

## Safeguarding and Wellbeing across PACE Academy Trust

### PACE Academy Trust Safeguarding Team:



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New Vallev Primary



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Chipstead Vallev Primary



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Beecholme Primary

### Safeguarding News- Virginty Tests

A virginty test is a method of checking if a girl or woman is a virgint. This usually involves checking for an intact hymen in the mistaken belief that a torn hymen means a woman has had sex. Virginty tests are sometimes used in Muslim and other conservative communities because their customs say women must be virgins when marrying their husbands. However, there is no scientific way to prove a girl or woman's virginty.

Taking the test can cause a girl or woman anguish and severe mental distress. Tragically, failing one can result in violence, sexual assault, banishment from the community, and, worse still, murder.

This is not something that just goes on in other countries. This is very much a British problem. In the 1970s it was reportedly carried out by immigration officials on women arriving from the Indian sub-continent to marry their British-Asian fiancés.

Virginty tests are carried out in the UK in private clinics. Although the extent of the practice in the UK is unknown, a BBC Newsbeat investigation in 2020 identified at least 21 clinics offering such tests. Doctors also offer hymen repair surgery, costing between £1,500-£3,000, should the girl or woman fail the test.

### Safeguarding Governor Bio:

Meet Shelly Rowe, our safeguarding governor at CVPS:



I've been a Governor at Chipstead Valley for 7 years and this is my 5th year overseeing safeguarding. I meet with Hannah, our DSL at least once a term, where we review and discuss her update before it goes to the Governing Body. I am also responsible for checking the DBS section of the Single Central Register. Away from school, I am Mum to Jamie, Dan and Jenna, all of whom happily went to school at CVPS.

### Scared of your partner or ex?



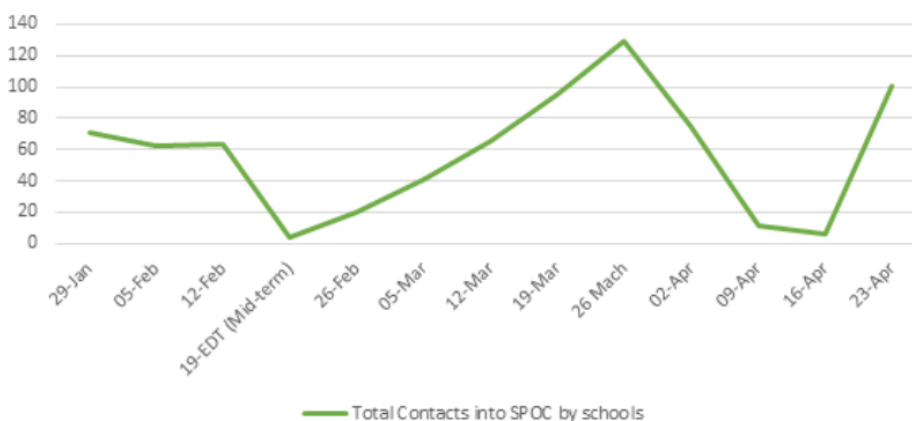
**Talk to us any time, day or night.**  
 Freephone 24 hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline  
 Confidential, non-judgmental support  
 Or reach us online: [www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk)  
**Refuge**  
 For women and children, against domestic violence

### Feeling Stressed?

Mind can help, listen and signpost you to other services.

Tel: 0300 123 3393

### Total Contacts into SPOC by schools



### Referrals

Lockdown has undoubtedly had a huge impact on us all in many different ways. Over the last few months, children's services across different boroughs have noticed patterns in the amount of social care referrals they have received. This graph shows the safeguarding referrals received by Croydon Children's Services over the last few months.

## “Children’s Mental Health Week” Across The Trust Schools

### Chipstead Valley Primary School:

We celebrated Children’s Mental Health Week through remote learning this year. Children across the school took part in activities based on the theme, “Express Yourself.” We had some fantastic examples of worry monsters, worry dolls, emotion artwork and songs being written throughout the week; these were shared on our school Twitter to celebrate. Teachers at CVPS took part in an “Express Yourself” video to share with our school community, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all! At the end of the week, staff and children were encouraged to express themselves with crazy hair or a hat- the photos we received were fantastic and the week was a real success!



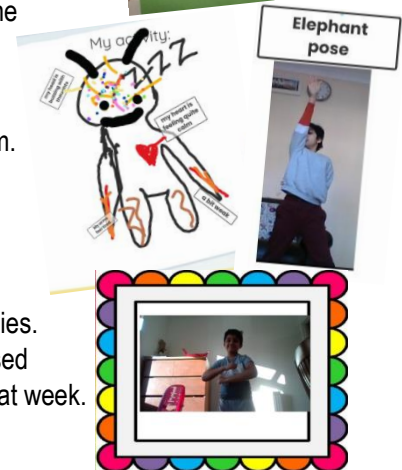
### Stanford Primary School

This Children’s Mental Health Week, we expressed ourselves through our clothes, art and writing. Lavender class got a surprise from a very colourful Miss Wood; Stan reminded us that boys can wear pink and rock it; and we even had a visit from a unicorn! The children in school made hats, body maps of how they feel and painted lovely images of our favourite things. One child wrote a song and sang it to her friends in the playground. who learning remotely, made collages or factsheets all about their favourite things; drew pictures of things that are important to them; made body maps; and showed us the things that they love to do. Children in school enjoyed seeing work and photos from their friends who were learning at home



