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#RelationshipReset Project

Student Charter for Action - Autumn 2024

As leaders in education, we are committed to providing safe and inclusive learning environments for all students. Sexual harassment is a serious issue that can have a detrimental impact on the well-being and academic success of children and young people. If we are to fulfil our mandate to promote and enhance social justice, young people must be educated in appropriate relationship behaviour.

This charter outlines our commitment and responsibility to address and prevent sexual harassment within our schools. By fostering a culture of respect, awareness and accountability, we strive to ensure that every student feels safe, valued and empowered to reach their full potential.

Creating a Safe and Supportive Environment

- Establish a zero-tolerance policy:** Develop and implement a comprehensive policy that clearly defines sexual harassment, emphasises zero tolerance and outlines the consequences for those who engage in such behaviour.
- Raise awareness:** Conduct regular awareness campaigns to educate students, staff, governors, Trustees and parents about sexual harassment, its impact, and how to prevent and report incidents. Foster open dialogue and provide resources for support. Education around sexual harassment should be a core part of the curriculum, expanded according to age.
- Promote a respectful culture:** Foster a culture that promotes respect, empathy and understanding among all members of the school community. Encourage positive relationships, healthy boundaries and mutual consent through ongoing discussions and educational programmes.
- Create an online support system:** Students can access this during holidays for support and help, anonymously if required.

Implementing Effective Reporting Procedures

- Provide multiple reporting channels:** Establish a variety of confidential (and anonymous) reporting channels, such as hotlines, online reporting systems, or trusted staff members, to ensure that students can report incidents safely and without fear of retaliation. Ensure that staff are well-trained in terms of preventing sexual harassment.
- Respond promptly and sensitively:** Develop clear guidelines for staff on how to respond to reports of sexual harassment. Ensure that all reports are treated seriously, investigated promptly and resolved in a sensitive and supportive manner. Ongoing feedback should be given to victims who must be treated with care and listened to. European rights of personal privacy must be adhered to.
- Support those subject to Sexual Harassment (SH):** Provide appropriate support and resources to survivors of SH, including access to counselling, medical services and legal assistance. Maintain confidentiality and prioritise the well-being of the survivor throughout the process. Ensure accessibility to trained mental health support workers for students. Ensure that those subject to SH retain control over the process post-reporting.

Staff Training and Development

- Provide comprehensive training:** Conduct regular training sessions for all staff members, including teachers, administrators and support staff, to raise awareness about sexual harassment, recognise warning signs, and understand their roles and responsibilities in prevention, challenge and intervention. Consider an action plan for student safety on the way to and from school.
- Foster a culture of reporting:** Encourage staff members to report any incidents or concerns related to sexual harassment promptly. Assure them that their reports will be taken seriously, and that appropriate action will be taken.
- Promote professional boundaries:** Educate staff about maintaining appropriate boundaries with students, ensuring that interactions are professional, respectful and free from any form of harassment.

Collaboration with Students, Parents and the Community

- Involve students in prevention efforts:** Engage student leaders and organisations in initiatives that promote respectful relationships, consent education and bystander intervention. Encourage student-led campaigns and empower them to be active participants in creating a safe school environment. Information around what to do if SH happens and how to respond.
- Partner with parents and carers:** Collaborate with parents and guardians to raise awareness through education and resources and to encourage open communication about sexual harassment prevention and the curriculum that is on offer to students. Seek their input and involvement in policy development and implementation. Work with parents should be culturally-appropriate, but resolute in tackling these sensitive issues.
- Engage the community:** Forge partnerships with local organisations, law enforcement agencies, and community leaders to strengthen prevention efforts, share best practices and ensure a holistic approach to addressing sexual harassment.

Conclusion

By adopting this charter, we, as school and Trust leaders, pledge to take proactive measures to prevent, challenge and address sexual harassment within our schools. We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive learning environment that promotes the dignity and well-being of all students.

Together, we will foster a culture of respect, empathy and accountability, ensuring that every student feels valued, protected and empowered to succeed.