Freedom Charity: Female Genital Mutilation

Teacher Guidance

Version 1.2

Freedom Charity is registered in England and Wales as charity 1139657

PSHE Association Quality Assured Resource

Please note: Do not ask any pupil to undertake research into FGM using their own home computer or any ICT equipment that could be viewed by their family. This could seriously endanger a vulnerable pupil. Instead offer the use of school equipment.

Freedom Charity: FGM Teacher Guidance

This guidance accompanies Freedom Charity's lesson on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The lesson is designed for key stage 3 but could be used for key stage 4. When planning your programme, do bear in mind, however, that as this is primarily preventative education, it is important that learning about FGM is not left too late. The lesson explains what FGM is, explores and clarifies facts related to FGM, and supports students to seek help and support if they, or others they know, are at risk of, or have experienced, FGM. This lesson should be taught as part of wider learning on relationships or health education, within a comprehensive PSHE education programme. Please read and consider this guidance first, before teaching the lesson.

Who are Freedom Charity

Freedom works to protect the lives of children and young people by raising awareness of human rights abuses. Their work focuses on forced marriage, the associated problem of dishonour abuse, and female genital mutilation (FGM). Freedom uses the term 'dishonour abuse' instead of 'honour-based violence', as there is nothing honourable about the physical and emotional suffering inflicted upon young women and girls. The term 'abuse' (as now mandated in the Court system) covers the full range of unwelcome and unacceptable coercive behaviour associated with both FGM and Forced Marriage. Freedom believes that all children have the right to live free from violence and coercion, without being forced into marriage or to endure the horrors of FGM. Prevention is crucial; a core aim of the charity is to ensure that if a young person is in danger, they know where to go, and that their friends know what the warning signs are and who can help.

Freedom's founder, Aneeta Prem, has written a novel: 'Cut Flowers', which tells a fictional account of the experiences of young people and their families relating to FGM. It is available from www.freedomcharity.org.uk/freedom-shop/book/cut-flowers) i. If you would like copies of 'Cut Flowers', or would like to find out more about the Freedom team's work in schools, please contact us at hello@freedomcharity.org.uk or call 0845 607 0133.

i. While the scenarios used in this lesson plan are based on the characters and their stories in 'Cut Flowers', only the lesson plan and accompanying resources carry the PSHE Association's Quality Mark

Freedom Charity: Teacher Guidance

Why teach about FGM?

The World Health Organisation defines FGM as 'all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.' According to Freedom, FGM is mostly carried out on females sometime between infancy and age 15, and occasionally on adult women.

It is illegal in the UK, however Gov.uk states that a 2015 study based on 2011 census data estimated that:

- approximately 60,000 girls aged 0 to 14 were born in England and Wales to mothers who had undergone FGM

- approximately 103,000 women aged 15 to 49 and approximately 24,000 women aged 50 and over who have migrated to England and Wales are living with the consequences of FGM. In addition, approximately 10,000 girls aged under 15 who have migrated to England and Wales are likely to have undergone FGM

Given the hidden nature of FGM, the exact number of women and girls in the UK who have undergone it is unknown.

To support young people who are at risk of, or have undergone FGM, it is crucial that all students are taught about it. Students should understand what FGM is and that it is illegal; and know how to, and feel able to, tell a responsible adult should they, or someone they know, be at risk of FGM.

Reporting FGM

By law, teachers have a duty to report instances of, or the risk of, FGM. Teachers must report any disclosures immediately to the police. The Home Office's Mandatory Reporting of FGM Procedural Information states that:

The FGM mandatory reporting duty is a legal duty provided for in the FGM Act 2003 (as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015). The legislation requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:
• are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
• observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

The duty does not apply in relation to suspected cases — it is limited to 'known' cases (i.e. those which are visually identified or disclosed to a professional by the victim). In these cases, you should follow local safeguarding procedures. If you are concerned that there is an immediate threat you should take immediate action in line with local safeguarding procedures.

If you are a relevant professional and a girl discloses to you that she has had FGM (whether she uses the term 'female genital mutilation' or any other term or description, e.g. 'cut') then the duty applies..... The duty applies to cases directly disclosed by the victim; if a parent, guardian, sibling or other individual discloses that a girl under 18 has had FGM, the duty does not apply and a report to the police is not mandatory. Any such disclosure should, however, be handled in line with wider safeguarding responsibilities.

The duty is a personal duty which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred.

Freedom Charity: Teacher Guidance

Preparing to teach

It is important to consider sensitivities and prior knowledge about specific students' circumstances. In the lesson 'girls and women' is used to refer to those whose natal sex is female. However, it is important to be aware of the individual needs of all students and use inclusive language where appropriate. If you choose to use, for example, 'someone' or 'a person', it is important that students understand that FGM affects those with female genitalia. For all students, a fully inclusive approach helps to increase empathy and reduce prejudice-based bullying.

Do's and Don'ts when teaching about FGM

Do...

- create a safe learning environment (see below).

- signpost support (see final section of this guidance).

- equip students with the language, strategies and skills needed to seek help and support.

- consider students' needs - many schools will want to include more specific teaching on FGM in light of the serious risks involved, or the area in which the school is situated and its student intake. Evidence of prevalence and public health data can support effective decision-making.

- report any disclosures immediately to the police (see above).

Don't...

- use shock tactics, e.g. sharing graphic stories, descriptions or accounts of the process and the aftermath, or sharing graphic images with students.

- make assumptions about students' prior learning at primary school – ensure a baseline assessment in conducted (as in the lesson plan).

- teach a 'one-off' lesson – teaching about FGM should be clearly linked with the wider PSHE education curriculum, for example, included in units of learning on health, keeping safe, safe relationships, privacy.

Freedom Charity: Teacher Guidance

Creating a safe learning environment

A safe learning environment helps students feel comfortable with sharing their ideas without attracting negative feedback, and avoids possible distress and disclosures in a public setting. It also helps teachers to manage discussions on sensitive issues confidently. This is particularly important when teaching a topic which may be particularly sensitive or personal for some students in the room. It is good practice to:

- work with students to establish ground rules about how they will behave in PSHE lessons, such as;

- Everyone has the right to be heard and respected.

- We will use language that won't offend or upset other people.

- We will comment on what was said, not the person who said it.

- We won't share our own, or anyone else's, personal experiences.

- We won't put anyone on the spot and we have a right to pass.

- We won't judge or make assumptions about anyone.

- We will use the correct terms, and if we don't know them, we'll ask the teacher.

- make a box or envelope available in which students can place anonymous questions or concerns, to avoid having to voice them in front of the class – this should include providing opportunities in the lesson for all students to submit responses to the anonymous question box, so as to not 'spotlight' those students that want to ask a question

- provide balanced, factually accurate information and differing views to help students clarify their own opinions

- be sensitive to the needs and experiences of individuals

- distance the learning from students to discourage personal disclosures in the classroom and to keep the learning environment safe

- always work within the school's policies on safeguarding and confidentiality

- make students aware of sources of support, both inside and outside the school

- link PSHE education into the whole school approach to supporting student wellbeing

Further guidance on creating a safe learning environment is available from the PSHE Association.

Freedom Charity: Teacher Guidance

Links to PSHE Association Programme of Study and DfE statutory guidance for RSE and Health education

The table below shows the learning opportunities from the relevant PSHE education Programme of Study core themes which are met by these lessons. It also highlights where elements from the statutory guidance for relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education are met through the lesson content. Learning should always take place within a spiral programme of knowledge, skills and attribute development, where prior learning is revisited, reinforced and extended in developmentally-appropriate contexts.

Learning opportunity from PSHE Association Programme of Study	*Department for Education: Statutory Guidance for RSE and Health Education*
Key stage 3 Students should have the opportunity to learn: H22. the risks and facts associated with female genital mutilation (FGM), its status as a criminal act and strategies to safely access support for themselves or others who may be at risk, or who have already been subject to FGM	- Schools should address the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM). They [pupils] should also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM. - Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example: female genital mutilation (FGM) **Topic: Being safe** *Pupils should know:* - the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships

Signposting support

It is essential that in all PSHE education lessons, appropriate support is signposted.

Ensure students know where they can find help and further advice, if they are concerned, both now and in the future. This includes highlighting trusted adults in school, such as their tutor, head of year, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the school nurse and other teaching staff. Reassure students that staff are always willing to listen to their concerns. When signposting support, it is important not only to inform students of where they can access it, but also to help them understand why they might seek support for themselves, or others, when they might seek support, how to do so, and what will happen next if they do. Highlight organisations where students and teachers can access support and further information:

- Freedom Charity www.freedomcharity.org.uk 0845 607 0133
- NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/#support
- Childline www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/abuse-safety/female-circumcision-fgm-cutting

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Lesson Plan

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Freedom Charity: Female Genital Mutilation

Context

This lesson is for students in key stage 3. The lesson explains what female genital mutilation (FGM) is, explores facts related to FGM, and supports students to seek help and support if they, or others they know, are at risk of, or have experienced, FGM.

