

Donnington Wood CE Junior School
BEHAVIOUR and PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2021

School Vision

Our school is a community where each person is valued as a child of God. We are a Church of England school, inspired and guided by the life and teaching of Jesus. We work together to create a caring, friendly and safe school family, to enable the whole school community to flourish and each person reach their full God-given potential.



[The School Logo links to our Motto.](#)

“The ones who plant and the ones who water work together as a team with the same purpose.”

1 Corinthians 3:8

We believe that with God’s help when we all work as a TEAM - Together Everyone Achieves More.

Our core values are - **friendship, hope and perseverance.**

Our Mission (INTENT)

At Donnington Wood CE Junior School, we will:

- put the safety of everyone as a priority so we can work in trust and peace.
- encourage everyone to understand the true meaning of **friendship, fellowship** and community by acting with **humility, compassion** and in **service** to each other.
- be inclusive so everyone is valued and respected and where **tolerance** and diversity are celebrated.
- seek out every opportunity to ensure that all of us flourish in all that we do, developing **wisdom** and **creativity**, through an ambitious and broad curriculum that challenges expectations, deepens knowledge and develops skills.
- empower pupils and adults to develop **hope** and **perseverance**, so that they are able to engage/explore the challenges of school and the wider world.
- nurture the spiritual development of our school **fellowship**, develop **tolerance** of other faiths, beliefs and cultures and build religious literacy through collective worship of God and teaching of RE.
- champion our values to equip our children ready for their future as respectful individuals, life-long learners and active citizens in society, advocating **justice**.

This policy adds further detail to how we achieve our Mission and should be read in unison with our Vision document (see website)

Introduction

At Donnington Wood CE Junior School, we are committed to ensuring that the children in our care learn in a happy, secure and safe environment where mutual respect and understanding is fostered and developed in every lesson and throughout the school day.

As a school, we aim to foster positive behaviour in our pupils, in line with our vision, and encourage them to take an increasing responsibility for managing their own behaviour. We want a school where

children **can** and **want** to learn and where teachers provide necessary support for those pupils who find managing their own behaviour especially difficult.

The Aims of this policy to achieve our vision

- To develop an ethos of mutual respect and understanding through a set of **Whole School Rules** that apply to **everyone**. (**friendship, fellowship, trust and peace**)
- To have a clearly structured behaviour plan that is applied throughout the school in a consistent manner. (**justice**)
- To define what is meant by unacceptable behaviour and deal with inappropriate behaviour quickly and efficiently
- Summarise the roles and responsibilities of different people in the school community with regards to behaviour management. (**service**)
- To keep parents well informed about the behaviour of pupils (**trust**)
- To foster an atmosphere of mutual support with the implementation of the behaviour plan

We believe that any policy has to be based on a clear set of principles with a clear structure that will underpin any concrete action. Therefore, this policy has been developed after consultation with governors, parents, pupils and staff, and in conjunction with our development of PSHE throughout the school.

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

It is also based on the [special educational needs and disability \(SEND\) code of practice](#).

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- Sections 88-94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which require schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupils' property

We will adhere to the statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 \(KCSIE\)](#). We will follow the DfE of [What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#), and have regard to [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) (September 2021). We recognise the [NSPCC](#) website also provides us additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

All child protection matters will be dealt with in line with the arrangements of [Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership \(TWSP\)](#) and [West Midlands Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures](#) or, if relevant, the safeguarding partnership area children reside in or are under the care of.

This policy replaces the previous policy of September 2020.

Principles

As a school, we have agreed on the following principles when dealing with pupils' behaviour:

- Every pupil understands they have the right to feel safe, valued and respected, and learn free from the disruption of others
- Adults will act as positive role models for children at all times in the way they interact with each other and children.
- All pupils, staff and visitors are free from any form of discrimination
- Rewards, sanctions and reasonable force are used consistently by staff, in line with the behaviour policy
- The behaviour policy is understood by pupils and staff and is applied consistently and fairly.
- Pupils are helped to take responsibility for their actions
- Families are involved in behaviour incidents to foster good relationships between the school and pupils' home life
- Adults will deal calmly and respectfully with behaviour and will NOT shout at children nor humiliate or embarrass children
- Adults will seek ways to support children who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour and will not 'Label' children as 'naughty'

We believe in promoting positive behaviour, rewarding acceptable behaviour and promoting equal rights to promote our core values of friendship, hope and perseverance.

We will not accept:

- Refusal of requests by adults
- Dishonesty, including stealing
- Bullying of any kind, including cyber-bullying (online)
- Racism, sexism or homophobia including name-calling or any type of harassment or discrimination.
- Verbal or physical aggression
- Anything illegal being brought into school
- Abusive or foul language to anyone
- Damage to property, including graffiti

Our Main School Rules (Golden Rules)

- We listen to and follow all adult instructions
- We treat others with respect and understanding
- We listen when others are speaking and to others points of view
- We do not hurt others through words or actions
- We own up to our mistakes
- We take responsibility for our own actions and do not blame others

As a school, we feel that it is vital that there is a consistent approach to behaviour management if it is to be as successful as possible. Therefore, we have devised a **WHOLE SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR PLAN** that applies to everyone in our school and will be applied consistently by all members of staff.

It is important to note that as a school, we recognise that there are some pupils who have significant behaviour difficulties and therefore the behaviour plan may not be appropriate for all children. In most cases, these children will have an IBP (Individual Behaviour Plan)

A copy of 'Our Golden Rules' is on display in every classroom for adults and pupils to refer to.

Behaviour Plan

Our behaviour plan is based on **rewarding positive behaviour** and discouraging inappropriate behaviour through a carefully planned rewards and consequences structure.

The plan is structured to help adults to deal with inappropriate behaviour in a calm, consistent way that minimises the impact on the other pupils and reduces the loss of teaching and learning time to an absolute minimum.

The 3 R's (Recognition, Reinforcement, Reward)

We believe strongly that appropriate behaviour should be **recognised** and all staff will endeavour to acknowledge pupils who are displaying expected behaviours. This recognition will promote and **reinforce** the positive ethos and values of the school. Positive praise will be given regularly and is the most effective form of behaviour feedback.

Rewards – when pupils display exemplary behaviour they will be rewarded in a number of appropriate ways:

- **Stickers** can be awarded by any member of staff for anything that they feel demonstrates positive behaviour or attitude and at any time throughout the school day.
- For behaviours that follow our school values pupils are awarded **Class Dojo points**. Totals and milestones of Dojo points are displayed and celebrated each week by staff and SLT.
- These Dojo points will earn children further rewards, including a special Dojo Party in the last week of term. Certificates are given out for 25, 50, 75 and 100 Dojo points.
- **Notes home** – certificates or short notes can be sent home to inform parents of how pleased with a child's behaviour, effort and attitude.
- **Head teacher/ Deputy Head teacher awards** are given each week to those children who have made an exemplary effort and displayed our school values. Anyone, staff or pupil can nominate a child for a Head teacher's award.

Whole Class Rewards

As well as individual rewards, children can earn 'Lion Spots' for their class. This reinforces the school ethos of 'TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More'.

A Class lion is on display in every classroom and when all of the spots are full, the children earn a class treat, such as extra play or choosing a fun activity to do together.

Any member of staff can award Lion Spots throughout the school day.

Attendance Award

At the end of each week, the Headteacher gives an award to the class who has 100% attendance. This class earn an extra playtime. We monitor attendance regularly and look for patterns of behaviour and poor attendance. It is essential all pupils be at school every day.

Golden Time

All children automatically have 30 minutes of 'Golden time' at the end of every week. This is a special time of fun activities run on Friday afternoons that pupils can select at the beginning of each week. During any week, 10 minutes of Golden Time can be lost for inappropriate behaviour **IF** behaviour continues to be unacceptable **AFTER** a Verbal warning and a 5-minute timer have been issued. This loss of Golden time is discussed with the pupil and the Deputy Head and behaviour targets set for the following week.

Steps to managing unacceptable behaviour

It is vital that all adults follow the Behaviour Plan consistently and therefore the following steps **MUST** be applied.

- **Informal reminders (de-escalation strategies)**

Before children move onto a formal behaviour plan, it is important that staff attempt to de-escalate the behaviour through a number of different strategies. These include

- tactical ignoring or pausing,
- non-verbal cues,
- redirection,

- distraction
- or directed choices.

Take up time is provided and gentle directives given to act as an informal reminder of the expected behaviour. These strategies are used to provide pupils with an opportunity to calm down, quickly stop behaving inappropriately and prevent disruption to the lesson. This is usually all that is needed, but if the inappropriate behaviour continues the Behaviour Plan **MUST** be followed using the following steps:-

