



Uniform Policy Guidance

Approval Body:	MST Standards Committee
Approval Date:	7 th March 2019
Implementation Date:	8 th March 2019
Review Date:	September 2023
Policy Version:	2

Version Control

Version	Reviewed	Changes since the last version
1	2019	Existing Policy
2	2022	Changes have been made to reflect the latest DfE Non Statutory Guidance on Uniform and Statutory Guidance on the Cost of School Uniform published in November 2021.

This policy has been adopted by the Mulberry Schools Trust “The Trust” and will be applied to all schools which belong to the Mulberry Schools Trust.

Rationale

The Mulberry Schools Trust has high expectations of all pupils who belong to its schools. A high standard of conduct characterizes the behaviour and relationships with others of any child or young person who attends one of its schools. Having a school uniform is a very important part of the way in which the Trust promotes good behaviour and develops community cohesion, respect for others and oneself, and belonging. It also prepares pupils for their adult lives in wider society and the world of employment.

The Mulberry Schools Trust also believes in the importance of some freedom to express individuality in the way they dress with regard to religion or belief, ethnicity and culture in a diverse and plural society. In its policies on school uniform, the Trust balances this with the need to prioritise community cohesion and health and safety. In being inclusive, the Trust promotes belonging and mutuality amongst its student body. It has an agreed way of navigating the freedoms of individuals whilst building community identity in its schools.

Decisions about uniform are made in Local Governing Bodies for each school. Each school in the Trust has its own uniform policy agreed with the principal and pupil body. However, Trust schools must follow this guidance when reviewing and amending their policies. Any new school seeking to join the Trust must also adhere to this guidance.

The guidance in this policy statement follows that of the latest DfE dated November 2021, entitled **School Uniform: Guidance for Schools**. It is non-statutory guidance that highlights best practice. The guidance in this policy also included the statutory guidance on Cost of School Uniform published in November 2021. This guidance requires schools to make uniform affordable for all.

Guidance

When deciding on changes to uniform, Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) must adhere to the following general principles:

- Adherence to the ethos and values of the Trust, as set out in its strategy and mission statement

- Cost effectiveness for parents and carers, particularly taking into account affordability for families
- Schools should keep the use of branded items to a minimum and state clearly what is optional
- Schools should ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire.
- Decision-making processes when making any significant changes must be consultative and transparent, taking into account the views of families, pupils and staff
- Supply of uniform – no one provider may have a monopoly on supply of uniform. When sourcing providers, school leaders must explore best value for money
- Appropriateness relating to age and activity
- Mindfulness of different groups within the school's community
- Realistic time-frames for families when making any changes
- A school's uniform policy should be published on the school's website, be available for all parents, including parents of prospective pupils, and be easily understood.
- Information on second-hand uniforms should be clear for parents of current and prospective pupils and published on the school's website.

The Mulberry Schools Trust has an overarching identity that characterizes its schools and so the following requirements are currently in place for LGBs when considering changes to their uniform policies:

- Blazers stitched with the school's logo for secondary school pupils must be worn, bearing in mind affordability
- For primary school pupils, the requirement is a polo shirt and jumper
- The Trust has identified a colour palette for uniform to which schools must adhere
- Skirts must be worn below the knee and above the ankle. They must be worn with tights not socks or leggings
- Trousers may not be fashion trousers, short trousers (shorts) or jeans
- For health and safety reasons, requirements for modest dress mean that long flowing garments such as the burkha or gathered skirts may not be worn in school or on school visits. Long hair must be tied back at all times
- Shoes must be black, formal and water-proof. Boots, trainers or plimsolls are not allowed except as part of PE or outdoor education
- Where head-coverings are a religious requirement such as turbans or bandanas for Sikhs, the hijab for Muslim women or the kippah or yamulka for Jewish boys, they may be worn. The hijab must be secured with pins to ensure it does not catch on equipment. Sports hijabs or swimhoods should be worn for PE and other physical activity if necessary as pins are a danger. The niqab is not a religious requirement and so is not part of school uniform
- Jewellery and make-up are not permitted as part of school uniform with the exception of small plain ear studs for pierced ears
- Coats should be formal and provide protection for inclement weather. Denim, leather jackets are not part of school uniform. Sports and leisure wear are only permitted for PE and outdoor education

Where pupils will be undertaking employment-related activities, such as at the UTC, dress should be appropriate to the sector. For example, in construction steel capped boots, helmets and high visibility jackets should be worn (provided by the school or employer). In science laboratory work, lab coats should be worn for experiments and clinical work. In technical theatre and film, black tee shirts and trousers are worn as standard working uniform. In catering, chef's whites and hair nets / hats should be worn (provided by the school or employer).

PE uniform should be practical, comfortable, appropriate to the activity and affordable.

School policies must:

- Be agreed with the school community within the requirements above
- Describe the uniform and its appearance clearly so that parents and carers are informed
- Consider reasonable requests to vary uniform, in particular to meet the needs of any pupil to accommodate their religion, belief, ethnicity, disability or other special requirements
- Consider carefully the risk of a challenge to the policy, ensuring insurance would cover the costs of any challenge
- Undertake regular reviews of the policy – at least every three years
- Avoid frequent changes
- Ensure that pupils are not barred from joining the school by costly uniform requirements

Where there is real hardship, parents and carers may contact the school to see if any financial support can be given. Cases are considered individually and the principal's decision is final.

Schools may consider running a uniform shop for recycling uniform in good condition.

Where breaches of uniform by pupils occur, schools should follow the Behaviour Policy and Exclusion Policy when deciding how to deal with this.