### Beecholme Primary School

We celebrated Children’s Mental Health Week at home via our online learning platform. We embraced the theme of self-expression by encouraging children to reflect on how they express themselves. We held a different workshop every day, including dance, music, yoga, poetry and art and provided opportunities for children to think about how each of these activities made them feel. On Friday, we organised a non-screen day where pupils took part in activities such as den building, mindful walks and craft activities. The week was rounded off with a class meeting on Teams where children came dressed in their most expressive outfits and were able to share something they had enjoyed that week.



### New Valley Primary School

New Valley celebrated Children’s Mental Health Week at home and at school, encouraging self-expression all week through assemblies and class meetings, and choosing times when we could share our endeavours. Memorably, our leader shared how he likes to express himself too and filmed a short video mixing his favourite records! This was appreciated by parents and children alike. Many children shared their personalities and we got to learn about some potential stars in the making. A magic moment occurred when one child plucked up the courage to sing to her classmates over teams- being able to sing whilst blocking her image (just like being on The Voice) gave her the confidence to astound us all with a performance that was far beyond just ‘good’! Throughout the week we made good use of the Place2Be recommendations and planned for and encouraged children to take part in a variety of activities to consider how they made them feel. For the parents, we arranged a very well attended workshop led by Zoe Barkham Manlow, Croydon Education Improvement Officer for health and wellbeing, regarding children dealing with anxiety.

### Keston Primary School

At Keston during Children’s Mental Health Week 2020, we looked at different ways of ‘expressing ourselves’ through our emotions. This included making our own ‘worry monsters’ and having some valuable screen-free time. During which, we carried out lots of practical activities from salt-dough crafts to nature inspired self-portraits to making a rainforest in a jar- to name but a few!



## 1. Background: What is FGM?

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for nonmedical reasons. It is a practice that takes place worldwide in at least 28 African countries and in parts of the Middle and Far East. It also takes place within parts of Western Europe and other developed countries, primarily among immigrant and refugee communities where FGM is commonly believed to be a way of ensuring virginity and chastity. The procedure may be carried out shortly after birth, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy. The practice is not required by any religion.

## 5. Signs:

Signs that a girl or young woman may be at risk include: The family comes from a community that is known to practice FGM; mother has been subjected to FGM; Family not well integrated into UK society; parents have poor access to information on the harmful impact of FGM; Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period; a child may confide to a professional that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion. Often parents themselves can experience pressure to agree to FGM for their children. It is important to recognise that those seeking to arrange the cutting are unlikely to perceive it to be harmful. FGM is often seen as natural and beneficial and the practice may be carried out by a loving family who believe that it is in the girls or woman's best interests. Whilst every attempt should be made to work with parents/carers on a voluntary basis to prevent FGM, the safety of the child must be paramount.

## 2. Why it matters:

FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls which has immediate and long-term health consequences including severe pain and blood loss, shock, mental health problems, complications in childbirth, and/or death. It is believed that FGM may happen to girls in the UK as well as overseas. Girls of school age subjected to FGM overseas are likely to be taken abroad (often to the family's country of origin) at the start of the school holidays, particularly in the summer, in order for there to be sufficient time for them to recover before returning to school.

### PACE Safeguarding

### 7 Minute Briefing

### FGM Refresher Guide

## 4. Different types of FGM:

Type 1 – Clitoridectomy: partial or total removal of the clitoris and, in very rare cases, only the prepuce (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoris).

Type 2 – Excision: partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora.

Type 3 – Infibulation: narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, or outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris.

Type 4- other: All other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes e.g. pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterising the genital area.

Prolonged absence from school or college with noticeable behaviour changes on return

May confide in a professional

Particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations

Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating  
long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.

## 3. Information:

FGM is illegal in England & Wales. As amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015, the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 now includes: an offence of failing to protect a girl from the risk of FGM; Extra-territorial jurisdiction over offences of FGM committed abroad by UK nationals and those habitually (as well as permanently) resident in the UK; lifelong anonymity for victims of FGM; FGM Protection Orders which can be used to protect girls at risk; and a mandatory reporting duty which requires specified professionals to report known cases of FGM in under 18s to the police.

## 6. Indicators: include:

Difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable  
Frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.

May talk about pain or discomfort between her legs

May ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

For further, free DfE training, click [here](#)

## 7. What to do:

- Do not contact the girl's parents or guardians
- Inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately
- The DSL must make a referral to Children's Social Care
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### If you receive a disclosure or you know that FGM has taken place:

- Contact the Police by dialling 101 and notify Children's Social Care
- In an emergency, such as when you know a child is at immediate risk of harm, dial 999

### Other useful numbers:

**Croydon CCG Safeguarding Team**  
0203 668 1345

**NSPCC FGM 24 hour Helpline**  
0800 028 3550