

Ascend Learning Trust

# School Uniform Policy

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## Version Control

Version	Details	Author	Date
1.0	Policy formation		Feb 2025

## Related Policies

ALT Complaints Policy  
 ALT Behaviour Policy

## Policy Statement

The Ascend Learning trust believes that a school uniform is vital for:

- Promoting the ethos of a school
- Providing a sense of belonging and identity
- Setting an appropriate tone for education.

For the purposes of this policy, “uniform” includes the following elements of pupils’ appearance:

- Clothing, including the school uniform itself, variations of the school uniform such as PE kits, and other clothing worn at school, e.g non-uniform
- Hairstyles and headwear
- Jewellery and other accessories
- Cosmetics such as makeup and nail polish

This policy lays out the measures that The Wellington Academy has taken to ensure a consistent, fair and inclusive uniform policy, and implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all pupils, is affordable, and provides the best value for money for both the school and pupils’ families.

This policy aims to:

- Set out our approach to requiring a uniform that is of reasonable cost and offers the best value for money for the school and pupils’ families.
- Explain how we will avoid discrimination in line with our duties under the Equality Act 2010
- Clarify our expectations for school uniform

We believe that pupils learn most effectively and achieve their best outcomes when they are comfortable, able to be themselves, and dressed in a way that sets an appropriate tone for education. In writing and updating this policy, we have therefore sought to:

- Engage with pupils and parents
- Consider how this policy might affect groups represented in the school, especially those who share protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- Consider how comfortable the uniform will be for pupils
- Take a sensible approach to allow for exceptions to be made, e.g. during adverse weather
- Ensure that the uniform is suitable and safe for pupils who walk or cycle to school
- Choose a PE kit which is practical, comfortable, appropriate to the activity involved and affordable
- Ensure the policy is easy to access and understand.

## Legislation and Statutory Requirements

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education (guidance around the cost of school uniforms) Act 2021
- DfE Guidance (2021) 'Cost of School uniforms'
- DfE Guidance (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE Guidance (2024) 'School Uniforms: guidance for schools'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) 'preventing hair discrimination in schools'

## Roles and Responsibilities

The **Board of Trustees** is responsible for:

- Setting a trust wide approach to school uniform that is in line with statutory guidance and legislative requirements.
- Ensuring overarching principles about accessibility and inclusivity of school uniforms across trust schools, ensuring adherence to legal requirements.
- Ensuring that uniforms at schools within the trust are accessible and affordable
- Demonstrating in this policy how best value for money has been achieved
- Ensuring compliance with the DfE's cost of school uniforms guidance
- Agreeing support for the cost of school uniforms in line the trust financial policies and practices.

The **Local Governing Body** is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the headteacher and school community, a practical and smart school uniform that accurately reflects the school's vision and values and that is in line with the trust wide approach set up by the board of trustees
- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible, inclusive and does not discriminate or disadvantage any pupil because of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of stakeholders regarding changes to the school's uniform.
- Will seek to ensure that uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- Enforcing the school's uniform rules on a day-to-day basis
- Ensuring that teachers understand this policy and what to do if a pupil is in breach of the policy

- Listening to the opinions and wishes of the school community in regard to the school's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the local governing body.
- Approving any exemptions to school uniform arrangements on a case by case basis.

**Staff** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that pupils dress in accordance with this policy at all times
- Where appropriate to their role, disciplining pupils who are in breach of this policy
- Ensuring that pupils understand why having a consistent and practical school uniform is important e.g sense of belonging and school identity.

**Parents/Guardians** are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct school uniform as detailed in this policy
- Informing the Headteacher if their child requires an exemption to the uniform rules for a period of time, with a qualifying reason
- Ensuring that their child's uniform is clean, presentable and the correct size.

**Pupils** are responsible for:

- Wearing the correct uniform at all times, unless the Headteacher has granted an exemption, which extends to on the school premises, travelling to and from school and at out-of-school events or on trips that are organised by the school and/or where they are representing the school
- Looking after their uniform as appropriate
- Understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to the school, e.g. school identify and community.

## Cost Principles

The Wellington Academy will develop its uniform policy in relation to the following starting principles:

- The school will seek to ensure that the uniform is affordable. In so doing, the school will consider the total cost of school uniforms, taking into account all items of uniform or clothing parents will need to provide while their child is at the school.
- The school will seek to keep the use of branded items to a minimum.
- The school will seek to ensure that uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money, including the quality and durability of the garment.
- The school will seek to ensure that second hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire.

In accordance with the 'school admissions code,' the headteacher will ensure that the school's uniform requirements do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child. We understand that items with distinctive characteristics (e.g. branded items) cannot be purchased from a wide range of retailers and that requiring such items limits parents/carer's ability to 'shop around' for a low price.

Therefore, the school will assess the overall cost implications of its uniform policy regularly, including prior to any changes to the school uniform. When evaluating whether costs are reasonable and proportionate, the school will take into account the opinions and situations of:

- Economically disadvantaged parents
- Parents with multiple children who are, or will be in the future, pupils at the school
- Parents of younger children, as they are likely to grow more quickly and require new sets of uniform more frequently
- Parents of pupils with protected characteristics that may impact their ability to access the uniform
- Looked after or post-looked after children.

The school will evaluate the cost of its uniform based on the overall collection of uniform items that parents would need to purchase for a pupil rather than on the cost effectiveness of individual items; this will include consideration of the fact that parents will need to purchase multiples of certain items, e.g. shirts and socks, to ensure their child can come to school in clean uniform every day.

The school will keep variations in school uniform for different groups of pupils, e.g. year group specific items, or house colours, to a minimum to ensure that pupils can get the most wear out of their uniform and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings.

The school will keep branded uniform items to a minimal level that is reasonable for all members of the school community. The school defines a branded uniform item as any item of clothing that cannot be purchased at a range of retailers, e.g. supermarkets, due to the item's logo, colour, design, fabric or other unique element. Where the school requires an item of branded clothing, it will assess how prices can be kept as low as possible and put measures in place to facilitate this. This may include:

- Offering sew or iron-on logo patches for blazers and jumpers that can be bought at non-specialist retailers, instead of requiring specific branded jumpers.
- Ensuring branded items are longer-lasting and unlikely to be worn out quickly, e.g. ties
- Making donated second hand uniform available for purchase at a lower price.

The school will meet the DfE's requirements and recommendations on costs and value for money. Care will be taken to ensure that school uniform is affordable for all current and prospective pupils, and that best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.

The school will work with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated will be passed to parents where possible. The school will not enter into exclusive single-supplier contracts or cash-back arrangements.

The school will not make frequent changes to uniform requirements and will take the views of parents and pupils into account when considering any changes.

## **Equality Principles**

The Wellington Academy takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any pupil very seriously.

In line with the above, the school will aim to ensure that its uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all pupils can access a school uniform that is comfortable, suitable for their needs, and reflects who they are, while avoiding any direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics or socio-economic status.

Where a school is consulting on changes to school uniform, it will seek to gather the views and ensure advice is sought specifically from pupils, and parents/carers of pupils, who are from a range of protected characteristics.

Parent's concerns and requests regarding school uniform and amendments to it are handled on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher.

### **Gender**

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain gender, the school will ensure that the cost of uniform is as equal in price as possible across items for all genders.

This includes:

- Adhering to the procedures laid out in the cost principles section of this policy
- Not directly requiring pupils of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by requiring female pupils to buy both trousers and skirts.
- Not holding pupils of different genders to different uniform standards, e.g. banning certain hairstyles for only one gender.

The Wellington Academy will implement a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that pupils will not be required to wear specific items based on their gender.

### **Religion and belief**

To avoid disproportionality impacting pupils of a certain religion, belief or culture, the school will ensure that there is flexibility to allow pupils to present themselves in a way that adheres to their dress requirements as far as possible, within the school's uniform policy.

The school will endeavour to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, the needs and rights of individual pupils will be weighed against and health and safety concerns appropriate to the circumstances, e.g. if safety headgear needs to be worn.

### **Race**

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain race, the school will ensure that its uniform policy does not constitute unlawful indirect discrimination through blanket rules. This includes:

- Not banning hairstyles to a pupil's ethnic origin e.g. Afro hairstyles
- Not banning hairstyles worn because of cultural family and social customs e.g. cornrows
- Not banning head covering related to a pupil's culture or ethnic origin, e.g. African heritage head wraps.

The school will follow the good practice guidance provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission on 'preventing hair discrimination in schools.'

### **SEND and Medical Conditions**

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils with SEND or medical conditions, the school will ensure its uniform policy takes into account the needs of these pupils. This includes:

- Ensuring the school uniform uses soft, stretchy fabrics and avoids intricate buttons or hard seams
- Allowing variations to the standard uniform for pupils whose medical conditions may impact how they dress, e.g. pupils with casts who require loose-fitting clothing or pupils with hair-loss conditions who wish to wear head coverings.

Where the needs of these pupils cannot be met in the standard uniform policy, individual adaptations to the uniform will be considered and permitted where possible.

The school will ensure that it works with a supplier that acts in accordance with the school's values and principles on equality and inclusion.

## **Complaints and Challenges**

The school will endeavour to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the school's complaints procedure and policies.

The school will refer individuals who wish to complain to the Complaints Policy and request that they follow the procedures outlined therein.

## **School Uniform Supplier**

The Wellington Academy's current school uniform supplier is:

Stitch-A-Logo  
12 Glenmore Business Park  
Colebrook Way  
Andover  
Hampshire  
SP10 3GQ

Telephone number: 01264 351 515

The local governing body will work with the Headteacher to ensure that items are procured as cheaply as possible without compromising on the quality and will be able to demonstrate how best value for money has been achieved.

If the school is considering changing its supplier and seeks a list of available suppliers, it will consider the following options:

- Consulting an industry body
- Researching local suppliers
- Consulting with other schools and networks, including other schools that form part of the multi-academy trust
- Having informal discussions with potential suppliers to help determine the school's own needs

If the school prepares to request bids from potential suppliers, it will consider the following elements:

- What products parents will need
- Existing contractual commitments
- Length of tender process

All schools in the Ascend Learning Trust will use the DfE's procuring uniform supplies template documents to ensure that they undergo the procurement process correctly. The templates consist of an invitation to tender, a request for quotation, and a pricing schedule.

Schools will use the invitation to tender template to ask questions of suppliers. Schools will then use the pricing schedule to ask suppliers to submit their prices.

## Uniform Assistance

The Wellington Academy will support disadvantaged families in meeting the cost of uniforms.

- Anyone in receipt of free school meals is entitled to assistance with uniform up to the cost of 50% but discretion will be applied when determining the level of support.
- To request assistance, parents/carers should contact their child's Year Leader. For students joining the school in the next academic year, they must contact the current Year 7 Transition Lead.
- Second hand uniform and outdoor clothing items, e.g. coats, are available and can be obtained by speaking to the child's Year Leader.

Parents will be invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it.

## Non-Compliance

Staff will be permitted to discipline pupils who breach this policy, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

## School Uniform

The Wellington Academy's school uniform is as follows:

Parents are encouraged to contact the school should they have any questions as to the acceptable school uniform before purchases are made.

The table below clearly sets out the compulsory items of school uniform to be worn by all pupils. All clothing should be clearly marked with the student's name.

Main uniform
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Black Wellington Academy blazer with embroidered badge</li><li>• Plain white shirt (no patterns; suitable for wearing with a tie)</li><li>• Black school trousers or School tartan skirt<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>Trousers must be full length, straight from the knee downwards, no skinny jeans, denim, patch pockets, double side seams, or studded pockets.</i></li></ul></li><li>• House tie (<i>required when wearing trousers</i>)</li><li>• House badge (<i>required when wearing a skirt</i>)</li><li>• Black socks <b>or</b> thick black tights</li><li>• Plain black formal shoes that can be polished<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Nike Air Force 1s or similar styles are not considered formal.</li></ul></li></ul>
Optional Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plain black v-neck sweater (no cardigans)</li></ul>
PE Kit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Black Wellington Academy polo shirt</li><li>• Black Wellington Academy shorts or skirt</li><li>• Black Wellington Academy tracksuit</li><li>• Black or white socks</li><li>• Training shoes</li><li>• Football boots (if needed for activities)</li></ul>

No items of PE kit are to be worn to or from school. PE kit is only to be worn for the duration of PE/Dance class. Pupils are expected to change back into their full school uniform including school shoes after a PE or Dance class. Pupils who do not have the correct PE kit will be unable to take part in these classes until they have rectified the infringement.

