



Equality and Diversity Policy

Context

Manor Green Apprenticeships promotes and actively contributes to equality, diversity and inclusion for all staff, apprentices and their employers. All staff, apprentices and employers are expected to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and not to discriminate against or harass other members of their school or other place of employment, regardless of their status.

All staff, apprentices and employers are expected to treat others fairly and with dignity and respect. Anyone involved with the apprenticeship scheme is actively encouraged to challenge and report and incidents of discrimination or harassment.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to create an environment in which all individuals involved with MGA are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.

The policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including members of the senior leadership team, assessors, support staff, apprentices and employers. Its aims are to:

- create an environment that is an inclusive place to work and study where an individual's personal characteristics do not create barriers;
- ensure that all policies, procedures and strategies reflect MGA's commitment to equality;
- ensure all staff, apprentices and employers treat each other with dignity and respect;
- ensure all staff, employers and apprentices are aware of equality issues and take responsibility for their actions;
- ensure that teaching provision is accessible and inclusive;
- take remedial action against any behaviour which results in the creation of an intimidating or hostile work or study environment.

MGA Equality and Diversity policy

Ratified February 2026

For review February 2027

Scope of the policy

Discrimination by or against an employee, apprentice or employer is prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. This applies whether discrimination occurs intentionally or unintentionally. MGA is committed to ensuring that no apprentice, employee or employer is discriminated against on the basis of:

- age¹,
- disability¹,
- gender reassignment¹,
- marital or civil partner status¹,
- pregnancy or maternity¹,
- race¹, colour, nationality,
- ethnic or national origin,
- religion or belief¹,
- sex¹,
- gender,
- sexual orientation¹

¹ Protected characteristic: discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any person due their displaying one or more of these characteristics is forbidden in law.

Legal context and links to other documents

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation and guidance, including the

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

Links to other documents

- MGA Harassment and bullying policy
- MGA Apprentice Code of Conduct
- MGA Complaints policy
- MGA Safeguarding policy
- MGA GDPR form

Types of discrimination prohibited by the policy

Direct discrimination. This occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not "fit in" would be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination. This occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would need to be objectively justified.

Harassment. This is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

Responsibilities and actions

Manor Green School's Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. Day-to-day operational responsibility, including a review of this policy every two years, has been delegated to the Apprenticeship Manager.

The Apprenticeship Manager is responsible for:

- ensuring all apprentices will be employed in an inclusive organisation by checking that all employers have an up-to-date Equality and Diversity Policy as part of the employer sign-up process;
- providing equality and diversity training to MGA staff as required.

All staff are responsible for:

- setting an appropriate standard of behaviour to fulfil the aims of the policy;
- promoting MGA aims with regard to equal opportunities;
- undertaking training on equal opportunities awareness;
- challenging any behaviour not in accordance with the aims of this policy;
- reporting any concerns that cannot be dealt with informally and directly to the Head of Safeguarding.

Apprentices are responsible for;

- signing the Apprentice Commitment Statement to confirm that they have read, understood and will follow this policy;
- treating others with respect and behaving in a way that fulfils the aims of the policy;
- reporting any concerns to their Assessor/Mentor.

The following sections (1-4) apply to all aspects of our relationship between MGA staff and apprentices at all levels. This includes advertisements, apprentice selection, training, development, conduct at work and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

We will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities.

1) Sign up to and delivery of the apprenticeship programme

MGA aims to ensure that no employer, applicant or apprentice suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics.

MGA will aim to advertise all opportunities to a diverse market; any promotional materials will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying.

Applicants for an apprenticeship will not be asked about health or disability before the contract is signed. There are exceptions which will only be used with the HR's approval. For example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an apprentice can (subject to any reasonable adjustments) perform an intrinsic part of the job
- Questions to establish if an apprentice is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
- Equal opportunities monitoring that will not form part of the decision-making process.

Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy. Applicants will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment without the approval of the Head of HR (who will first consider whether such matters are relevant and may lawfully be taken into account).

MGA is required by law to ensure that all apprentices are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective apprentices, regardless of nationality, will be expected to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the UK Border Agency.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be under-represented or disadvantaged in the organisation, MGA will monitor applicants' and apprentices ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an applicant's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their acceptance onto an apprenticeship. The information is kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps MGA take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

2) Staff training and conditions of service

Staff training needs will be identified through regular appraisals. All staff will be given equal access to appropriate training to enable them to progress within MGA and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

The workforce composition and promotions will be monitored regularly to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

MGA staff conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly in conjunction with MGS HR department to ensure that they support equal opportunities for all.

3) Apprenticeship disciplinary proceedings

MGA will ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings or other disciplinary action such as the termination of an apprenticeship.

4) Disability support for apprentices

If an apprentice is disabled or becomes disabled, MGA encourages them to tell the organisation about their condition so that they can be given appropriate support.

If an apprentice experiences difficulties in completing their apprenticeship because of their disability, they will be encouraged to talk to their Assessor/Mentor to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. In either case, this may involve consultation with the individual and a medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. MGA will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the needs within reason. If a particular adjustment is considered unreasonable, the reasons will be explained and an alternative adjustment found where possible.

Manor Green School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider if they place disabled apprentices at a significant disadvantage compared to their peers. Where reasonable, it will improve access for those affected.

Breaches of this policy

MGA takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

Any member of staff or apprentice found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action by MGS. Any apprentice found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action as described in the MGA Harassment and Bullying Policy. This may result in termination of the apprenticeship.

If an apprentice believes that they have been **discriminated** against' they are encouraged to raise the matter through the MGA Complaints Procedure.

If an apprentice believes that they may have been subject to **harassment**, they should follow the procedure(s) detailed in the MGA Harassment and Bullying policy.

- Members of staff should raise the matter with their line manager and/or a member of the HR team

Staff and apprentices who make an allegation in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result of making an allegation. However, any false allegations which are found to have been made maliciously or in bad faith will, be subject to disciplinary action.

Confidentiality

All concerns or allegations relating to equality and diversity or any potential breach of this policy will be treated in confidence.

Promoting awareness of this policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- Staff and apprentice induction
- Publication on the MGS website (MGA staff and internal apprentices)
- Publication on Quadsdirect (external apprentices)

Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

MGA believes this policy does not prioritise or disadvantage any apprentice, member of MGA staff or partnering employer.

Monitoring and review

The Governors and Headteacher have overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually, and following any concerns and/or updates to relevant legislation, national/local guidance or procedures. MGA will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives. As part of this process, MGA will monitor the composition of the apprentice cohort. Apprentices are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the Apprenticeship Manager.

The Governing Board approved this policy on **5 February 2026**.

Signed: **Colin Hayfield, Chair of Governors**

Signed: **Helen Hannam, Headteacher and Principal**

Date of review or revision	Description	Author or reviewing officer
April 2023	New policy	Apprenticeship Manager
April 2024	1 st review – layout and content changes to clarify procedure	Apprenticeship Manager
January 2026	Routine review	Kate Hartup

Appendix 1

Equality, diversity and respect: guidance for apprentices

1) It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that there is equal opportunity and dignity in all our working practices, procedures and behaviours.

Everyone is responsible for their own behaviour.

You should:

- treat everyone kindly and with dignity and respect;
- not bully or harass anyone;
- not victimise or attempt to victimise anyone who has made complaints of discrimination, or provided information to support a complaint;
- report any incident you consider inappropriate to your Assessor/Mentor.

2) If there is anything that happens within your work which you are uncomfortable with, or believe is discriminatory or unfair, in any way, please raise the issue immediately.

Your Assessor/Mentor has a duty of care to take action once they are aware of any bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination. This may be by supporting you through the informal approach as outlined below or through the Grievance Procedure laid out in the Complaints Policy.

Informal approach

Keep a record of any incidents that occur including who else was around at the time.

You could firstly try to sort out matters informally with the person who is making you feel uncomfortable. The person may not know that their behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. An informal discussion or even an email may help them to understand the effects of their behaviour and agree to change it or stop it.

You can talk in confidence to your manager or the Head of HR to get advice on how to handle this informally. If your concerns are about your manager, you should speak to their manager. If you don't feel able to talk to the person concerned, their manager or the Head of HR could approach them on your behalf.

Formal procedure

If the above informal approach is not appropriate or does not achieve the desired result, you should formally raise your concern in accordance with the formal stages of the School's Grievance Procedure as detailed in the Complaints Policy. Your complaint will be fully investigated and any complaints will be treated seriously. Such complaints will be handled sensitively and you will be fully supported.

Further help

If you feel that you require further independent help you may also call the Equality, Advisory and Support Service 0808 800 0082, or ACAS 0300 123 1100.