

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Policy

Springboard Nurseries have robust and rigorous safeguarding procedures and take its responsibilities of child protection seriously.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and as such is dealt with under Springboard's Child Protection/Safeguarding policy and procedure. At Springboard Nursery the owner and manager expect Safeguarding to be everybody's responsibility and expect all staff to adhere to and follow these policies and procedures.

Definition of FGM

"Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons."

(World Health Organisation 1997)

As from January 2013 Ofsted have included FGM in their "Inspecting Safeguarding" briefing for inspectors. Below are excerpts from this document:

"...Designated senior staff for child protection in schools should be aware of the guidance that is available in respect of FGM, and should be vigilant to the risk of it being practised. Inspectors should be also alert to this when considering a school's safeguarding arrangements, and where appropriate ask questions of designated staff. Key questions could include:

- Are designated senior staff for child protection aware of the issue and have ensured that staff in the school are aware of the potential risks?
- How alert are staff to the possible signs that a child has been subject to female genital mutilation or is at risk of being abused through it?
- Has the school taken timely and appropriate action in respect of concerns about particular children?"

In light of this information Springboard Nursery implement these policies and procedures:

Procedures

Springboard nurseries have decided to take proactive action to protect and prevent our young girls from being forced to undertake FGM. The owner and manager do this by:

- Ensure all staff undergo training on FGM - the safeguarding lead and manager ensure all staff are kept up to date on their training.
- Cause for concern forms are documented.
- Any signs, symptoms, or concerns will be referred to child protection.

Indications that FGM have taken place:

- Prolonged absence from school/ nursery with noticeable behaviour change - especially after a return from a holiday.
- If a child seems withdrawn and lacks interaction with others.
- If a child says they are hurting "down, there" or their bottom.
- The family come from a community that is known to practice FGM - especially if there are elderly women present.
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM or something related that they are anxious about at home.

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- A child may express anxiety about a special ceremony.
- If a woman has already undergone FGM – and it comes to the attention of any professional, consideration needs to be given to any Child Protection implications e.g. for younger siblings, extended family members and a referral made to Social Care or the Police if appropriate.

If we have concerns that children in our nursery are at risk or victims of FGM then we refer to our local social care authority.

Record

All interventions will be accurately recorded and kept in the safeguarding file.

Refer

The designated safeguarding lead needs to seek advice about making referrals to social care and to follow procedure guidelines on FGM referrals.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/female-genital-mutilation-fgm-migrant-health-guide>

This policy was implemented by Springboard Management Team: please note all policies and procedures will be reviewed on a yearly basis, unless there is a need to implement changes prior. Please note any updates and changes will be forwarded by email.

Date: 01.09.2023