- **Formal Verbal Warning** - It is important to use this term so that children know they are now on step one of the Behaviour Plan. This caution should be private, follow a scripted dialogue, be recorded by the teacher and time given to allow for a response.
- **5-minute timer** - Children have a timer placed on their table and their behaviour monitored for 5 minutes. At the end of this time, if the pupil has responded, the timer is removed and the pupil continues with their activity. It may be necessary to relocate the child for this timed period (time out), such as to another desk or special calm area of the classroom. Children should only be placed outside of the class to calm down or diffuse a situation; this should be no longer than for 3 minutes. At break times/lunchtimes, the child should be directed to 'calm zone' for 5 minutes. The duty staff are responsible for monitoring and timing this' isolation'.
- **Reparation Conversations** – any pupils that get to this stage will be expected to have a brief conversation (5 mins max) to address their behaviour that led to the sanctions. This will take place at the end of the lesson/activity. (see Appendix)
- **Loss of 'Golden time'** – If after the verbal warning and timer the child has not responded then they will lose 10 minutes of their Golden time. The teacher records when and why they have lost their Golden Time on a proforma. The Deputy Head must be informed if this stage has been reached by a pupil. Loss of GT forms are given to the Deputy Head for monitoring. The Deputy Head will issue a letter to inform parents of this step.
- **Time out with a Senior Leader/Pastoral Support Manager** – Continued unacceptable behaviour or high-level disruption will result in a senior leader being sent for to discuss the behaviour with the pupil. Decisions on the next steps then rest with the Senior Leader/PSM.
- **Red Card** – These are only issued if inappropriate behaviour continues after all other steps have been followed or due to high-level disruption. A Red card results in removal from the class or playground by the Headteacher, Senior Leader or Pastoral Support Manager. Parents will be contacted and a behaviour meeting will be arranged. Children will miss the following day's playtimes and a Behaviour Plan will be drawn up to support the child's behaviour.

*If it becomes necessary to issue a Red card a message **MUST BE SENT** to the school office or staff room (playtimes only) and the child will be removed by a senior member of staff or the PSM.*

The Senior Leader will fill in a Red card notification sheet, located in the main office.

Red cards can only be issued by a member of senior staff or the PSM.

Severe Incidents

Sometimes it is necessary to issue an instant Red card missing out the above steps in the following circumstances

- A deliberate and unprovoked act of violence towards another person
- Behaviour that puts themselves or others at risk of harm
- Damaging school property.

If any child puts himself or herself at severe risk through actual aggression or inappropriate behaviour, or at potential risk to others (threatening behaviour) then certain staff have been sanctioned to use physical intervention. These staff members are trained in the MAPA approach that ensures the **care, welfare, safety and security** of all involved.

Physical restraint will

- Always be used only as a last resort.
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible

- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded and reported to parents. They will be invited in to discuss the incident, to minimise further risks.
- For further details, please see the physical restraint policy.

The above procedure in italics must still be followed.

Exclusion

In certain circumstance severe behaviour or incidents may result in exclusion. Please read the [exclusion policy](#) for further details.

Off-site behaviour

Sanctions may be applied where a pupil has misbehaved off-site when representing the school, such as on a school trip or inter-school competition, or on the way to or from school.

Confiscation

Any prohibited items found in pupils' possession will be confiscated. These items will be returned to parents. We will also confiscate any item which is harmful or detrimental to school discipline. These items will be returned to pupils after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate. Searching and screening pupils is conducted in line with the DfE's [latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).

Online Behaviour

As a school we also expect our online behaviour to be as good as our in school behaviour, and will apply the rules of the behaviour policy to any infractions of the policy.

Incidents occurring out of school on social media or any internet-connected device will be taken seriously and acted upon if they break these rules. We do not tolerate abuse/bullying in any form. All pupils regularly receive Online Safety training from the school and the NSPCC and know the standard expected.

We promote the message, STOP, SPEAK, SUPPORT. This is part of a national campaign to change the behaviour of young people who are 'bystanders' to online bullying and give them information and support.

Further examples and consequences can be found in your home school agreement, the Authorised Use Policy (AUP) and in our safeguarding policy.

Informing parents

Parents play a very important role in behaviour management and should be supportive of the school policy. Parents sign a Home /School agreement to agree their support.

New parents are given a copy of the Behaviour plan and its use and purpose are explained at the Year 3 induction meeting.

Parents are encouraged to share any concerns that they have about behaviour with the school through contact with the Pastoral Support Manager, Deputy Head, class teacher, Parent Governors or by contacting the Head teacher directly.

Parents will be contacted when incidents occur involving their child, and whenever pupils have lost Golden time or received a Red Card.

Confidentiality

If parents approach any staff for information regarding an incident at school, the staff member must direct them to the appropriate Class teacher, Pastoral Support manager, Deputy Head or Head. It is very important to remember that all incidents should be treated as confidential and the school will not discuss consequences, actions or outcomes for other children.

Pupil support

The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent pupils with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, our approach to challenging behaviour may be differentiated to cater to the needs of each pupil.

