All Silver Stars Day Nursery policies will be subject to any future change according to Government legislation and guidelines to maintain the safety of all children, families, staff and visitors.

2.15

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Statement of Intent:

At Silver Stars Day Nursery, we are fully committed to the ongoing protection and safety of all children, families, staff, and the wider community.

We recognise that **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** is illegal in the UK and is a serious form of child abuse with long-lasting physical, emotional, and psychological consequences. All staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and mandatory reporting duties in relation to FGM.

Staff are vigilant to the possibility that a child may be at risk of FGM or may have already undergone FGM. Any concerns will be treated as a safeguarding matter and dealt with immediately in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Definition of FGM

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) refers to all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for cultural or non-medical reasons.
FGM is typically carried out on girls between the ages of 4–15, although it can occur earlier or later, including before marriage or pregnancy.

FGM is:

- Illegal in the UK under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as amended)
- Illegal to arrange or take a child abroad for FGM
- A form of child abuse
- A violation of human rights

FGM can cause severe physical pain, infection, long-term health complications, trauma, and emotional harm.

Aim:

- Ensure all staff discuss FGM professionally and sensitively.
- Ensure all staff understand the indicators that FGM may have taken place or may be about to take place.
- Ensure all staff follow safeguarding procedures immediately where concerns arise.
- Ensure all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training, including awareness of FGM.

- Support children and families in a respectful and culturally sensitive manner.
- Create an open and safe environment where children feel listened to and supported.

Signs and Indicators:

Possible Indicators That FGM May Have Taken Place

- The family originates from a community known to practise FGM.
- A child has prolonged or repeated absences, particularly after travel abroad.
- Noticeable behavioural changes following a period of absence.
- A child appears withdrawn, anxious, or depressed.
- Recurrent bladder, menstrual, or urinary difficulties.
- A child requesting to be excused from physical activity without medical evidence.
- A child asking for help directly or indirectly.

Possible Indicators That FGM May Be About to Take Place

- A child refers to a “special procedure,” “special occasion,” or extended holiday abroad.
- A child expresses anxiety about an upcoming trip.
- A child asks for help to prevent something from happening.
- A sibling (including a boy) raises concerns about a sister or female relative.
- Family discussions about preparing a girl for marriage or womanhood in a way that raises concern.

All concerns must be treated seriously, even if indicators appear subtle.

Cultural context:

We understand that FGM is a complex issue. In some communities, it is viewed as a cultural or social norm and may be believed to:

- Preserve virginity or chastity
- Ensure marriageability
- Maintain family honour
- Mark a rite of passage
- Promote cleanliness

However, FGM has no medical benefit and is not supported by major religious texts. Regardless of cultural beliefs, FGM is illegal and constitutes child abuse in the UK.

Staff will approach all discussions with cultural sensitivity while maintaining a clear safeguarding stance.

Procedures

If staff have any concerns:

1. Report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
2. Record all information factually, including exact words used.
3. Do not question the child extensively or conduct an investigation.
4. Do not inform parents if doing so may place the child at further risk.
5. Follow safeguarding referral procedures without delay.

Mandatory Reporting Duty

If a regulated professional (including nursery staff) discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, they must report this to the police via 101 as soon as possible (and within 1 working day).

The DSL will coordinate reporting and referrals in line with safeguarding procedures.

Absence Monitoring

Silver Stars closely monitors absences, particularly:

- Extended holidays abroad
- Unexplained or repeated absences
- Sudden travel to countries where FGM is known to be practised

Clear communication with parents/carers is maintained regarding holidays and extended leave.

Emergency and Support Contacts

- Police (Immediate Danger): 999
- Non-emergency Police Reporting (Mandatory Reporting): 101
- NSPCC FGM Helpline: 0800 028 3550
- Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Safeguarding Commitment

FGM is child abuse. The welfare of the child is paramount.

All concerns will be handled in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and local safeguarding procedures.

This policy was adopted by	Silver Stars Day Nursery
Date	February 2026

Review date	February 2027
Name of signatory	Mrs Jenifer Capper
Role of signatory	Proprietor
Signed: Date:	 February 2026