

Your details

[Address line 1]

[Address line 2]

[Address line 3]

[Postcode]

[Email]

[Telephone]

Recipient details

[Address line 1]

[Address line 2]

[Address line 3]

[Postcode]

[Date]

Dear [name of Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead],

My child, [name], is in [class/form/year] at [school].

I am writing to communicate my concerns about the wording of your Equality Policy and express my doubts that this complies with the Equality Act 2010.

[Either:]

Your policy inaccurately lists 'gender' as a protected characteristic, which it is not. 'Sex' is the protected characteristic as listed in the Equality Act 2010, but it is not listed in your policy.

[Or:]

Whilst your policy correctly lists 'sex' as a protected characteristic, it unfortunately conflates the terms 'sex' and 'gender' throughout the document.

Although the terms 'sex' and 'gender' have been used interchangeably in recent history, changing political circumstances have made it necessary to draw a distinction between the two – particularly where legislation is concerned. 'Sex' refers to the biological, reproductive classification of people as either 'male' or 'female'. 'Gender' refers to the social expectations, roles or stereotypes of each of the sexes. While the two are clearly linked, it is important to acknowledge the difference in order to protect both adults and children from sex-based discrimination.

I respectfully ask that you amend your Equality Policy to replace any erroneous references to 'gender' as a protected characteristic with the correct term, 'sex'.

I would also strongly advise that you add definitions of each protected characteristic to avoid ambiguity or misinterpretation. I have included a list of suggested definitions below.

Age

Age may refer to the length of time that a person has lived or a particular stage in someone's life, such as childhood, adolescence, adulthood etc.

Disability

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender Reassignment

A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Race

Race includes: colour; nationality; ethnic or national origins. The fact that a racial group comprises two or more distinct racial groups does not prevent it from constituting a particular racial group.

Religion or belief

Religion means any religion and includes a lack of religion. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief (including political beliefs) and also a lack of such beliefs.

Sex

Either of the two categories (male and female) into which humans and most other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions. Male refers to the sex that produces gametes, especially spermatozoa, with which a female may be fertilised or inseminated to produce offspring. Female refers to the sex that can bear offspring or produce eggs, distinguished biologically by the production of gametes (ova) which can be fertilised by male gametes.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation means a person's sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex (homosexuality), persons of the opposite sex (heterosexuality) or persons of either sex (bisexuality). Gay refers to males who are sexually attracted to other males. Lesbian refers to females who are sexually attracted to other females.

Marriage and civil partnership

A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner, as recognised in law.

Pregnancy and maternity

A person has the protected characteristic of pregnancy if they are pregnant, breastfeeding or have recently given birth.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

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