School Uniform Policy

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Responsible Officer	**Chief Executive Officer**

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1. Aims

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 all parents and carers
- Explain how we will avoid discrimination in line with our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010
- Clarify our expectations for school uniform

2. Our school's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include: age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

To avoid discrimination, our school will:

- Avoid listing uniform items based on sex, to give all children and young people the opportunity to wear the uniform they feel most comfortable in
- Make sure that our uniform costs the same for all children and young people
- Allow children and young people with sensory or physical needs to make reasonable adaptations to their uniform, depending on their specific needs
- Allow all children and young people to have long hair (although we reserve the right to ask that long hair be tied back)
- Allow all children and young people to style their hair in a way that is appropriate for school, and makes them feel most comfortable
- Allow children and young people to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons, or if they are experiencing discomfort
- Allow children and young people to wear headscarves and/or other religious garments
- Allow for reasonable adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality by asking children and young people or their parents/carers to get in touch with the Head of Academy, who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis

3. Limiting the cost of school uniform

Our Trust and its academies (schools) have a duty to make sure that the uniform we require is affordable, in line with statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on the cost of school uniforms.

We have reviewed our uniform policy as part of the Poverty Proofing work that each school has been doing with the charity 'Children North East.' The Trust-wide lead for Poverty Proofing is Richie Dunn.

There is no compulsion from school to purchase branded uniform and we would strongly encourage families to purchase widely available cheaper alternatives from local supermarkets etc. We understand that many of our children and young people may experience wear and tear rather quickly and for this reason we lace no expectations on families to purchase branded items. This is also in line with our approach to Poverty Proofing.

The important thing about uniform is that all our children and young people feel comfortable during the school day. We are highly flexible with our approach to uniform and recognise that many children and young people may find uniform uncomfortable from a sensory perspective. We are happy to support jogging bottoms as an alternative to trousers as we recognise that this supports independent access to the toilet for many of our children and young people.

4. Expectations for school uniform

4.1 Our school uniform

We recognise that uniform in our Trust can help to:

- Bring about a feeling of belonging.
- Support children, young people and parents/carers in removing competitive dressing/ brand names etc.
- Ensure that all children and young people come to school smartly and appropriately dressed.
- Enable the needs of all children and young people to be met. (We accept that not all young people can fasten zips and buttons etc so elasticated bottoms are fine and this can also make it easier for changing)
- We also acknowledge that many children and young people cannot tolerate the feel of some clothing or fastenings and we are flexible

Details of the suggested uniform for each individual academy (school) are set out in the transition packs when a child or young person starts and at points of transition within the school. All schools are open to discussions about flexibility regarding uniform, especially to meet the sensory needs of individual students.

There are often opportunities for uniform swaps as young people grow out of clothing and we encourage parents/carers to send used items that remain in good condition to the school for reuse.

4.2 Where to purchase or acquire uniform

We encourage families to purchase widely available alternative non-branded uniform which can be bought from a range of suppliers, supermarkets, local shops etc. The important thing about uniform is that all our students feel comfortable during the school day.

5. Expectations for our school community

5.1 Children and Young People

Children and young people are expected to wear the appropriate uniform, or agreed adjustments, at all times (other than specified non-school uniform days) while:

- On the school premises
- Travelling to and from school
- At out-of-school events or on trips that are organised by the school, or where they are representing the school (if required)

5.2 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to make sure their child or young person has the correct uniform and PE kit, and that every item is:

- Clean
- Clearly labelled with the child's name
- In good condition

Parents/carers are also expected to contact the Head of Academy if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to:

- Their child's protected characteristics
- The cost of the uniform

5.3 Colleagues

Colleagues will closely monitor children and young people to make sure they are in correct and appropriate uniform, ensuring they focus on their needs. They will give any children and young people and families breaching the uniform policy the opportunity to comply but will follow up with the Head of Academy if the situation doesn't improve.

In cases where it is suspected that financial hardship has resulted in a pupil not complying with this uniform policy, staff will take a mindful and considerate approach to resolving the situation, in line with the Trust's work on Poverty Proofing.

5.4 Trustees

The Board of Trustees will review this policy and make sure that it:

- Is appropriate for each school's context
- Is implemented fairly across the schools in the Trust
- Takes into account the views of parents/carers, and children and young people
- Offers a uniform that is appropriate, practical and safe for all children and young people

The Board will also make sure that the school's uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money, for example by avoiding single-supplier contracts and by re-tendering contracts at least every 5 years.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the CEO. At every review, it will be approved by the Standards Committee.

7. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Readiness to Learn (Behaviour) Policy
- Equality information and objectives statement
- Anti-bullying Policy