Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
Please speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Hannah Pallôt** or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: **Matt Collinge or Sam Shainberg** immediately with any concerns.
MARU: **0300 1231 116** LADO: **01872 326536**

Seven Minute Safeguarding

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

What is FGM?
FGM includes all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting' but has many other names. The National FGM Centre also has a list of traditional terms

Why is FGM a safeguarding concern?
FGM is a form of child abuse. It is dangerous and is a criminal offence in the UK. Important facts: there are no medical reasons to carry out FGM; it's often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass or razor blades; children are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained; it's used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.
FGM causes significant harm and constitutes physical and emotional abuse. FGM is a violation of a child's right to life, their bodily integrity as well as their right to health.

Why is FGM a concern for Primary Schools?
FGM can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life, including:
when a baby is new-born; during childhood or as a teenager; just before marriage or during pregnancy.
However, it is most commonly carried out on girls between birth and 15 years of age.
(NHS ' FGM: A pocket guide for health care professionals', 2016

Who is most at risk?
Girls living in communities that practice FGM are most at risk. It can happen in the UK or abroad.
In the UK, the Home Office has identified girls and women from certain communities as being more at risk. These communities include: Somali, Kenyan, Ethiopian, Sierra Leonean, Sudanese, Egyptian, Nigerian, Eritrean, Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian.
Children are also at a higher risk of FGM if it's already happened to their mother, sister or another member of their family.

We have a legal duty to report cases of FGM to the police.
A mandatory reporting duty for FGM requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report known cases of FGM in under 18-year-olds to the police. The FGM duty came into force on 31 October 2015.

What to find out more?
The elimination of the practice of FGM links to goal 5 of the UN Global Goals for Development. They have written a blog post 'Five ways to help end FGM' to read this, click the image.

What are the signs that this might happen?
These signs are taken from the NSPCC website. It is important to remember that this is not an exhaustive list and building positive, open relationships with children is so important.

- A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad.
- A special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'.
- A female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM.
- A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad (particularly to areas of the world where this is a prevalent practice) during the summer holidays.
- A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school.
- A girl struggles to keep up in school.
- A girl runs away – or plans to run away - from home.

What are the signs that this has happen?

- Having difficulty walking, standing or sitting.
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet.
- Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed.
- Acting differently after an absence from school or college.
- Reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations.
- Asking for help – though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed.