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## Equality



# Bishop Perowne

Church of England College

## Endeavour Forever

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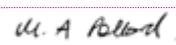
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This document is a controlled document authorized for release once all signatures have been obtained or has been approved for release at either a Full Governing Board meeting or relevant sub-committee meeting. Approval of this document constitutes approval of the content as described herein.

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## 1 OVERVIEW

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### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out Bishop Perowne Church of England College's commitment to equality and inclusion, and how the College intends to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

### 1.2 Scope

The Equalities Policy brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality and equal opportunities. It includes all protected characteristics governed under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against, or to devalue, any individuals within our community.

This Equality Policy replaces previous College Equality policies including:

- Race Relations Policy
- Disability Equality Scheme

### 1.3 Related documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- DfE guidance for schools on the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
- EQUALITY ACT 2010 - ADVICE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS, SCHOOL STAFF, GOVERNING BODIES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES
- Every Child Matters Agenda.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Ofsted Inspection Schedule 2012
- Monitoring Racist and Bullying Incidents Guidance 2010
- School community cohesion audit
- Accessibility Plan
- The following College Policies: Admissions Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Attendance Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Curriculum Policy and Pupil Premium Policy.

### 1.4 Reviews

This policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises.

### 1.5 Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 the College is obliged not to discriminate against people on the basis of age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and the Governing Body believes that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil or any other connected party and it helps to promote equality at the College.

## 2 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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### 2.1 Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Head teacher to ensure all College personnel and visitors to the College are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- nominated a link governor to visit the College regularly, to liaise with the Head teacher and the coordinator and to report back to the Governing Body;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

### 2.2 Role of the head teacher

The Head teacher will:

- ensure all College personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the link governor and coordinator;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;

### 2.3 Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- be aware of this policy;
- be encouraged to take an active role in the life of the College by attending:
  - parents and open evenings
  - fundraising and social events

## 3 POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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### 3.1 Aims

This policy aims to:

- To introduce and put into practice the Equality Act 2010 that combines and builds upon the existing legislation covering discrimination and promotion of equality of opportunity.
- To treat everyone equally irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other protected characteristic.
- To minimise the distress and disruption to those pupils and College staff who are transgender.
- To achieve the highest standards of teaching and learning for all children irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other protected characteristic.
- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our college and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

### 3.2 Mission Statement

At Bishop Perowne Church of England College we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the College, irrespective of **race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and age**. We will adhere to the legal definitions of these protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (please refer to Annex A).

We aim to develop and maintain a culture of inclusion and diversity, in which all those connected with the College feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in College life.

The achievement of students will be monitored by race, sex, age and disability and we will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination through our positive approach to equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We believe that our diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

### 3.3 College Context

Bishop Perowne is an average sized 11-16 Church of England academy serving the Diocese of Worcester and offering a broad and balanced curriculum centred on a robust core of traditional GCSE subjects. The College has equally high expectations of all students and is committed to encouraging and enabling all students to achieve the highest standards. We work to raise standards for all students. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of students raises standards across the whole College.

### 3.4 Recruitment process

We are an Equal Opportunities employer and we adhere to the principles of equal opportunity in all aspects of the recruitment process.

We welcome applications for vacant posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

### 3.5 Complaints

The complaints procedures will be used to deal with any discriminatory complaint from any member of the college staff.

Any case of harassment will be dealt with by the college's disciplinary procedure.

### 3.6 Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

Whilst the College operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice (detailed in this policy) more specific actions are set out in the Raising Attainment Plan, self-evaluation document and the Accessibility Plans.

#### 3.6.1 Teaching and learning

Bishop Perowne aims to provide all our students with opportunities to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps, including providing targeted support where appropriate;
- Take account of the achievements of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the College's population and local community which do not stereotype but which do expose students to a range of thoughts and ideas;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and also to celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and their impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches which are inclusive of our diverse range of students;

- Seek to involve the community around the College in celebrating and raising awareness of cultural diversity;
- Monitor and evaluate the College's effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for students from all racial groups and attendance.

### **3.6.2 Admissions and exclusions**

Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate with reference to the Protected Characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and neither does the College discriminate with reference to socio-economic factors, subject to the following permitted exceptions set out in the College's Admissions Policy:

- that as a Church of England school the College may give priority in admissions to students on religious grounds; and
- the College allocates up to 20 Year 7 places each academic year to students who can be identified as being able to benefit from teaching in the performing Arts or who demonstrate a particular capacity to succeed in this subject.

The College's admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered consistently and fairly. Exclusions will always be based on the College's Behaviour Management Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any disproportionaate lity is identified and dealt with.

Strategies for integrating long term truants and excluded students address the needs of students from all racial groups. Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance; this includes staff as well as students. Student attendance is monitored by ethnicity.

## **3.7 Equality of Opportunity for Staff**

### **3.7.1 Equality of Opportunity for Staff**

Bishop Perowne is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the College reflects the diversity of our community.

### **3.7.2 Employer duties**

As an employer we will ensure that we eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment in our employment practice and advance equality across all groups within our workforce. Everyone involved in recruitment and selection is trained and aware of what they should do to avoid unconscious discrimination.

Aspects of Equality (age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity and religion and belief) are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating

Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions do not unlawfully discriminate against any person.

Actions we will take to ensure that this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Providing continued professional development opportunities for all staff, which are monitored as part of the performance management process;
- Provision of Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

### **3.7.3 Equality and the Law**

Bishop Perowne will ensure it does not unlawfully discriminate against its students, prospective students, staff, job applicants, or parents / carers in the performance of its duties or in applying its policies and practices.

Unlawful Discrimination involves treating someone less (or more) favourably than a “comparator”. Harassment (which is a form of discrimination) means violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Victimisation involves treating a person less favourably because of a previous complaint. We recognise that discrimination can occur in the following ways and will actively work to alleviate it;

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from disability including failure to make reasonable adjustments and provide auxiliary aids and services.
- Harassment
- Victimisation

### **3.7.4 Accessibility**

Bishop Perowne Church of England College will comply with the Building Regulations and the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 and will ensure that our College is as physically accessible as possible to students who have a disability.

To ensure wider accessibility we will:

- Increase the extent to which students who have a disability can access the College’s curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of the College to increase the extent to which students who have a disability can access education and associated services;
- Improve access for students who have a disability to written information which the College provides. This will be done within a reasonable period of time and in formats which take account of the views expressed by students and their parents / carers about their preferred means of communication.

We will review our accessibility targets at least every three years. The targets can be found in the Accessibility Plan.

We will work actively to anticipate the needs of staff and students who have a disability and will ensure their inclusion by making reasonable adjustments. When considering whether a request for a reasonable adjustment can be met we will consider the following factors:

- How effective the change will be in assisting the disabled person
- Its practicality
- The cost
- The resources and size of College
- The availability of any financial support
- Any safety issues

### 3.7.5 Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to students and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole College.

The procedure for responding and reporting is outlined over the page:

Stage 1 - Incident

Any person who experiences, witnesses or is reasonably led to believe that this Policy has not been respected, should immediately bring the situation to the attention of the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will delegate responsibility for investigating the incident to an appropriate senior member of staff (section 6 below). The person responsible for the incident will be reminded of the existence and purpose of this Policy, have their behavior challenged and shall be requested to adhere to this policy.

Response to victim and family

Response to perpetrator and family

Stage 3

The offending person has the right to appeal. He/she can write to the Headteacher. The decision of the Headteacher will be final.

Incident form to be completed and filed.

Incidents to be reported to Governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

Stage 2



*Action taken to address issue with year group / College if necessary e.g. through circle time/assembly/morning meeting. If the person continues to behave in an unacceptable manner, the matter will be referred to a member of SLT who will decide the next course of action which might include a warning being issued, a disciplinary or referral to a higher level of authority.*

### 3.7.6 The general and public sector equality duties

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single equality duty for all public bodies, including schools. This Duty replaced previous Equality Duties and applies in respect of all Protected Characteristics– age, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief. The Equality Duty has three aims. It states that the College will, in the discharge of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Bishop Perowne Church of England College will tackle discrimination by:

- recording and reporting all racist incidents and prejudice related bullying incidents;
- ensuring that all incidents reported are dealt with following the procedure set out under Section 4 above and, where appropriate, pursuant to the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Management Policy.

Bishop Perowne Church of England College is committed to advancing equality of opportunity by:

- utilising to maximum benefit the Pupil Premium funding received from the Government in respect of those students for whom it has been received;
- removing or minimising disadvantage with the assistance of the Pupil Premium where appropriate;
- taking steps to identify and meet the needs of students, parents/carers and staff that are particularly disadvantaged;
- encouraging participation in any activity in which participation of protected groups is disproportionately low.

Bishop Perowne Church of England College will foster good relations by:

- tackling prejudice and harassment including bullying;
- promoting understanding between students from different backgrounds; and
- encouraging all parents/carers to participate in the life of the College.

Bishop Perowne Church of England College will ensure that a clear procedure is in place to enable all students and staff to report any incidents which are of concern. All staff will be encouraged to consider dealing with such incidents as a vital aspect of well-being for the whole College.

In addition to the general Equality Duty schools are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which was introduced by subsequent Equality Regulations. The PSED sets out requirements for public bodies (including schools) to set and publish equality objectives and publish information which will demonstrate how the College is complying with the aims of the Equality Duty and meeting the objectives it has set.

