

Our Ref: PST/JT



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AN ROINN

Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O

Lear

Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
Rathgill
Bangor
BT19 7PR

To: All CPSSS Staff

22 July 2014

Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and, within education, is dealt with as part of the current child protection training for Designated Teachers for Child Protection, their Deputies and Principals. The training covers warning signs and the appropriate response with signposting to further information and sources of help.

The Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) has now published Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation.

The Guidelines were issued for targeted consultation on 13 January 2014 and a number of responses were received. The responses have been analysed by DFP and, while broadly welcoming of the Guidelines, they raised other ancillary issues including training, awareness-raising and the development of local expertise. The analysis of the consultation responses recognises that further work is required; however it was agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive that as there is a serious gap in this area, the Guidelines should publish now, without further delay.

As such, the Minister of Finance and Personnel sought agreement in accordance with paragraph 2.14 of the Ministerial Code to invoke the urgent procedure to publish the Guidelines and an analysis of responses to the consultation.

The guidelines are non-statutory and seek to provide advice and support to frontline professionals who are responsible for safeguarding children and protecting adults from the abuses associated with FGM. It is acknowledged that no single agency will be able to meet the multiple needs of someone affected by FGM and this document sets out a multi-agency response and strategies to encourage agencies to co-operate and work together.

The Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation and the consultation responses can be found on the DFP website at:

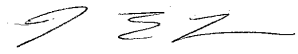
<http://dfpni.staging.nigov.net/dfpinterstg9.8.4/index/about-dfp/consultation-zone.htm> -
Consultation Zone

or

<http://dfpni.staging.nigov.net/dfpinterstg9.8.4/index/civil-law-reform/law-reform/latest-news> -
Law Reform Latest News

A copy of this letter has also issued to all Principals, Designated Teachers and Chairs of Board of Governors in grant aided schools with the additional advice that if there are any concerns at school level they should contact CPSSS in the first instance.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J TENER', written in a cursive style.

JUDITH TENER
Pupil Support Team