

**EQUALITY ,
DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION**

Including Human Rights

By Genevieve Agbandje, Inclusion Manager

we're kind we're fair we listen we care

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we're kind
We show consideration, concern and thoughtfulness towards everyone

we're fair
We embrace difference, treat everyone with respect and promote diversity, equity and inclusion

we listen
We always seek to understand, learn and improve

we care
We work together and innovate to put our service users at the heart of everything we do

Introduction

Welcome to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Human Rights workshop. This introduction aims to raise awareness.

Oxleas is committed to being an inclusive organisation that champions equality, diversity and inclusion while eliminating unlawful discrimination and unacceptable behaviour.

We strive for our staff to truly represent our diverse society and to feel respected in their roles.

To reinforce our commitment to addressing inequality for staff, service users and carers, we provide EDI awareness sessions to foster a culture where everyone feels they belong.

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Objectives

- 1: To understand and recognise the importance of EDI and Human Rights
- 2: To understand what different types of unlawful behaviour are in relation to EDI
- 3: To raise awareness of how Equality and Diversity can affect People in different ways.
- 4: To recognise how to implement this within the workforce.

Genevieve Agbandje | February 2026

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Equality & Human Rights Team



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What does Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion mean?

Equality means giving everyone the same opportunities and treatment, regardless of their background or characteristics.

Diversity is understanding that each person is unique. It means embracing people's differences, including people of different races, genders, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, visible and invisible disabilities, class, or status. (Representation)

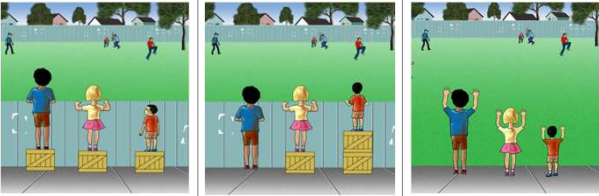
Inclusion is an extension of equality and diversity. Celebrating diversity requires thoughtful inclusion. It means that all people, without exception, have the right to be included, respected, and appreciated as valuable members of the community and be provided with opportunities to get involved, and have their perspectives valued and heard. (Participation)

It's also useful to know what **Equity** means.
Equity is providing individuals with the support they need to succeed, recognising that everyone faces different barriers and circumstances. Unlike equality, which gives everyone the same resources, equity tailors support to ensure a fair environment where all can reach their full potential. (Belonging)

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Equality vs Equity



Equality

Equity

**Systemic Barrier
Removed**


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How would you feel...

...If you were Spiderman?

... If you were Batman?



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Belonging

Belonging is the sense of feeling secure, supported, accepted and recognised within a group, community or organisation.

It's not just about fitting in; it's about recognising that your unique identity, perspective, and contributions matter, fostering a space where you're encouraged to be authentic and supported in your growth.

When individuals feel a strong sense of belonging, they are more likely to engage, collaborate, and contribute positively.

Key elements of workplace belonging:

- **Psychological Safety:** A safe space to speak up, take risks, admit mistakes, and be vulnerable without fear of repercussions.
- **Authenticity:** The freedom to bring your whole "professional" self to work, including aspects of your identity, beliefs, and personality, without hiding.
- **Valued Uniqueness:** Feeling that your specific talents, experiences, and perspectives are recognised and treasured, not just tolerated.
- **Connection & Trust:** Strong, trusting relationships with colleagues and leaders built on empathy, respect, and shared purpose.
- **Voice & Inclusion:** Feeling heard, listened to, and having your ideas considered in decisions that affect you and the team.

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Discrimination

Discrimination means treating someone 'less favourably' than someone else, because of their "Protected Characteristics".

Less favourable treatment can be anything that puts someone with a certain protected characteristic at a disadvantage, compared to someone who does not have that characteristic.

There's no legal definition of 'putting someone at a disadvantage'.

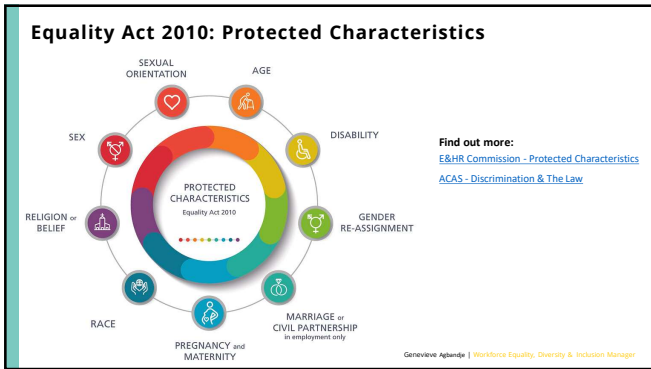
But it might include:

- Excluding someone from opportunities or benefits
- Making it harder for someone to do their job
- Causing someone emotional distress
- Causing someone financial loss

It can still be discrimination even if the less favourable treatment was not intended.