In order to comply with the requirements of the PSED we will:

### **1. Collect and publish College equality information annually (from 6th April 2012)**

Bishop Perowne will undertake routine equality monitoring of our students by race, gender, age and disability across a number of areas including admissions, exclusions, progress and attainment.

Bishop Perowne will also undertake routine equality monitoring of our staff. We will collect (and for schools with 150+ staff, publish) the following workforce information;

- The number of part-time/full-time staff and analysis of race, gender, disability, and age distribution
- Gender pay gap information
- Grievances and dismissals

Bishop Perowne will publish College equality information annually as part of the Head teachers report to governors in the summer term and on the College website.

## **2. Undertake engagement activity with protected groups annually**

Bishop Perowne will undertake engagement activity annually with protected groups to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new and the review of existing policies.

Engagement activity will include:

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Youth forums and College council
- Parents evenings

This is not an exhaustive list.

## **3. Identify and publish College equality and accessibility objectives by 6th April 2012 and on an annual basis thereafter**

Bishop Perowne Church of England College will develop specific and measurable equality and accessibility objectives based on the evidence gathered and published and the engagement in which we have been involved. Objectives will meet the three aims of the general Equality duty.

The equality and accessibility objectives will be reviewed regularly

Every three years we will draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall College improvement plan and self evaluation process; this will set out the specific equality and accessibility objectives we will pursue.

We will report annually on progress towards achieving them.

## **3.8 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.8.1 The role of governors**

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy and will continue to do all it can to ensure that the College is fully inclusive and meets the needs of both students and prospective students.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that no-one seeking employment at the College will be subject to any kind of unlawful discrimination. It will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the College

environment is accessible to adults and children who have disabilities. It will strive to make College communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and students.

- The governing body will ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our College on account of any of the protected characteristics, and ensures that all reasonable adjustments are made for disabled students.

The governing body is liable for any breaches of Equality legislation. It is also liable for the actions of its employees and agents of the College, unless it can show that it took all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation taking place.

### **3.8.2 The role of the Head Teacher**

- The Head Teacher is responsible, with the support of the governing body, for the implementation of the College's Equality Policy.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy and their responsibilities within it, and that teaching and non teaching staff are given appropriate training and support to apply this Policy fairly in all situations.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this Policy, so that no-one is discriminated against in respect of employment or training opportunities.
- The Head Teacher will promote Equality principles and standards when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of College life.
- The Head Teacher will consider all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, as matters of grave concern
- The Head Teacher will ensure a record is kept of all racist incidents and prejudice related bullying incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of such incidents at the College and how the College dealt with them. This data will be reviewed termly and action will be taken to reduce incidents.

### **3.8.3 The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching**

A senior member of staff has day to day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of this policy and for monitoring outcomes. S/he will have expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act.

- All staff will ensure that all students and members of staff are treated fairly, equally and with respect and will promote and maintain awareness of the College's Equality Policy.
- All staff will maintain the highest expectations of success for all students.
- All staff will support different groups of students in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may find aspects of academic learning difficult.
- All staff will keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.
- All staff will monitor teaching and curriculum developments to ensure high expectations of all students and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the College and the wider community.
- All staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom.

- All staff will strive to provide curriculum material which includes positive images and challenges stereotypical images and assumptions.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of bullying, prejudice, racism or homophobia, and will record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Head Teacher.
- All staff are trained to identify and to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice
- All staff will foster a positive atmosphere of respect and trust among students from all ethnic groups.
- Teachers will support the work of ancillary or support staff and support and encourage positive intervention in respect of any discriminatory incidents.
- Staff are personally responsible for acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation which they carry out during their employment.
- Visitors and contractors will be made aware of and comply with the College's Equality Policy.

### **3.9 Review of progress and impact**

Bishop Perowne Church of England College has a rolling programme for reviewing our College policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Policy annually and monitor our equality and accessibility objectives annually as part of College improvement planning.

We make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track student progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

## 4 RAISING AWARENESS OF THIS POLICY

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This policy is a public document and will be made available to any interested stakeholder.

### 4.1 Promoting Awareness

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- The College website [www.bishopperowne.co.uk](http://www.bishopperowne.co.uk)
- Meetings with College personnel and volunteers
- Reports such as the annual report to parents and Head teacher reports to the Governing Body

### 4.2 Training

All College personnel:

- Receive training on induction which specifically covers:
  - All aspects of this policy
  - Ethos
  - Equal opportunities
  - Inclusion
  - Anti-bullying
  - Assessment
  - Curriculum
  - Pupil Behaviour & Discipline
  - Sex and Relationships
  - Teaching and Learning
- Receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information;
- Receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

### 4.3 Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises.

## 5 GLOSSARY

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Glossary of terms used within this policy and procedure document. For the full Glossary of terms used at Bishop Perowne CE College, please refer to the document “REF-02 Glossary of Terms”.

