

Honour Based Abuse Including Female Genital Mutilation

1. Purpose and content

The purpose of this appendix of the College Safeguarding Policy is to provide a clear set of guidelines to staff regarding the actions they must take if they become aware that honour based abuse is taking place or female genital mutilation has been performed, or is planned to be performed, on a female.

2. Definitions

The key terms in this document are defined as:

- **Child:** Those under the age of eighteen.
- **Honour Based Abuse:** (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes, which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family 'izzat' and/or the community, including forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing and Female genital mutilation.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** Comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse, for those aged under 18, with long-lasting harmful consequences.

All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and must be handled and escalated as such.

3. Relevant external guidance

Department for Education (DfE) September 2019: Keeping children safe in education; statutory guidance for schools and colleges outlines the statutory duty on teachers, introduced in October 2015, under Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. The guidance also outlines that those teachers failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

4. Actions to be taken in response to FGM

- All staff must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and be vigilant. Staff must respond immediately if there is any indication that HBA is taking place or FGM has been performed on any female. This includes learners, staff, volunteers, learners on placements and any other female in the College or wider community.
- Curriculum delivery staff (e.g. teachers and lecturers) must report the information they have become aware of directly to the Police if the female is under 18. Unless the teacher/lecturer has a good reason not to, they should then report the case to social services and discuss the case with the College Designated Lead for Safeguarding Mark Moore, Alys Tregear or one of the Deputy Designated Persons in her absence, following the referral routes as outlined in Appendix A (child and adult protection) of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Teachers/lecturers should report information of FGM on a female aged 18+ to the College Designated Lead for Safeguarding or one of the Deputy Designated Persons in his absence, following the referral routes as outlined in Appendix A (child and adult protection) of the Safeguarding Policy.
- All other staff should report information of FGM to the College Designated Lead for Safeguarding or one of the Deputy Designated Persons in his absence following the referral routes as outlined in Appendix A (child and adult protection) of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Note; staff **must not** perform examinations of any kind on the female/s concerned.

5. Actions to be taken in response to HBA

Forced marriage – Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

Potential Indicators

- Absence and persistent absence.
- Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin.
- Fear about forthcoming school holidays
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school.
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality.

- Poor exam results.
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility.
- Removal from a day centre of a person with a physical or learning disability
- Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger
- Prevented from going on to further/higher education

Teachers/lecturers should report information to the College Designated Lead for Safeguarding or one of the Deputy Designated Persons in his absence, following the referral routes as outlined in Appendix A (child and adult protection) of the Safeguarding Policy.