

Notes to teachers about the Policy on Sexual Harassment.

10/01/13

If you observe questionable behaviour:

- If it is not already clear from pupils' reactions, quietly check to see if the behaviour is unwelcome.
- If possible, bring the two parties together without fuss. Point out why the behaviour is unacceptable and that it must stop.
- Ask for co-operation in solving the matter from the alleged harasser(s).
- Try to get an apology, if appropriate.
- Ensure the harasser is warned that victimisation or retaliation is a serious matter and will not be tolerated.
- If the behaviour appears unthinking rather than malicious and an apology is forthcoming, then it is probably not necessary to take the matter any further. Realise we are trying to improve social behaviour rather than find scapegoats for it. However, if the matter seems more serious, or if it appears that similar unacceptable behaviour has happened before, then the matter should be referred to a person delegated to respond to such matters. With that person decide whether the heads of the pupils' houses need to be informed at that stage.
- In either case warn the pupil who is complaining of the serious consequences of making any public unsubstantiated accusations.
- Document the incident and let one of the people designated to deal with such matters know about it.

If a pupil raises a problem of sexual Harassment with you:

- Take the complaint seriously, and confidentially. Put the pupil at ease, and allow a friend to be present as supporter or witness, if desired.
- If it seems a straightforward matter which you can handle yourself, then record the facts: who, what, where, when and how, (why is irrelevant); and ask if anyone else can substantiate them.
- Do not criticise the alleged harasser or give judgments.
- Find out what the pupil complaining would prefer as an outcome.
- Check for any concern about retaliation.
- If the matter seems to need merely an awakening of understanding and an apology, talk to the alleged harasser in confidence and arrange this. (Be sure you warn against retaliation).
- If a simple solution is not forthcoming, or if it seems more appropriate, discuss the issue immediately with one of the staff nominated to help in such matters, continuing to maintain strict confidentiality.

In any case document the incident and discuss with one of the people designated to deal with such matters, and give them a copy of the documentation for confidential storage.

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