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## 6 APPENDIX A - PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

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The protected characteristics for the Colleges provisions are:

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are NOT protected characteristics for the Colleges provisions, but do apply to staff.

### **Disability**

A person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has what the law calls 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause.

In relation to physical impairment:

- Conditions that affect the body such as arthritis, hearing or sight impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses), diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, conditions such as HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered.
- HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis are covered from the point of diagnosis.
- Severe disfigurement (such as scarring) is covered even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided the long-term requirement is met (see below).
- People who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist, are automatically treated as disabled under the Act.

Mental impairment includes conditions such as dyslexia and autism as well as learning disabilities such as Down's syndrome and mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia. The other tests to apply to decide if someone has the protected characteristic of disability are:

- The length the effect of the condition has lasted or will continue: it must be long term. 'Long term' means that an impairment is likely to last for the rest of the person's life, or has lasted at least 12 months or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months. If the person no longer has the condition but it is likely to recur or if the person no longer has the condition, they will be considered to be a disabled person.

- Whether the effect of the impairment is to make it more difficult and/or time-consuming for a person to carry out an activity compared to someone who does not have the impairment, and this causes more than minor or trivial inconvenience.
- If the activities that are made more difficult are ‘normal day-to-day activities’ at work or at home.
- Whether the condition has this impact without taking into account the effect of any medication the person is taking or any aids or assistance or adaptations they have, like a wheelchair, walking stick, assistance dog or special software on their computer. The exception to this is the wearing of glasses or contact lenses where it is the effect while the person is wearing the glasses or contact lenses, which is taken into account.

For example:



*Someone who has ADHD might be considered to have a disability even if their medication controls their condition so well that they rarely experience any symptoms, if without the medication the ADHD would have long-term adverse effects.*

Progressive conditions and those with fluctuating or recurring effects are included, such as depression, provided they meet the test of having a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### **Gender reassignment**

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with.

This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or, as is more likely for College students, it may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.

A person will be protected because of gender reassignment where they:

- make their intention known to someone – it does not matter who this is, whether it is someone at College or at home or someone like a doctor:
  - once they have proposed to undergo gender reassignment they are protected, even if they take no further steps or they decide to stop later on
  - they do not have to have reached an irrevocable decision that they will undergo gender reassignment, but as soon as there is a manifestation of this intention they are protected
- start or continue to dress, behave or live (full-time or part-time) according to the gender they identify with as a person
- undergo treatment related to gender reassignment, such as surgery or hormone therapy, or
- have received gender recognition under the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

It does not matter which of these applies to a person for them to be protected because of the characteristic of gender reassignment.

This guidance uses the term ‘transsexual person’ to refer to someone who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

The Act lists pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic. Pregnancy and maternity discrimination is covered in Section 2.

### **Race**

Race means a person’s:

- colour, and/or
- nationality (including citizenship), and/or
- ethnic or national origin

and a racial group is composed of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

A person has the protected characteristic of race if they belong to a particular racial group, such as ‘British people’.

Racial groups can comprise two or more racial groups such as ‘British Asians’.

### **Religion or belief**

The protected characteristic of religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.

A religion need not be mainstream or well known to gain protection as a religion. It must, though, be identifiable and have a clear structure and belief system. Denominations or sects within religions may be considered a religion. Cults and new religious movements may also be considered religions or beliefs.

Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.

‘Religious belief’ goes beyond beliefs about and adherence to a religion or its central articles of faith and may vary from person to person within the same religion.

A belief which is not a religious belief may be a philosophical belief, such as humanism or atheism.

A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their life or perceives the world.

For a belief to be protected by the Equality Act:

- It must be genuinely held.
- It must be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on information available at the moment.
- It must be a belief as to a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.
- It must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance.

- It must be worthy of respect in a democratic society.
- It must be compatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

### **Sex**

A person's sex refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to either boys or girls.

### **Sexual orientation**

Sexual orientation means the attraction a person feels towards one sex or another (or both), which determines who they form intimate relationships with or are attracted to.

- Some people are only attracted to those of the same sex (lesbian women and gay men).
- Some people are attracted to people of both sexes (bisexual people).
- Some people are only attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual people).

Everyone is protected from being treated worse because of sexual orientation, whether they are bisexual, gay, lesbian or heterosexual.

Sexual orientation discrimination also covers discrimination connected with manifestations of that sexual orientation.



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