

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Policy

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Next Review Due: July 2026

Our Values

This policy reflects our unwavering commitment to child protection, gender equality, and open, proactive safeguarding. At Young Friends, we believe in:

- **Sustainability** – Protecting all children from harm, now and in their future
 - **Respect** – Every child has the right to bodily autonomy and safety
 - **Authenticity** – Safeguarding is built into everything we do — not tokenistic
 - **Supportive Leadership** – Staff are trained, confident and ready to act
 - **Community** – We work with families, not against them, while upholding safety
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Policy Statement

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and is illegal in the UK. We have a duty to protect girls at risk and to act immediately on any concerns. This policy explains our responsibilities and response procedures.

Definition of FGM

FGM refers to the partial or total removal of the female external genitalia, or any other injury to female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and causes lifelong harm. There are **4 main types**, all of which are illegal.

Legal Framework

- **The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003** (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) • **Mandatory Reporting Duty** (Section 5B, Serious Crime Act 2015):
 - Staff must report known cases in under-18s to the police immediately
 - **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023**
 - **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024**
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Who Might Be at Risk?

Children may be at increased risk if they or their families:

- Come from communities where FGM is culturally practised
 - Have a female relative who has undergone FGM
 - Travel abroad to countries where FGM is prevalent
 - Experience honour-based pressure from relatives or community leaders
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Warning Signs of Possible Risk Children

may:

- Talk about a **special ceremony or trip abroad**
- Be withdrawn, anxious or fearful of a holiday

- Have siblings or peers who have undergone FGM
 - Have parents who discuss '**becoming a woman**' in unusual ways Staff should also be alert to **post-FGM symptoms**, such as:
 - Difficulty walking or sitting
 - Frequent urinary infections
 - Pain or unusual behaviour in the genital area
 - Reluctance to change for PE (in older children)
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Staff Responsibilities

All staff at Young Friends are:

- Trained to understand the signs and risks of FGM
 - Confident to speak to the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) immediately
 - Aware of their **mandatory duty to report** known cases **We will not wait for disclosure — suspicion is enough to act.**
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If You Are Concerned Step

1:
Raise the concern **immediately** with the DSL (Louise Lloyd-Evans or Claudia Harrington)

Step 2:

DSL will assess the level of risk and:

- Make a **referral to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)**
- Contact the **police** if there is an immediate threat
- Inform the **LADO** if the concern involves a professional **Step 3:**

Support the child's **emotional wellbeing**, confidentiality and safety **If a known case of FGM is disclosed**, staff must:

- Make a direct report to the police (via 101)
 - Inform the DSL and document clearly
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Working with Families

We build open, trusting partnerships with all families. However:

- We never ignore concerns out of fear of being offensive
- Safeguarding always overrides cultural sensitivity
- We will work respectfully but firmly to prevent harm

We may share awareness resources with families when relevant.

Record Keeping

All concerns and disclosures are:

- Recorded factually
 - Stored securely in the child's safeguarding file
 - Followed up with clarity and accountability
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Monitoring and Training

- All staff complete annual safeguarding training
 - FGM is covered in induction and Level 2+ refresher training
 - DSLs complete advanced safeguarding and multi-agency training
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Linked Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Whistleblowing
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Prevent Duty and British Values
- Parent Code of Conduct

Authorisation Signed:

 *Louise Lloyd-Evans*

Owner and Director

Young Friends Kindergarten

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