

Butlers Hill Infant and Nursery School



Protected Characteristics: A Parent and Carer Guide

Introduction

At Butlers Hill Infant and Nursery School, we are committed to creating a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment. This booklet explains what protected characteristics are, why they matter, and what they might look like in everyday school life. Our approach is guided by the Equality Act 2010, which sets out how schools must prevent discrimination and promote equality.



age



race



disability



religion



relationships



gender



present yourself



who we love



having baby

What Are Protected Characteristics?

Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity that are protected by law. This means it is unlawful to treat someone unfairly because of any of these characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment (presenting yourself)
- Marriage and civil partnership (relationships)
- Pregnancy and maternity (having a baby)
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation (who we love)

*The brackets are the simplified terms for our infants.

All the protected characteristics are important in helping children learn about fairness, respect and diversity which links in to our school ethos.

Why Are Protected Characteristics Important in School?

Children learn best when they feel safe, included and respected. Teaching children about protected characteristics helps to:

- Promote kindness and understanding
- Prevent bullying
- Prepare children for life in modern Britain
- Meet our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

We aim to help pupils understand differences in an age-appropriate, sensitive and factual way.



Age

In a primary school, age mainly relates to how children are treated fairly across year groups or through child - adult interactions.

In practice, this means:

- Clear, consistent rules that apply to all pupils and that are consistent throughout school
- Activities and expectations suited to children's ages and stages
- Respectful behaviour between older and younger pupils



Race

Race includes skin colour, nationality, ethnicity and cultural background.

In practice, this means:

- Celebrating a wide range of cultures and traditions
- Challenging stereotypes
- Ensuring curriculum materials reflect diversity and that this is reflecting / celebrated around school



Disability

A disability may be physical, sensory, learning-related or linked to mental health.

In practice, this means:

- Reasonable adjustments so children can access learning (e.g. adapted resources or extra support)
- Inclusive classrooms where children learn that everyone has different strengths
- Teaching pupils not to use hurtful language and to show understanding of how words can have consequences



Religion or Belief

People may follow different religions, have other beliefs, or have no religion.

In practice, this means:

- Respecting religious practices (e.g. dress / dietary needs)
- Teaching children about different beliefs in a balanced and respectful way
- Encouraging curiosity and respectful discussion or debates



Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Relationships)

This characteristic mainly applies to adults rather than pupils and therefore not explicitly taught.

In practice, this means:

- Respect for different family structures
- Avoiding assumptions (e.g. not all families have a mum and a dad)
- Using inclusive language such as “grown-ups” or “parents and carers”



Sex/Gender

Sex refers to being male or female.

In practice, this means:

- Equal opportunities for all children
- Avoiding gender stereotypes (e.g. who can play certain sports or roles / favourite colours)
- Encouraging all pupils to explore interests freely



Gender Reassignment/Present yourself

This refers to people whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth.

In practice, this means:

- Teaching respect for everyone, regardless of how they express themselves
- Challenging stereotypes (e.g. “boys can’t do that” or “girls shouldn’t wear that”)
- Supporting any child or family member with kindness and sensitivity

*Teaching is always age-appropriate and focused on respect, not personal detail.



Sexual Orientation/Who you choose to Love

This refers to who a person is attracted to (for example, heterosexual, gay or bisexual).

In practice, this means:

- Teaching that families can look different
- Challenging homophobic language or bullying
- Promoting respect for everyone, without discussing adult relationships

*Teaching is always age-appropriate and focused on inclusion and kindness.



Pregnancy and Maternity (having a baby)

This applies to staff and family members rather than children.

In practice, this means:

- Respecting pregnant staff or parents
- Helping children understand changes in families in a sensitive way
- Ensuring no one is treated unfairly because they are pregnant or have a baby



How We Teach About Protected Characteristics

We teach about protected characteristics through: •
Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE)
education and other curriculum areas

- Assemblies and discussions
- Stories, books and examples in the curriculum
- Clear behaviour expectations and anti-bullying policies

Lessons are planned carefully to be suitable for the age and maturity of the children. Our Approach to Questions and Concerns Children are naturally curious and may ask questions.

Staff respond:

- Honestly and simply
- In an age-appropriate way
- With respect for all families and beliefs

If sensitive topics arise, we focus on kindness, respect and safety.

Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

We value open and respectful communication with families.

If you:

- Have questions about what your child is learning
- Want to discuss how topics are taught
- Have concerns or feedback

Please speak to your child's class teacher or a member of the leadership team.

Our Commitment We are committed to ensuring that:

- Every child feels safe, valued and included
- Discrimination and bullying are not tolerated
- Differences are recognised as a strength

Together, we can help children grow into respectful, confident and caring members of society.