

<b>DIRECTORS' REPORT AUTUMN TERM 2014</b>	<b>ITEM NO 11</b>	<b>FOR INFORMATION &amp; FOR ACTION</b>	<b>ATTENTION OF:</b> All governors
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and the Ealing Response</b>		
<b>SUMMARY</b>	Female genital mutilation is a safeguarding issue that was highlighted in the letter sent to schools by the Secretary of State for Education in April 2014. As Ealing is the third most ethnically diverse borough in the country, with a large majority from FGM practising communities, the borough is one of the Metropolitan Police's FGM hotspot areas This briefing outlines the current work that the is being carried out in Ealing to safeguard children against this practice and the role schools can play.		
<b>KEY ACTION POINTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department for Education 'Safeguarding Children Safe in Education' (2014)</li> <li>- Ofsted 'Inspecting Safeguarding' (2014)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Review, and if necessary refresh your relationship, sex education (RSE) policy, to include how pupils are safeguarded against FGM</li> <li>• Ensure that the safeguarding lead (Child Protection lead) in school has recently attended training on FGM</li> <li>• A governor to attend a training session on RSE this year</li> </ul>		
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### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)– What Is It?**

According to the World Health Organisation, FGM is 'all procedures which involve the partial or total removal of the external genitalia or injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or any other non-therapeutic reasons'. This is performed in 28 African countries, including parts of the Middle East, Asia and Latin America. School aged girls are most at risk of FGM as the practice is usually carried out on girls between infancy and the age of 5, with the majority between the ages of 5 and 8 years. It is practised by communities as a way of 'protecting' girls and ensuring their future. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, it is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 and carries a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment.

### **Female Genital Mutilation- A Safeguarding Issue**

The practice of FGM was highlighted in April in a letter that was sent to all schools by the Secretary of State for Education when bringing their attention to the 'Keeping children Safe in Education' document. This document clearly stipulates that all professionals "*need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM*"... and makes clear, "*If staff members have concerns about a child they should raise these with the school's or college's designated safeguarding lead*' like any other safeguarding issues."

Ofsted also highlight FGM in their 2014, 'Inspecting safeguarding' document, and require schools to ensure that 1) the Child Protection (CP) lead has attended training on FGM; 2) staff are alert to the possible signs of FGM and 3) the school

has taken timely and appropriate action in respect of concerns about particular children

### **Governor and School Headteacher's Responsibilities**

Female genital mutilation falls under the safeguarding duties of the school's governing body, and governors must ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and take FGM into account.

The DfE document clearly states that, *“Governing bodies and proprietors should consider how children may be taught about safeguarding.... this may include covering relevant issues through personal, social health and economic education (PSHE), and/or – for maintained schools and colleges – through relationship and sex education (RSE).”*

The teaching about FGM falls under RSE and both primary and secondary schools are legally obliged to have an up-to-date RSE policy that describes the content and organisation of RSE taught outside the science curriculum. It is the responsibility of the school's governing body to ensure that the policy is developed and made available to parents.

### **What the Health Improvement Team is Doing?**

Chairing the **Ealing FGM Partnership Group** which coordinates local activities regarding FGM and developing publicity material that will be shared across Ealing, include in schools

Working with the Department of Health and the Ealing FGM Partnership group to host a **North West London Conference on FGM, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

Planning and delivering **training** on relationship and sex education as a safeguarding prevention tool for **school governors**

Developing and disseminating a **new RSE curriculum** guidance and resources for high schools to adopt and adapt that includes topics of relevance and importance, such as FGM

On a buy back basis, **INSETs on FGM** for the whole school and/or **parent workshops** can be delivered in schools

### **Training for Governors**

Training is available for governors which is aimed to help raise awareness, dispel myths, misconceptions and uncertainty about the need for RSE and outline how RSE contributes significantly to the safeguarding of children and young people.

Please go to [www.ealingcpd.org.uk/cpd](http://www.ealingcpd.org.uk/cpd) to book your place for the briefing on 24th March 2015, 6-7.30pm at EEC

If you would like training or to attend the conference on RSE for staff and/or governors in your school, please contact Sonita Pobi to discuss this in more detail.