The lesson is not designed to be taught in isolation, but should always form part of a planned, developmental PSHE education programme. Teaching about FGM could be included in units on health, relationships or keeping safe.

Learning objective

To learn:

- about FGM and the help and support available

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- explain what is meant by FGM

- clarify facts about FGM

- analyse how to safely access support for themselves or others who may be at risk, or have already been subject to FGM



Resources

- Box or envelope for anonymous questions

- Post-it notes

- Resource 1: Overheard conversation [one per student]

- Resource 2: Getting the facts straight [one per pair]

- Resource 2a: Getting the facts straight – teacher notes

- Resource 2b: Rose's responses

- Resource 3: Scenarios [one per small group]

Additional optional resource:

- Young adult novel: **Cut Flowers by Aneeta Prem** (available from www.freedomcharity.org.uk/freedom-shop/book/cut-flowers). The scenarios used in this lesson plan are based on the characters and their stories in 'Cut Flowers'.

Lesson Summary:

Activity	Description	Timing
1. Baseline assessment	Establish or reinforce ground rules. Students respond to an overheard conversation.	10 mins
2. Introduction	Introduce the learning objective and outcomes, and explain what FGM is and that it is illegal.	5 mins
3. Getting the facts straight	Students clarify facts about FGM.	10 mins
4. Understanding feelings	Students discuss why someone might find it difficult to talk about, or report, FGM.	10 mins
5. Seeking help	Students review scenarios and explain where the characters might seek help and support.	10 mins
5. Signposting support	Teacher explains who students should talk to if they have concerns and where to access further advice.	5 mins
6. Endpoint assessment	Students revisit the baseline assessment activity and write an anonymous question or note for the teacher.	10 mins

Climate for learning:

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson, which include guidance on establishing ground rules, the limits of confidentiality, communication and handling questions effectively.

It is important to consider sensitivities and prior knowledge about specific students' circumstances. In this lesson 'girls and women' refers to those whose natal sex is female. However, it is important to be aware of the individual needs of all students and use inclusive language where appropriate. If you choose to use, for example, 'someone' or 'a person', it is important that students understand that FGM affects those with female genitalia.

Be aware that, in a diverse community, it is possible that some pupils may have personal experience of FGM within their own family or community and may find this lesson challenging or distressing. Any disclosure must be reported immediately (see Teacher Guidance for further information).

Key words	*Female genital mutilation, cutting, female circumcision, rights, protection, disclosure*

Detailed Lesson Plan:

Baseline assessment *10 min*	Before teaching, establish or remind students of the ground rules. Highlight that if they have worries or questions during or after the lesson that they do not want to raise in front of the class, they can write their name on a piece of paper and put it in the question box so that you can talk to them individually. Explain that everyone will get a chance to write a question or thought about their learning at the end of the lesson (anonymously if they wish). Ask students to read the conversation between two young people in Resource 1: Overheard conversation. Either individually, in pairs, or as a whole class, ask students to respond to the questions underneath the conversation and share their ideas. Circulate the room while students are completing the activity. This will allow you to gauge students' current understanding and any common ideas or misconceptions, and consider how these will be addressed in the lesson. Once completed, make sure students have added their names and put them to one side, as these will be revisited at the end of the lesson to demonstrate progress.
Introduction *5 min*	Introduce the learning objective and outcomes and explain that the lesson will explore FGM and the importance of seeking help and support. Explain that FGM stands for female genital mutilation. FGM means that parts of the female genitals, such as the clitoris or labia, are removed or changed. You may wish to recap female anatomy with students at this point in the lesson. It is also sometimes known as 'cutting', or 'female circumcision'. Emphasise to students that unlike male circumcision, there is no medical basis for FGM to be performed, nor does male circumcision result in ongoing health problems, such as problems urinating or enjoying sex. FGM is a dangerous, harmful practice that has no health or hygiene benefits. Whilst other cultures may use other terms for FGM, it is always abuse and it is always a crime. FGM can happen to girls and women in any country, including in the UK. FGM is a direct violation of rights. It goes against the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which protects children from violence, abuse and neglect, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which says that no one shall be subjected to torture, nor to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
Getting the facts straight *10 min*	In pairs, ask students to read the quotes in Resource 2: Getting the facts straight – explain that these are based on different characters' thoughts in Aneeta Prem's 'Cut Flowers' and stress that they are all incorrect statements. Ask students to discuss and write down how someone (for example, the character Rose) might challenge each of these misconceptions. After each statement, take feedback from students and share the supporting information in Resource 2a: Getting the facts straight – teacher notes. Reinforce the key message that, regardless of what people may believe, argue or try to persuade others, FGM is abuse. All girls and women have a right to be safe. FGM is a crime that nobody should experience, and help is available to anyone who fears they, or someone they care about, may be at risk, or who has already been subjected to it. **Support:** Ask students to read Resource 2b: Rose's responses and match the responses to the relevant misconceptions presented in Resource 2: Getting the facts straight. More than one of Rose's responses may be used per misconception.

Detailed Lesson Plan (cont):

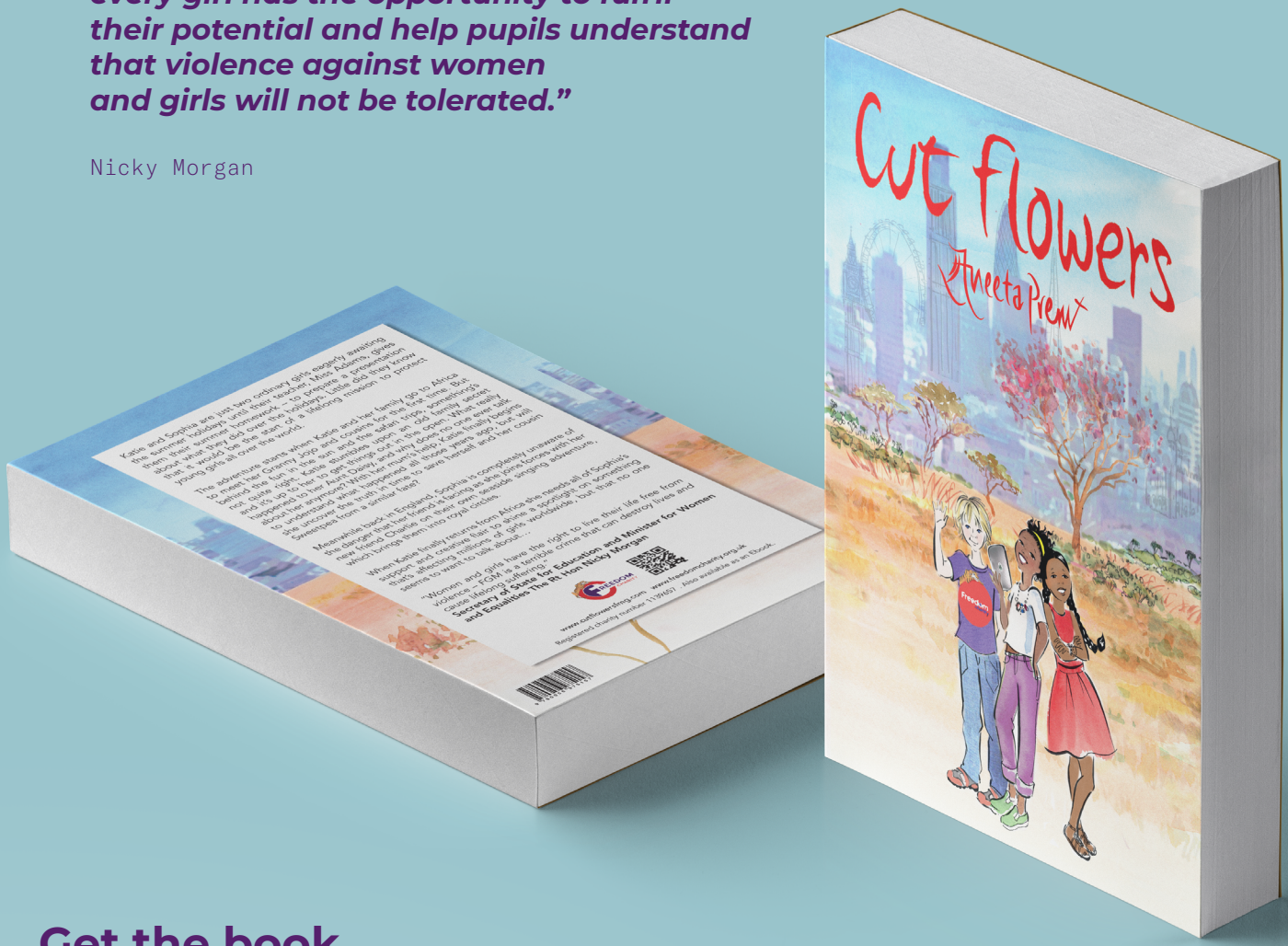
Understanding feelings *10 min*	Ask students to think-pair-share why someone might find it difficult to talk about FGM, either before or after it has happened, or to tell someone that they are worried it might happen to them. Create a whole class brainstorm of students' ideas. Students might suggest: worries about getting in trouble; fear of getting people they love into trouble; finding it difficult, upsetting, or embarrassing to tell others what might happen to them, or what has already happened to family members; feeling confused about whether it is right or wrong; not knowing what will happen to them or their family if they report it. Explain to students that sometimes a girl might be told that she will be attending a special party or celebration, or going on a special holiday and that this should be kept a secret. However, it is very important that if they are worried or feel uncomfortable about being told something like this will happen to them (or someone they know), and/or told to keep a secret, they tell someone they trust, for example a teacher or other trusted adult at home or outside the family (see signposting below).
Seeking help *10 min*	Then, in small groups, hand students one of the scenarios in Resource 3: Scenarios (these are based on situations/characters detailed in Cut Flowers). Ask students to consider the feelings the characters might have about saying something, as discussed in the previous activity, and what each might do to overcome these. Finally, ask students to discuss where the individual might seek help and support. Take feedback from each group. Students might suggest: • *Reporting FGM may feel challenging, and it can feel like there are a lot of reasons not to tell someone. Remind students that everyone is entitled to the same rights and that if someone is abusing these, it is important to speak out. The benefits of reporting FGM/the risk of FGM outweigh the barriers to seeking help.* • *If a girl/woman has already undergone FGM, regardless of their age or how long ago the procedure happened, they should seek support. FGM can have long-term health effects and can affect someone's mental health - it is important that they access appropriate help when needed.* • *Someone could report their situation or concerns (for themself or someone else) to Freedom Charity, or a teacher who could then take steps to keep them safe. They could also speak to friends or family members for emotional support, as well as teachers or other trusted adults (who will report it). A friend might provide a listening ear and encourage them to contact a support service, or tell a teacher or someone else about their concerns.* **Challenge:** Ask students to script the opening to a conversation between their character and a trusted adult – what could they say to express their concerns and ask for help?

