

The Equality Act (2010)

The Equality Act (2010) was introduced to combine the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Previously public bodies were bound by these three sets of duties to promote disability, race and gender equality. In April 2011 these were replaced by a single public sector equality duty (known as the PSED or the equality duty). This new duty extends to all the aspects of a person's identity that are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

These are known as protected characteristics and are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

General Duty

Public bodies including schools and settings have a general duty to have due regard when making decisions and developing policies:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- To foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Specific Duty

To help schools and maintained EYFS settings in England meet the general equality duty, there are two specific duties that they are required to carry out. These are:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives.