



# Uniform Policy

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**Policy Reviewed and Adopted by**

**Governing Board: Dec 22**

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**Responsible Officer: B Foxton, Business Manager**

## Introduction

Hawes Side Academy believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital to promote the ethos of the school and provide a sense of belonging and identity for all pupils, regardless of their protected characteristics or socio-economic circumstances.

## Purpose of this policy

This policy lays out the measures the academy has taken to ensure a consistent, fair and inclusive uniform policy, and to implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all pupils, and is affordable and the best value for money for the pupils' families.

We believe that pupils learn most effectively and achieve their best outcomes when they are comfortable, able to be themselves, and dressed in such a way that sets an appropriate tone for education.

## Linked Documentation

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

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education Act 2011
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

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

- DfE (2021) 'Cost of school uniforms'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2021) 'School uniforms'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Financial Procedures

## Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the Principal and academy community, a practical and smart school uniform that accurately reflects the academy's vision and values.
- Ensuring that the academy's uniform is accessible and inclusive, and does not disadvantage any pupil by virtue of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of parents, pupils and the wider school community regarding changes to the academy's uniform.
- Ensuring that the academy's uniform is accessible and affordable.
- Demonstrating how best value for money has been achieved in the uniform policy.
- Ensuring compliance with the DfE's 'Cost of school uniforms' guidance.
- Processing and approving all eligible School Uniform Assistance Application Forms.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Enforcing the academy's uniform 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 academy community in regard to the academy's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.
- Providing pupils with an exemption letter as appropriate, e.g. for a pupil who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting top.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Ensuring that pupils dress in accordance with this policy at all times.

- Working with parents of pupils who are in breach of this policy.
- Ensuring that pupils understand why having a consistent and practical school uniform is important, e.g. academy identity.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct school uniform as detailed in this policy.
- Informing the Principal if their child requires a more relaxed uniform policy for a period of time, including why.
- 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 Principal has granted an exemption.
- Looking after their uniform as appropriate.
- Understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to the academy, e.g. school identity and community.

## Definitions

## Related Procedures

### Cost principles

The academy is committed to ensuring that its uniform is affordable and accessible to all pupils, and does not place an unreasonable financial burden on parents.

In accordance with the 'School Admissions Code', the Principal will ensure that the uniform policy does not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

The academy will assess the overall cost implications of its uniform policy regularly, including prior to making any changes to the school uniform. When evaluating whether costs are reasonable and proportionate, the academy 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 quickly and require new sets of uniform more frequently.
- Parents of pupils with protected characteristics that may impact their ability to access the uniform due to costs.

The academy 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 the academy in clean uniform every day.

The academy keeps variations in school uniform for different groups of pupils, e.g. year group-specific items to a minimum where possible to ensure that pupils can get the most wear out of their uniform possible and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings. At Hawes Side Academy the only variation is a hoody in Year 6

The academy keeps branded uniform items to a minimal level that is reasonable for all members of the school community. The academy defines a branded uniform item as any item of clothing that cannot be purchased at a range of retailers, including by virtue of logos, colours, design and fabrics. Where the academy decides to require an item of branded clothing, it will conduct an assessment to ensure prices are kept as low as possible, e.g. by offering sew- or iron-on logo badges for jumpers that can be bought at retailers instead of requiring special branded jumpers. The academy will also offer an alternative non-branded option.

The academy is committed to meeting the DfE's recommendations on costs and value for money. Every care is taken to ensure that our uniforms are affordable for all current and prospective pupils, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.

The academy works with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated are passed to parents where possible and does not enter into exclusive single supplier contracts or cash-back arrangements. More information on supplier processes can be found in the 'School uniform supplier' section of this policy.

The academy will not amend uniform requirements regularly and will take the views of parents and pupils into account when considering any changes to uniforms.

### **Equality principles**

The academy takes its legal obligation to avoid discriminating against any protected characteristic unlawfully very seriously, and aims to ensure that the uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all pupils are supported to access a school uniform which is comfortable, suitable for their needs, and reflects who they are.

The academy will work to ensure that uniform cost does not disproportionately affect any pupils by ensuring that uniforms for all genders are as equal in price as possible and by adhering to the cost principles laid out above.

The academy will ensure that parents and pupils are consulted over any changes to school uniform, and that views and advice is sought specifically from pupils, and parents of pupils, who:

- Are transgender, including non-binary pupils.
- Have SEND and/or sensory needs.
- Are of a religious or cultural background that has dress requirements.

The academy implements a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that pupils are not required to wear specific items based on their gender, and may wear any of the uniform items listed in the 'School uniform' section of this policy regardless of the legal sex recorded on the school's records. Transgender pupils are supported to access the uniform that best reflects their gender expression.

The academy ensures that pupils who are required to follow certain dress requirements, e.g. by virtue of their membership of a particular religious or cultural group, are afforded flexibility to allow them to wear a uniform that adheres to their requirements as far as possible. The academy endeavours to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, will ensure that the needs and rights of individual pupils are weighed against any health and safety concerns for the entire academy community.

Parents' concerns and requests regarding religious clothing are dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Principal and governing board, and always in accordance with the academy Complaints Policy.

The academy ensures that the needs of pupils with SEND and/or sensory difficulties are considered in the uniform policy, e.g. ensuring soft, stretchy fabrics and avoiding intricate buttons or hard seams; however, where the needs of these pupils cannot be met in the standard uniform policy, individual adaptations to the uniform will be considered and permitted wherever possible.

### **Complaints and challenges**

The academy endeavours to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the academy Complaints Policy.

To make a complaint, parents should refer to the Complaints Policy and follow the stipulations outlined.

When a complaint is received, the academy works with parents to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

Governors are willing to consider reasonable requests for flexibility to allow a pupil to accommodate particular social and cultural circumstances.

### **School uniform supplier**

The academy does not stock uniform to sell. Local and online suppliers stock the academy uniform to allow choice to parents. These are:

- First Class Kids
- Brigade

### **Uniform assistance**

The academy will endeavor to support vulnerable families in providing uniforms. The academy holds second-hand school uniforms in school for parents to access; access to these uniforms is available upon request. Parents are invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it.

A budget for school uniform assistance is held to support families if needed. Financial assistance will be assessed on the basis of individual circumstances. Evidence of eligibility will be required, e.g. evidence of receipt of the benefits.

### **Lost Property**

The academy will request that parents should place names in all uniform to allow safe return if items are lost. Un-named/unclaimed items will be kept in the central lost property store and can be accessed as needed.

Items in the central store will be displayed for collection at the end of each half term, where items are not retrieved after being displayed twice they will be treated as second-hand school uniforms as above. Items that are not fit for this purpose will be appropriately disposed of.

### **Non-compliance**

The academy will expect and promote that pupils attend school in the uniform as stated and will provide support as above to ensure uniform requirements can be fulfilled.

In cases where breach of uniform policy is not due to the need for assistance, the academy behaviour policy will be followed and parents will be notified in all cases.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored annually to ensure appropriate organisation and arrangements are in place to control financial risk.

This will be undertaken through internal quality assurance processes by the senior team, the Governing board and/or an external audit team to support the academy and provide feedback to ensure that effective organisation and arrangements are in place.