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Types of Discrimination

- **Direct** – less favourable treatment directly because of a protected characteristic
- **Indirect** – when everyone's treated the same but people with a protected characteristic are put at a disadvantage
- **Harassment** – unwanted or offensive behaviour related to a protected characteristic
- **Victimisation** - being singled out, targeted or subjected to adverse treatment for advocating for your own or your colleagues' equality rights.
- **Associative** – 'by association' – e.g. an assumption is made about you because of where you live as it's known to be an area with high crime, gangs and drug dealing
- **Perceptive** – 'perceived to have' – e.g. stereotypes about people who are gypsies and travellers

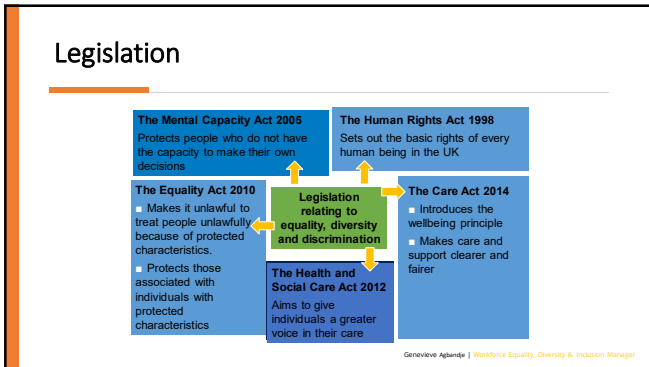
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Types of Discrimination

<p>Direct Discrimination</p> <p>Treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others.</p>	<p>Indirect Discrimination</p> <p>Putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that puts someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.</p>
<p>Harassment</p> <p>Unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.</p>	<p>Victimisation</p> <p>Treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment.</p>
<p>Association</p> <p>Where a person is associated with someone who has a particular protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Perception</p> <p>Where someone thinks a person has a particular protected characteristic, even if they do not.</p>

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Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) enshrines fundamental rights and freedoms for all in the UK, incorporating the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law.

It came into force on 2 October 2000 and applies to everyone in the UK—citizen or foreign national, child or adult, prisoner or public—plus legal persons like companies. Public authorities, including HMRC and EC-S, are required to comply with the HRA.

Core Values

- Fairness
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity
- Autonomy

Collectively known as the **FREDA** values

[The Human Rights Act | EHRC](#)

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Oxleas EQUITY MATTERS for all

BFOS Building fairer Oxleas services
Increasing service user and carer equity

To ensure that people have equity of access, experience and outcomes when using our services, including people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, people with lived experience of disability, mental health or neurodiversity, people who are LGBTQ+, and people of all ages and genders.

Working with partners and local communities we deliver a programme to dismantle structural inequalities and support all service users and carers.

Through this, we will deliver the Patient and Carer Risk Equality Framework

BAFO Building a fairer Oxleas
Increasing staff equity

To ensure that people working in our services have equity of experience, including people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, people with lived experience of disability, mental health or neurodiversity, people who are LGBTQ+, and people of all ages and genders.

A programme to dismantle structural inequalities and support all staff including:

- BAFO's new challenge to raise awareness and promote discussion
- Staff networks and groups offering spaces free from bias or judgement
- Changing approaches, policies and rules in the system to reduce bias

Our Equity Matters work is underpinned by us recognising the structural inequalities with our organisation and the wider system and being an anti-racist organisation.

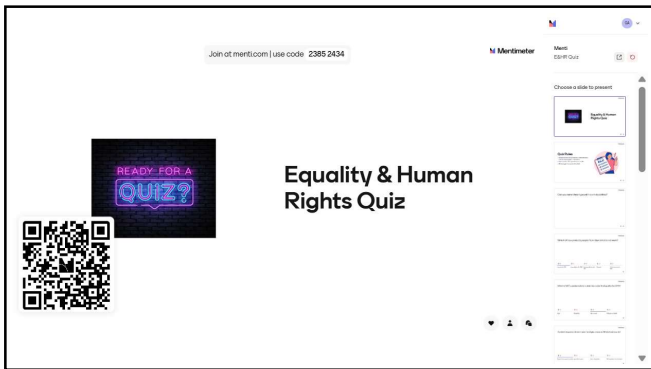
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Summary of Session: Why Does Equity Matter?

- Knowledge of various health inequalities and how these impact upon individuals and communities will help us work towards improving health outcomes
- Awareness of issues may help in our conversations with service users and their carers; building empathy and enabling person centred care
- It will help us to be compassionate and culturally intelligent colleagues and managers
- It will help us to put Oxleas values into practice and build a fairer Oxleas
- It helps us to meet our Public Sector Equality Duties under the Equality Act

Genevieve Agbende | Workplace Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Manager

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Useful Resources

Onvero	All employees can access FREE resources and events via Onvero (previously known as enei). Register using this link – it's quick, taking just a minute, with access within 24-48 hours.
BAFO 5 Step Challenge Activity Pack	Promotes community and belonging by guiding participants through five practical steps. It enhances engagement, inclusion, and authentic connection, encouraging reflection, active listening, and a culture where all feel valued and empowered.
ACAS	Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) is an independent UK public body that provides free, impartial advice and services to employers and employees to improve workplace relationships and resolve disputes. Funded by the government, it offers guidance on employment rights, best practices, and aids in resolving conflicts through conciliation and arbitration.
Equality and Human Rights Commission	The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) monitors human rights, protecting equality across 9 grounds - age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment
The Ox	Our Intranet is your go-to platform for navigating daily work life efficiently and staying connected with the wider organisation. It offers organisation updates, policy documents, HR forms, IT support, and events. Additionally, it includes staff directories, collaborative spaces for projects, and learning resources for professional development.

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Contact Us:

Building a Fairer Oxleas
 Email: oxl-tr.bafo@nhs.net | For enquiries regarding staff networks, BAFO events, BAFO awareness sessions, BAFO meetings and 5 Step Challenge

Equality and Human Rights Team
 Email: oxl-tr.equalityandhumanrights@nhs.net | For personal, private and confidential support and advice.

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Thank You

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