



8 July 2024

Dear Nursery Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead,

Sussex Police are committed to working in partnership with Local Authorities as well as other agencies to protect the most vulnerable people in society, including children, from our diverse communities.

We are writing to you to ask for your support and awareness in helping to identify and protect young girls who may be at risk of Female Genital Mutilation / Cutting (FGM/C)

FGM/C is one of the hidden crimes within our communities, and one that causes severe long-term physical and emotional harm to the girls and women affected by it. FGM/C comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is recognised in the UK as a criminal offence, even if it is carried out in another country.

It is important to report and refer children at risk of FGM/C so we can safeguard them but also so we know and understand the full scale of the challenge. If FGM/C is not reported, we won't know and cannot respond appropriately.

Please be aware of statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024)' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)' as they make explicit reference to FGM/C as a safeguarding issue, and since 31 October 2015, regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales have been required legally to report known cases of FGM/C in under 18-year-olds, which they identify in the course of their professional work, to the police.

Sussex Police has trained and experienced officers and staff, who are mindful and respectful of anyone who may feel reluctant to contact police due to cultural or religious beliefs. The circumstances of a victim are always of paramount consideration when the police investigate a case, acting at all times with integrity, courage and compassion.

Following this letter, your Designated Safeguarding Lead can contact your Youth Engagement Officers, Safeguarding Team, Local Authority Safeguarding lead or Safeguarding Children Partnership website for information and support and with any questions they may have.

Should you want to speak to someone directly to gain more information regarding Harmful Practices please make contact with Detective Inspector Iain McNabb on Iain.Macnab@sussex.police.uk or 07912 893150

Resources associated with FGM can be found:

<https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/>

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Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 4BA

Tel: 01 273 470101
www.sussex.police.uk

Find us on
social media





<https://www.sussex.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fgm/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

<https://www.sussex.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fgm/fgm-support-organisations/>

<https://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/>

[Protecting children from female genital mutilation \(FGM\) | NSPCC Learning](#)

[Female genital mutilation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Thank you for your support and co-operation.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R McDonagh'.

Richard McDonagh
Detective Chief Superintendent