

## **Millfield English Language Holiday Courses (MELHC) Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **Statement of intent**

MELHC is a co-educational Easter and summer school for pupils 6 – 17. It is pleased to welcome pupils from many different nationalities, cultural and social backgrounds and of differing levels of English language ability.

### **Our mission**

- To support and nurture individual pupils with diverse needs to develop confidence and resilience through a wide range of opportunities
- To serve our pupils by establishing a dynamic, international learning community based on diligence, mutual respect and understanding
- To achieve these goals by drawing on the richness of the school environment and its people, the broader MELHC community and by encouraging each pupil to achieve their highest standards in all aspects of life
- We are committed to a positive policy of promoting equal opportunities for all pupils and members of staff.

### **We aim to**

- Ensure that pupils and staff recognise that discrimination on the basis of colour, culture, origin, religion, age, sex, sexuality or ability is not acceptable.
- Provide a happy and caring environment in which all pupils and staff feel safe enough to express and question views. To work towards the elimination of discrimination and harassment by promoting positive attitudes to encourage respect and appreciation of each person as an individual.
- Ensure that all pupils and staff feel valued and supported.
- Ensure that the principles and practice of equal opportunities apply to all members of the school community: pupils; teaching and non-teaching staff; group leaders and visitors.
- Educate, develop and prepare all our pupils for life whatever their gender, colour, origin, culture, religion or ability.

### **Discrimination**

All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously, as such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist or other discriminatory symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden at MELHC. Staff are asked to be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes and behaviour. Lessons should be planned with care to avoid bias (whether explicit or implicit). Teachers must consider possible discrimination in planning schemes of work and will pay special attention to topics which are likely to be sensitive.

### **Disability**

MELHC welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities offered and can flourish in its caring environment and improve their English. We are firmly committed to inclusivity and to giving every pupil the best possible opportunities. Treating every pupil as an individual is central to our mission. We welcome pupils with special educational needs or with physical disabilities and will comply with our legal and moral responsibilities.

### **Culture, class and race**

MELHC is proud of the fact that pupils and staff come from diverse cultural, social and racial backgrounds. We endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help to promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony.

- We will take positive action to enable every individual to raise his/her self-esteem, expectations and achievement.
- We will relax our usual rules on dress to allow special forms of dress where these are an essential part of a religious or cultural background.
- We value the contribution of our multicultural community and seek to express this in the life of the school.
- We seek to counter negative, patronising and stereotyped views.
- We will not tolerate racist behaviour.

### **Gender**

We encourage staff and pupils to avoid stereotyping. We will not accept bullying or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. We are committed to providing a curriculum which gives equality of access for boys and girls.

## **Religion**

We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith; others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of, and respect for, the beliefs and practices of others.

## **Staff appointments**

A 'Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy' is in place which aims to produce a recruitment process without any direct or indirect discrimination. At interview discriminatory questions will be avoided. In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on professional criteria and the requirements of the job description/person specification. The principles of equal treatment guide the way we induct, train, promote and generally manage all our employees.

## **Awareness of policy**

Staff, parents and pupils will be made aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities and that the school has an equal opportunities policy. This will be made clear to staff and new students at their induction into the school.

## **Procedures for dealing with discrimination or prejudice**

All cases of discrimination or prejudice at MELHC will be taken seriously and dealt with, as appropriate, according to existing sanction procedures (as set out in the 'Anti-bullying Policy' for example). Any member of the school (staff or student) acting in a manner contrary to the letter or spirit of this policy will be made aware of the unacceptable nature of his/her behaviour.

If the behaviour is regarded as pre-meditated, severe or regular pupils/staff will be subject to disciplinary procedures. In extreme circumstances suspension/dismissal will be considered. In other cases students will be seen by their House Parent and staff will be spoken to by their Line Manager or a senior member of staff. Their conversations will aim to encourage change in a supportive manner and reinforce the principles of this policy.

## **Complaints**

If a pupil considers that they have been subjected to discrimination which is in conflict with the policy, they, their parent, or guardian should follow our complaints procedure as set out in the 'Complaints Procedure Policy', a copy of which will be available on request. This will involve an initial 'informal' resolution approach. If the difficulty is not resolved, a formal complaint can be made to the Director of Holiday Courses and Events. Any member of staff who considers that they have been subjected to discrimination which is in conflict with the policy should register a complaint with their Line Manager.



### **Monitoring and review**

All staff, and especially those with management responsibility, have an obligation to ensure that the policy is both known and implemented throughout MELHC.