

21st March 2022

Dear Head Teacher,

The Police and Crime Commissioner and Hampshire Constabulary are committed to working in partnership with Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight Local Authorities as well as other agencies to protect the most vulnerable people in society including children from all of 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 (FGM) and Forced Marriage (FM) throughout the year but specifically over the school holidays. FGM 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. Forced Marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent (e.g. for those with learning disabilities) to a marriage and they are pressurised or abuse is used to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as a criminal offence and a form of domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

It's important to report and refer children at risk of FGM and FM so we can know and understand the full scale of the challenge. If FGM and FM are not reported, we won't know and cannot respond.

Both sets of statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' make explicit reference to FGM and FM as safeguarding issues, 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 in under 18-year-olds, which they identify in the course of their professional work, to the police.

Hampshire Constabulary 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 school's Designated Safeguarding Lead can contact your local Neighbourhood Policing Team, Safeguarding Team, respective Local Authority Safeguarding lead or Safeguarding Partnership website for information and support and with any questions they may have. Additional resources specifically for education professionals are available on the Safe4me website (www.safe4me.co.uk).

You can share non-urgent information relating to children at risk safely and directly through our Community Information Sharing (CPI) form which can be found on Safe4Me (<https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/sharing-information/>)

Resources associated with FGM and FM can be found on our Safe4Me website if there is anything you would like to see on there, or you have general feedback, or would like further information or training on CPI submission please contact the Education Partnership Team via schoolyouthengagement@hampshire.police.uk

The 4 Local Safeguarding Children's Partnerships (LSCP) offers webinar training on Harmful Practices, including Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage, FGM, Breast Flattening and Child Abuse Linked to Faith and Belief (CALFB). Please book a place through your LSCP website.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Kind regards,



Police and Crime Commissioner
Donna Jones



Chief Superintendent Raj Kohli
Hampshire Constabulary



Derek Benson
Hampshire/IOW/Portsmouth & Southampton
LSCP