Detailed Lesson Plan (cont):

Signposting support *5 min*	Reiterate to students that FGM is illegal and a violation of someone's human rights. Explain that a young person concerned about FGM, whether it has already happened to them or someone they know, or it might happen in the future, can: - Talk to a teacher or adult they trust at school - Talk to an adult they trust at home (or outside the family) - Talk to their GP - Contact Freedom www.freedomcharity.org.uk 0845 607 0133 - Contact ChildLine 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk - The NSPCC also have an FGM helpline, call free on 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk - Police: non-urgent calls call 101 or if in immediate danger, call 999
Endpoint assessment *5 min*	Ask students to revisit the baseline overheard conversation activity. Using a different colour pen, ask them to add any additional information they have learnt in response to each question. This will provide information about students' progress and identify any gaps in learning that still need to be addressed in future lessons. Give all students an opportunity to write something on a post-it note to add to the question box. This might be a something they learnt in the lesson, an unanswered question they have about the topic, or, if they want to tell you anything privately they can do so on this note. Remind students that if they want to talk to someone for more advice, to put their name on the paper. Ensure that the question box is checked at the end of this lesson. Any questions about the content should be followed up as soon as possible; in the following PSHE education lesson if not before. If any students have chosen to make a disclosure, ensure this is responded to immediately in line with the law, and the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures (see Teacher Guidance).
Extension activity	**Book report** Ask students to read Aneeta Prem's 'Cut flowers' and write a short book report, summarising what they learnt from the story.

"Freedom does vital work by helping to give schools the tools they need to ensure every girl has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and help pupils understand that violence against women and girls will not be tolerated."