### Regulations concerning Make-up, Hair and Jewellery

#### Make-up

Make-up must be minimal, natural, and discreet. We recognise there is a difference between make-up use to cover a variety of skin problems (which can positively contribute to a feeling of self-confidence) and prominent, noticeable make-up applied to the skin, lips or eyes. The former is acceptable and the latter (which includes eyeliner, heavy mascara, eye shadow, eyebrow liner and lipstick or gloss) is not acceptable for school.

#### Nail Polish

Nail polish must be neutral/clear polish and not be brightly coloured or patterned. Nail extensions are not permitted.

#### Jewellery

Jewellery is limited to one pair of small studs, or ear hugging hoops, earrings in ear lobes (no drop earrings), a small ring, a single bracelet and one necklace. Facial or tongue piercings are not permitted under any circumstances. Excess jewellery will be confiscated; valuable items may be collected at the end of the day. All jewellery must be removed for PE.

#### Outdoor coats/tops

Pupils may wear a winter coat to and from school and whilst outside however, its must be removed when inside any of the buildings. Students are not permitted to wear their coats when moving between lessons within the building. Hoodies and other branded sweatshirts/jumpers are not part of the school uniform and are therefore not permitted. No hats or caps are to be worn inside or outside whilst in uniform.

#### Shoes

School shoes must be worn when wearing uniform and these must be black, sensible, plain, leather low-heeled shoes (NOT boots, trainers, trainer lookalike shoes, sandals, cloth or canvas shoes of any type).

- No sport trainers
- No alternative colour branding
- Completely black



## **Sixth Form Dress Code and Expectations**

Sixth Form students are expected to dress appropriately for learning and act as role models for the rest of the school. Staff are entitled to engage with students over their appearance and exercise judgement over what is suitable within the framework of this dress code. Ultimately the Head of Sixth Form will have the final judgement on the suitability of clothing and has the right to adapt the policy any time.

### **Dress Code**

- A collared shirt, polo shirt or t-shirt are acceptable. Exposure of the abdomen is unacceptable, as are strapless, backless and excessively low-cut tops or vest tops.
- Suit jacket, blazer, jumper, cardigan and smart hoodies are all acceptable.
- Smart trousers, cargo trousers, tracksuit bottoms or jeans are acceptable (no excessively ripped jeans)
- Skirts and dresses should not be too short (mid-thigh length at the shortest)
- Tailored Shorts and sport shorts are acceptable (mid-thigh length at the shortest)
- Smart shoes, boots or trainers (no flip flops, sliders or crocs)
- Hats and headwear are banned other than for religious purposes.

### **Hair Tattoos and Jewellery**

- Unconventional hair styles and extreme and unnatural colours are not acceptable.
- Tattoos should be discreet and not on the face or throat. If possible to do so, tattoos should be covered.
- Conventional jewellery/earrings are acceptable.

### **Items of value**

Items of value (expensive mobile phones, jewellery, iPads, laptops, significant amounts of money, etc.) are brought into the Academy at the pupil's own risk. We cannot accept liability for loss of valuables. Mobile phones and ipods may be used in the Sixth Form Area but not around the main school.

**Lanyards must be worn at all times.**

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*<sup>i</sup> The responsible officer must keep the policy or procedure current between formal reviews. Minor or technical changes to a policy or procedure that do not affect its substance may be made by the responsible officer without requiring approval from the approving body. Examples include updating staff names, contact details, or making technical adjustments required by legislation or guidance that do not alter how the policy or procedure works. If a proposed change is substantial and does not qualify as a minor or technical drafting amendment, the revised policy or procedure must be submitted to the next available meeting of the approving body for consideration and approval.*