Pastoral Support Manager (PSM): Miss Ganderton.

The Pastoral Support Manager plays a significant role in the Personal Development and Behaviour Management of our pupils. She works with pupils and their families, to provide support and access additional services through the CAF and TAF process. She coordinates PSHE across the school. The Pastoral Support Manager works with pupils who have received red cards to discuss their behaviour and to identify next steps, in order to modify the negative behaviour patterns exhibited by pupils.

The school's Pastoral Support Manager will evaluate a pupil who exhibits challenging behaviour to determine whether they have any underlying needs that are not currently being met.

Children who are experiencing major difficulties can be referred to the PSM in order to access additional support.

Where necessary, support and advice will also be sought from specialist teachers, an educational psychologist, medical practitioners and/or others, to identify or support specific needs.

When acute needs are identified in a pupil, we will liaise with external agencies and plan support programmes for that child. Sometimes there are occasions when an individual pupil needs an **Individual Behavioural Plan**. These are created by our Behaviour team in the school and in partnership with parents and other agencies.

Attendance

A key part of this policy is that we expect good Attendance, as a school we set a target of 97% attendance. Attendance below 95% will be challenged. Please see attendance policy for further information.

Pupil Groups/Peer support

At Donnington Wood CE Junior School, there are a number of ways pupils can encourage and support their peers' responsibilities and behaviour:

School Council

We have a group of elected school councillors, one from each class, who hold office for a year. Children can be nominated by their peers, or put themselves forward to become the class representative. Each child then has to make a short presentation to the class stating why they think they would make a good school councillor. The class then vote, by secret ballot, for their chosen representative.

Councillors meet regularly with the Pastoral Support Manager and with the Head teacher on a half-termly basis to discuss a wide range of issues. Councillors are encouraged to bring any concerns from class members to the attention of the School Council for discussion.

The School Council has an important role in the decision making process for school improvement.

Rainbow Groups

At Donnington Wood CE Junior School, we feel it is important children across our school community receive opportunities to work and play together beyond class or year groups. This encourages friendship, respect, and aspiration. We have seven Rainbow Groups that mix pupils from each year

group together. Various activities are organised throughout the year when children can participate with the other members of their house group from across the school.

All adults are assigned to a Rainbow group too to support children from across the school.

Children can earn 'Rainbow Points' for demonstrating positive behaviours, such as being helpful or considerate, picking up litter, tidying classrooms etc. The house with the most points at the end of each term receives a reward. Any member of staff can award Rainbow points BUT points CANNOT be taken away for any reason. Each Rainbow group has a 'Rainbow Captain' from Year 6. Rainbow captains are expected to be a good role model for others at all times.

The School Day

We recognise that some children have difficulty behaving in the way we expect them to when they are outside of a classroom.

Several initiatives have been put into place to support children during these times.

- **Before School** – The school gates are opened at 8.35am and doors opened at 8:35. Teachers and TAs are in classes from this time to receive and greet children. Children are discouraged from arriving at school before 8.35am unless they are attending **Early Bird Club**. From 8.35am until 8.45am, SLT staff are on duty outside to greet children and parents as they arrive.
- **Playtime** – To monitor children's safety at playtime it has been agreed that there will be two members of staff/year group on duty at playtime. Pupils are zoned in different areas and classes rotate around these zones during the week. These areas include; the Wooden Adventure Zone, the Metal Adventure Zone, The Bottom Yard and Top Yard, our school field (weather dependent) and the Bikes and Scooter Zone. Staff are supported by our **Playground Buddies** who are on duty throughout playtime.
- **Lunchtime** – From the beginning of academic year, 2021-22 classes will use classrooms and the school hall to eat their lunch. Selected year groups will eat in the hall each day. Children are expected to display good behaviour if eating or collecting food in our dinner hall. These include using good manners, eating reasonably quietly and clearing up after themselves, before being allowed to leave the dining hall in an orderly manner. If children come into the hall for their lunch, they are expected to sit quietly at a table until they are sent for their lunch.
- **Lunchtime Play** – The playground area is split into a number of 'Zones' where different activities take place (ball games take place on the Top yard, or the field for example) Teaching Assistants act as Lunchtime supervisors for their Year group classes and work in different 'Zones' on a rota basis. They are responsible for getting out any necessary equipment and putting it away.
- **At the end of the day** – Children are expected to leave school and travel home respectfully and safely. A member of staff escorts children from the school premises at the end of each day. On rare occasions, incidents do occur and these may involve children from other schools. The school follows up any incidents that occur in a sensitive and sympathetic manner and if necessary support is sought from, the **Community Police** who may decide to patrol the area at home time for a few days.

