

## The Equality Act and Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act became law in 2010. It covers everyone in Britain and protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Everyone in Britain is protected. This is because the Equality Act protects people against discrimination because of the protected characteristics that we all have. Under the Equality Act, there are nine Protected Characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage or civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion or belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

Under the Equality Act you are protected from discrimination:

- When you are in the workplace
- When you use public services like healthcare (for example, visiting your doctor or local hospital) or education (for example, at your school or college)
- When you use businesses and other organisations that provide services and goods (like shops, restaurants, and cinemas)
- When you use transport
- When you join a club or association (for example, your local sports club)
- When you have contact with public bodies like your local council or government departments

We use the British values and the protected characteristics in the Equality Act as a framework to prevent discrimination of any kind in our community and explicitly teach our students to report any discrimination to a trusted adult immediately.

**The 9 Protected Characteristics are actively promoted at Nether Stowe School through:**

- Our school vision and values
- Our Prouder way principles in particular Relationships and Respect
- Our consistent behaviour routines and norms
- Our student leadership programme
- Our Community Conversations with united leaders during Community Lunch
- Our 'We ARE Nether Stowe' curriculum and explicit teaching of, British values and the equality act
- Our wider curriculum areas
- Our wider opportunities for external speakers, workshops and external visits
- Our student voice, staff voice and family voice.



# The Equality Act 2010

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their:

## Age

Age discrimination is when you are treated differently because of how old you are. The treatment could be a one-off action or as a result of a rule or policy based on age. Young people, as well as older people, face age discrimination.



## Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marriage is a union between two people, it can either be between a man and a woman, or between partners of the same sex. Couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships' as an alternative to marriage.

## Religion and Belief

Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

## Disability

Disability means a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, this may or may not be visible. It is discrimination to be treated unfairly because of your disability.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy refers to when someone is expecting a baby; maternity is the period following the birth. It is unlawful to treat a woman unfavourably because of her pregnancy, a pregnancy-related illness, breastfeeding in a public place, or because of maternity leave.

## Sex

Sex can mean either male or female according to the Equality Act 2010. You must not be discriminated against because you are or are not a particular sex or because someone thinks you are the opposite sex. The latter is known as discrimination by perception.



## Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment means proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a process to reassign your sex. To be protected from gender reassignment discrimination, you do not need to have undergone any medical treatment or surgery.

## Race

Race is your skin colour, your nationality/citizenship or your ethnic/national origins, which may not be the same as your current nationality. Race also covers ethnic and racial groups, which can be made up of two or more distinct racial groups, for example black Britons.



## Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is an attraction towards persons of the opposite sex, persons of the same sex or persons of either sex. It is also called discrimination by perception to be discriminated against because someone thinks you have a particular sexual orientation.

If you are concerned about discrimination please speak with your trusted adult and contact a member of the safeguarding team.