

St Mary's University
Research & Literature Summary

Title and Author

Equality Act 2010 - Government Equalities Office (GOV.UK)

Further reading: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)

Summary

- Stands to legally protect individuals and groups from discrimination in both organisations and wider society;
- Passed into law in 2010, replacing previous acts focusing on discrimination, and providing greater clarity around unlawful discriminatory behaviours;
- Outlines nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation;
- Sets out a framework defining direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- Includes protection from discrimination for those perceived to have or those associated with someone with a protected characteristic;
- Introduced notion of 'positive action' to allow organisations to promote equality of opportunity for individuals with protected characteristics;
- Subsequently introduced the Equality Duty in 2011, which set out public bodies' responsibility to consider individuals with all protected characteristics and none in their daily actions.

Key Considerations for Practice

- Schools must consider how individuals in their settings are protected from harassment, discrimination and victimisation;
- Teachers need to develop cultures of belonging, respect and understanding in their classrooms and consider how the rights of all individuals are promoted;
- Teachers and leaders must consider a school-wide approach to implementing effective policies and practices in response to the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Prompts for Professional Dialogue and Reflection

- What evidence is there of the Equality Act 2010 in your setting?
- How do you promote equality, fairness and respect in your professional practice?
- How do you address unconscious bias and stereotypes in education?
- What strategies for belonging and inclusion do you see in practice and what is their impact on individual learners and wider school culture?
- How is representation addressed in your school setting and what is the impact on individual learners and wider school culture?
- What are your next steps for developing your enactment of the values and attitudes promoted by the Equality Act 2010?
- What other reading has informed your understanding of the Equality Act 2010?