Maria International School of Bucharest

Resilience Respect Compassion Integrity Responsibility

Equal Opportunities Policy

Our Mission

We provide a learning experience and environment at Maria International that fosters creativity and excellence. Whilst providing supportive, stimulating and relevant lessons and resources within the context of the British style international curriculum.

Our school will be a caring place where adults and children are valued equally. Our aim is to create an environment where children and the whole school community will be inspired to be resilient, respectful, compassionate and act with integrity.

Our children will learn to respect themselves and others in an atmosphere of high expectations where they are nurtured and dare to make mistakes

We will strive to create opportunities for students to have a well-rounded school and learning experience, where they can develop critical thinking skills and work in collaboration with others.

Our Values

Resilience - We will handle adversity and problems with a mentality that enables us to keep going and do better.

Respect - We treat others with dignity, empathy and equality through our words and actions.

Compassion - We are kind, caring and will help everyone to be the best they can be.

Integrity - We are open, honest and act with good morals and ethics in all situations.

Responsibility - We ensure our own work, learning and duties are completed in a timely manner and to a high standard

Rationale

Maria International recognises the important influence that schools and educators have on those being educated and also affects the broader attitudes of society. It is therefore important to Maria International to promote and nurture the correct attitudes. This means that as a member of the Maria International community we acknowledge that every person in society is unique and has characteristics that can be more or less visibly different from another individual in the same society, these differences can be an issue of personal sensitivity. However, regardless of these differences, we expect that all members of society be treated with equal respect, sensitivity and are equally entitled to access the facilities, resources and opportunities available within and through the school.

It is expected that this Equal Opportunities policy is signed upon enrolment at Maria International and should be read and used with other Maria International Policies and Key Documents such as:

- Maria International Staff Handbook
- Maria International Parent/Student Handbook
- Maria International Complaints and Concerns Policy
- Maria International Terms and Conditions
- All relevant EU and Romanian legislation

Aims

At Maria International, it is our objective to educate, prepare and develop all in our community, especially our students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality, and culture. We expect that our students and staff contribute fully to creating a respectful, tolerant, caring and happy environment and this can be done by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals.

It is Maria International's aim to equip our students with an education that helps them understand and encourage diversity so that they can appreciate and value any culture that they happen to be in. It is also important that our students value the different aspects that diversity can bring to a culture and that we should encourage and support those who are different from ourselves, and who may be self-conscious of those differences.

This Equal Opportunities Policy intends to lay out the clear expectations put forth by Maria International in regards to Equal Opportunities for all members of our diverse community to ensure that all have equal access to the variety of opportunities available and details the specific responsibilities of staff in ensuring that these expectations are met.

Expectations

At Maria International we have fundamental expectations that all must adhere to, which include the following:

- Every member of the school community is entitled to certain rights. These include equality of access to facilities, resources and opportunities available within the school.
- No person should be discriminated against on the grounds of:
    - Age
    - Appearance;
    - Ethnicity
    - Nationality;
    - Cultural Background,

  - Social Background
  - Family Background;
  - Mother Tongue or Accent;
  - Religious Beliefs;
  - Gender
  - Sexual Orientation;
  - Ability
  - Disability.
- All students have the right to study in a safe and non-threatening environment.
- It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to maintain a happy environment, conducive to work and progress.
- Teasing or bullying is not tolerated.
- All members of the school community have the right to raise concerns about any aspect of school life.
  - This may be done through the Student Council, Class Parent Representatives or the PTA, or by talking to the Class Teacher/Form Tutor, Head of Key Stage or Headteacher. Serious matters will always be referred to the Headteacher.
- All members of the school community must ensure that the well-being of others is never compromised, either by design or carelessness.
- No person should endanger the health and safety of either themselves or others.
- All communication within the school, including in lessons, should be conducted in a polite and civilised manner.

Roles

All members of the Maria International community are expected to comply with the Equal Opportunities Policy at all times. Failure to comply with the Equal Opportunities Policy will result in sanctions for students or disciplinary action for staff, in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

Any member of the community who considers that there has been a breach of these expectations should follow the procedures laid out in the Concerns & Complaints Policy, and appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the school's policies.

Staff

Members of the Maria International staff have a significant role to play in ensuring equality and equal opportunities throughout the school, therefore:

- Every member of staff, teaching or non-teaching, should remember that they have a valued contribution to make to the life of Maria International and its community.

- All staff must be aware of the dangers of allowing stereotypes to influence their expectations and must ensure that all pupils are offered equal opportunities.
- All staff must ensure that there is no racial, gender, religious or other bias in their expectations of students, parents or colleagues.
- All staff must ensure that there is no racial, gender, religious or other bias in the opportunities they offer to students.
- Curriculum planning is monitored to ensure there is no racial, gender, religious or other bias in subjects, content and timetabling.
- Current resources and new acquisitions are monitored to ensure the promotion of a positive image regarding race, gender, religion and special need.
- Students of differing abilities are included fully within the activities of the school, but their individual needs may be accommodated through differentiation in mainstream classes or through additional learning support.
- Professional Development of any staff member should enrich the resources of the school as a whole and is to be encouraged and supported wherever possible.

Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to model the above-stated practices and expectations and ensure that these standards are met throughout the school and its community.

In the instance of a formal complaint being lodged, the Headteacher will conduct a fair and impartial investigation and impose appropriate sanctions in accordance with the Complaints and Concerns Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy and other related key documents and policies.

Review and Evaluation

This policy is to be renewed, evaluated and appropriately updated annually by the Maria International leadership team and Head Teacher.

Date of next review: 15/08/2025

Prepared/Updated by: Yara Barsoum **Date**: 26/11/2024

Approved by: Nicholette Vicol **Date**: 28/11/24

This policy is to be reviewed **annually** and updated as and when relevant changes occur.