**Sallygate Harmful Sexualised Behaviour Policy**

**1. Introduction**

At Sallygate, we are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students, particularly those with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. We recognise that some students may exhibit harmful sexualised behaviour (HSB) as a result of various factors, including trauma, neglect, exposure to inappropriate content, or unmet emotional needs. This policy outlines our approach to identifying, preventing, and responding to harmful sexualised behaviour in a way that is sensitive, non-judgmental, and ensures the safety and well-being of all students.

**2. Definition of Harmful Sexualised Behaviour**

Harmful sexualised behaviour (HSB) refers to sexualised actions, comments, or conduct that are inappropriate for a student's age or development level, and that can cause harm to others or are indicative of a lack of understanding about consent, appropriate boundaries, and respectful relationships. HSB may include, but is not limited to:

* **Sexual Comments or Innuendo:** Inappropriate or suggestive remarks, jokes, or gestures.
* **Sexual Touching or Physical Behaviour:** Unwanted or inappropriate touching or groping, even if it is not intended as a form of assault.
* **Exposure or Displaying Private Parts:** Deliberate exposure of sexual body parts to others or inappropriate actions in public or private spaces.
* **Sexualised Gestures or Mimicking Sexual Acts:** Repeated or inappropriate acts that mimic sexual activity, such as inappropriate role play or gestures.
* **Online Sexual Behaviour:** Sending or sharing sexually explicit material, images, or messages through digital platforms or social media.
* **Coercion or Manipulation:** Pressuring, encouraging, or coercing another student into sexualised behaviours or activities.

It is essential to understand that HSB can be exhibited by both victims and Culprits, and students may need support to understand appropriate boundaries and relationships.

**3. Scope**

This policy applies to all students, staff, and visitors at Sallygate, and is designed to guide the response to incidents of HSB that occur between students within the school setting.

**4. Causes and Context of Harmful Sexualised Behaviour in SEMH Students**

In SEMH settings, students may display harmful sexualised behaviours due to various underlying factors, such as:

* **Trauma or Abuse:** Students with histories of trauma, sexual abuse, or neglect may engage in sexualised behaviour as a result of emotional distress or to seek attention.
* **Exposure to Inappropriate Material:** Some students may have been exposed to inappropriate sexual content through media, online platforms, or peer interactions.
* **Lack of Understanding or Boundaries:** Many students with SEMH may struggle with understanding personal boundaries, consent, and appropriate relationships.
* **Social and Emotional Needs:** Inadequate social skills or challenges in managing emotions and relationships can lead to harmful sexualised behaviour.

**5. Responsibilities of Staff**

All staff at Sallygate have a duty to prevent, identify, and respond to harmful sexualised behaviour. Their responsibilities include:

* **Recognising the Signs:** Identifying signs of harmful sexualised behaviour, such as inappropriate language, physical actions, or distress in students.
* **Responding Appropriately:** Taking immediate action to stop any harmful behaviour, providing support to those involved, and reporting the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
* **Record and Report:** All incidents of harmful sexualised behaviour must be documented and reported according to the school’s safeguarding procedures.
* **Supporting the Victim and Culprit:** Offering appropriate emotional and pastoral support to both the victim and the student exhibiting harmful sexualised behaviour, as well as helping the student to understand the inappropriateness of their actions.

**6. Reporting and Responding to Harmful Sexualised Behaviour**

All incidents of harmful sexualised behaviour must be reported immediately. The following steps outline how such incidents will be managed:

1. **Immediate Action:**  
   If a student is found to be engaging in harmful sexualised behaviour, staff will:
   * Separate the students involved to ensure safety.
   * Reassure any victim(s) that their concerns will be taken seriously.
   * Report the incident to the DSL as soon as possible.
2. **Investigation and Risk Assessment:**  
   The DSL or safeguarding lead will conduct an initial investigation into the incident. A risk assessment will be carried out to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to protect all students involved. This includes:
   * Interviewing the students involved and any witnesses in a safe, non-confrontational manner.
   * Assessing whether the incident involves an immediate safeguarding concern.
   * Consulting with external agencies if necessary, including social services or the police.
3. **Support for the Victim:**  
   Victims of harmful sexualised behaviour will receive appropriate support, including:
   * Immediate safeguarding support to ensure their emotional and physical safety.
   * Ongoing pastoral and counselling support, as needed.
   * Clear communication with the victim and their family to ensure they understand the steps being taken to resolve the situation.
4. **Support for the Culprit:**  
   Students exhibiting harmful sexualised behaviour will also be offered support. This may include:
   * Counselling or therapy to address underlying emotional or psychological issues.
   * Restorative practices or behaviour management strategies, including educating the student about consent, boundaries, and respectful relationships.
   * Consequences may also be brought in line with behaviour policy.
   * In some cases, external referrals to specialist services may be necessary.
5. **Parental Involvement:**  
   Parents or guardians of both the victim and the Culprit will be informed as soon as possible. Meetings will be held to discuss the incident and agreed steps for support and resolution.

**7. Preventative Measures**

To prevent harmful sexualised behaviour, [School Name] will implement the following strategies:

* **Education and Awareness:**  
  Provide regular education to students about healthy relationships, boundaries, consent, and respectful behaviour. This will include:
  + PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) lessons.
  + Workshops and campaigns focused on respect, consent, and appropriate behaviour.
  + Teaching students about online safety, including the risks of sharing explicit content.
* **Staff Training:**  
  Ensure all staff are trained to identify and respond to harmful sexualised behaviour, with a particular focus on the needs of SEMH students and the impact of trauma.
* **Promoting Positive Behaviour:**  
  Encourage a school culture that values respect, kindness, and inclusion through initiatives such as peer mentoring, social skills groups, and restorative practices.
* **Monitoring and Early Intervention:**  
  Regularly monitor students' behaviour and provide early interventions for those displaying signs of harmful sexualised behaviour or other concerning patterns of behaviour.

**8. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and to ensure that the school is compliant with any new guidance or legal requirements. Incidents of harmful sexualised behaviour will be tracked and trends reviewed, ensuring that preventative measures are adjusted as necessary.

**9. Legal Framework and Compliance**

This policy is in line with the following legal frameworks and guidance:

* **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023** (UK)
* **Children Act 1989 and 2004**
* **The Equality Act 2010**
* **Sexual Offences Act 2003**
* **The Protection of Children Act 1999**
* **The Children and Families Act 2014**

**10. Conclusion**

Sallygate School is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment where all students feel secure. We take all incidents of harmful sexualised behaviour seriously and will respond swiftly and sensitively. Our approach ensures that both victims and Culprits are supported, and that the well-being of all students is our priority.

Agreed December 2024

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