Playground Buddies

Playground Buddies are children with a desire to support others at playtime and lunchtime.

Children who wish to become Playground Buddies fill in an application form and go through an interview process. The Pastoral Support Manager and School Council carry out interviews.

If their application is successful, the children join the Playground Buddy team and support staff at playtimes and lunchtimes on the playground.

Playground Buddies:

- Mediate between pupils to solve minor disputes
- Play with children who are lonely or upset
- Introduce playtime games
- Hold regular meetings with the Pastoral Support Manager to discuss issues related to playtimes.

Playground Buddies have a significant part to play in the overall management of behaviour at our school and their contribution is highly valued by all staff.

Safeguarding and Behaviour

Certain behaviour may warrant use to deal with them in line with our Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection routines. We are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

We do not tolerate any forms of abuse. All incidents of concern are passed immediately to the school's DSL and logged on CPOMS.

Pupil transition

To ensure a smooth transition into the next year, pupils have transition sessions with their new teacher(s). This is when expectations of behaviour and routines are explained and established. In addition, staff members hold transition meetings to discuss pupil information.

To ensure behaviour is continually monitored and the right support is in place, information related to pupil behaviour issues may be transferred to relevant staff at the start of the term or year.

Information on behaviour issues is transferred from Infant school and records may also be shared with new settings for those pupils transferring to other schools.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body

Our governors are responsible for reviewing and approving the written statement of behaviour principles. Governors will also review this behaviour policy in conjunction with the Head teacher and monitor the policy's effectiveness, holding the Head teacher to account for its implementation.

The Head teacher

Mr Fox, the Head teacher is responsible for reviewing this behaviour policy in conjunction with the governing body giving due consideration to the school's statement of behaviour principles. The Head teacher will also approve this policy.

The Head teacher will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with poor behaviour, and will monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure rewards and sanctions are applied consistently.

Deputy Head

Mr Rawson, the Deputy Head is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and monitoring of our school Behaviour Policy. He will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with poor behaviour, and will monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure rewards and sanctions are applied consistently. He will monitor awards and Dojo points, issuing certificates and prizes. He will also monitor pupils' loss of Golden Time and the issuing of Red cards.

Pastoral Support Manager (PSM)

Miss Ganderton, the Pastoral Support Manager plays a significant role in the Personal Development and Behaviour Management of our pupils. She will work with pupils and their families, to provide support and access additional services through the CAF and TAF process.

The Pastoral Support Manager works with pupils who have behaviour problems to discuss their behaviour and to identify next steps, in order to modify the negative behaviour patterns exhibited by pupils.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently
- Modelling positive behaviour
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of particular pupils
- Recording behaviour incidents

The senior leadership team will support staff in responding to behaviour incidents.

Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Support their child in adhering to the pupil code of conduct
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly

General Statement

As a school, we recognise that behaviour management is the responsibility of **everyone** in the school (TEAM) and our behaviour policy is regularly discussed and reviewed by all. If you have any concerns about behaviour or actions taken please contact us, we pride ourselves on being able to find a solution.

We strongly believe that a **POSITIVE** approach is far more effective than a Negative one and work hard to avoid negative comments and use **PRAISE** as often as possible to raise children's self-esteem and encourage positive behaviour throughout our school.

Behaviour and personal development is monitored as part of the schools Self Evaluation procedures.

Ofsted commented: *The behaviour of pupils is a strength of the school. During the inspection, pupils were exceptionally courteous, kind and polite.*

We expect this every day.

September 2021

Along with other policies, we will measure the impact of this policy through the **Ofsted standards**.

Behaviour and attitudes

27. Inspectors will make a judgement on behaviour and attitudes by evaluating the extent to which:

- the provider has high expectations for learners' behaviour and conduct and applies these expectations consistently and fairly. This is reflected in learners' behaviour and conduct
- learners' attitudes to their education or training are positive. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively and do so, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements
- learners have high attendance and are punctual
- relationships among learners and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture. Leaders, teachers and learners create an environment where bullying, peer-on-peer abuse or discrimination are not tolerated. If they do occur, staff deal with issues quickly and effectively, and do not allow them to spread.

Personal development (Please see our vision and ethos document)

28. Inspectors will make a judgement on the personal development of learners by evaluating the extent to which:

- the curriculum extends beyond the academic, technical or vocational. It provides for learners' broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents
- the curriculum and the provider's wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy
- at each stage of education, the provider prepares learners for future success in their next steps
- the provider prepares learners for life in modern Britain by:
 - equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society
 - developing their understanding of fundamental British values
 - developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity
 - celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law.