Nicky Morgan



Get the book

The Freedom Charity lesson plans are designed to work in conjunction with the two books we have produced 'Cut Flowers' on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and 'But It's Not Fair' which focuses on Forced Marriage, both by Aneeta Prem.

As a school we can offer you a pack of 34 books, bookmarks and posters at a discounted rate of £180 inc . (list price for a copy of each book on our website and Amazon £6.99).

Freedom charity have delivered assemblies to over one hundred schools and staff and safeguarding training on dishonour crimes including, forced marriage, FGM and domestic abuse. We have had outstanding feedback from both pupils and staff. Ofsted have been invited to some of our Assemblies and we have been rated 'excellent'.

If you would like more copies or book an assembly and or safeguarding training for your school, please contact us at hello@freedomcharity.org.uk or call 07703 191 326 and speak to Vineeta or any one of the Freedom team.

PSHE Association Quality Assured Resource PSHE

Freedom Charity: Female Genital Mutilation

Resources

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PSHE Association Quality Assured Resource

Resource 1: Overheard conversations

Katie "Mum said that when she was young, there was a party for her and some other girls, but then they were cut."

Sophia "Cut? What do you mean?"

Katie "Their flowers were cut. You know, their womanhood? It sounded awful. I thought they were going to do it to my sister and me."

1. What does being 'cut' mean here?

2. Why might there have been a party?

3. What help might be available for Katie's mum, or the other girls?

4. What support might be available for Katie and her sister?

5. What questions might Katie and Sophia have?

Resource 2: Getting the facts straight

In the book Cut Flowers, the villagers say things about FGM that are not true.
What can Rose say to help them get their facts straight?

Villagers say...	Rose replies...
 Girls are clean once they've been cut.	
 It's completely safe, nothing can go wrong.	
 Being cut is part of becoming a woman.	
 The procedure ensures that a woman remains pure – a virgin until her wedding night.	

Resource 2a: Getting the Facts straight (teacher notes)

Girls are clean once they've been cut.	Rose might say: "The vagina keeps itself clean naturally and the vulva isn't dirty – it just needs gentle washing in the shower or bath."	**Notes:** *Normal hygiene practices keep the vulva and vagina clean. The body produces discharge so the vagina can stay clean and lubricated. FGM has no health or hygiene benefits. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and interferes with the natural functions of female bodies.*
It's completely safe, nothing can go wrong.	Rose might say: "It's not safe at all – it can cause lots of serious problems at the time and for the rest of the girl's life."	**Notes:** *There is a serious risk of blood loss during the procedure, serious infection following the procedure and longer-term complications including continued pain.*
Being cut is part of becoming a woman.	Rose might say: "FGM is a crime and most women don't experience it – it's nothing to do with becoming a woman."	**Notes:** *Whilst FGM may be practised in some communities, the vast majority do not experience FGM. It is a violation of human rights and often practised to control girls and women. Carrying out FGM is a serious crime punishable by imprisonment. A person who has experienced FGM is a victim of a crime – they are not in any trouble themselves. If FGM is prevented before someone undergoes it, then no crime has been committed. Seeking help will actually protect those involved in practising FGM from committing a serious crime.*
The procedure ensures that a woman remains pure – a virgin until her wedding night.	Rose might say: "FGM has nothing to do with virginity."	**Notes:** *FGM is nothing to do with virginity. It is not promoted in any religious texts. Many men are also equally outraged by this practice (for example, Kai in the book).*

Resource 2b: Rose's responses

"FGM has nothing to do with virginity."	**"FGM is a crime."**
"It's not safe at all - it can cause lots of serious problems at the time and for the rest of the girl's life."	**"The vagina keeps itself clean naturally and the vulva isn't dirty - it just needs gentle washing in the shower or bath."**
"It's nothing to do with becoming a woman."	**"Most women don't experience it."**

Resource 3: Scenarios (Cut Flowers)

Scenario 1.

While in another country, Katie tells her cousin Sweetpea that she thinks their family is going to force them both to undergo FGM.

Scenario 2.

Rose tells a colleague that she has undergone FGM and is suffering from the consequences as an adult.

Scenario 3.

Tony is worried that his sister might be forced to undergo FGM but isn't sure what he can do about it.

Scenario 4.

Before she goes on holiday, Katie tells her friend Sophia that she is worried about FGM.

Thank you

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