



# Horizons Therapeutic Education Trust

## Flexible Clothing and Uniform Policy

*Policy | Updated for Trust Board approval: 11 May 2026*

<b>Trust / setting</b>	Horizons Therapeutic Education Trust (HTET)
<b>Policy owner</b>	Head of Provision / Equality Lead
<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>Approval route</b>	Trust Board
<b>Next review</b>	May 2027 or sooner if statutory guidance changes
<b>Publication / circulation</b>	Website and all HTET employees, trustees and relevant partners

### Summary of May 2026 revisions

Area	Revision made	Board assurance point
DfE cost guidance	Added statutory guidance on cost of school uniforms and draft 2026 branded-item expectations.	Confirms low-cost approach.
Equality and SEND	Added reasonable adjustments, sensory need and trauma-informed flexibility.	Supports HTET cohort needs.
Safety	Clarified safety, offensive clothing, footwear and preparation-for-adulthood expectations.	Keeps policy defensible without unnecessary restriction.

### Policy statement

HTET operates a flexible clothing policy rather than a traditional compulsory branded uniform. This reflects the Trust's therapeutic education model, young people's sensory, trauma, mental health and SEND needs, and the importance of reducing barriers to attendance and engagement.

The Trust will have regard to statutory guidance on the cost of school uniforms. Because HTET does not require compulsory branded uniform, the policy is designed to keep costs low, support equality and avoid unnecessary barriers for young people and carers.

## Expectations

- Young people should wear clothing that is safe, practical and suitable for the planned learning, activity, community or work-related context.
- Clothing must not contain offensive, discriminatory, sexually explicit, violent, extremist, drug/alcohol-related or otherwise inappropriate images or language.
- Tops must provide appropriate coverage for a learning environment; straps are acceptable but clothing must be safe and not intentionally exposing.
- Footwear should be flat, safe and suitable for the activity; specific footwear may be required for outdoor, practical, PE, vocational or work-experience activities.
- Jewellery, accessories or clothing that creates a safety risk may be restricted for specific activities.

## Equality, SEND and reasonable adjustments

Staff will consider sensory processing differences, trauma triggers, gender identity, disability, religion or belief, cultural needs, mental health, self-esteem and safeguarding when applying this policy. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required. Any restriction must be proportionate, explained respectfully and recorded where it relates to safeguarding, risk or repeated concern.

## Preparation for adulthood

Although HTET does not require traditional uniform, young people will be supported to understand clothing expectations in different settings, including college, work experience, interviews, community activities and employment. This will be addressed through PSHCE, employability, keyworker work and transition planning.

## Costs and branded items

HTET will avoid compulsory branded items unless there is a clear educational, safety or identity reason approved by the Trust Board. If any branded or specific items are introduced in future, the Trust must consider cost, availability, second-hand options, supplier arrangements, equality impact and the statutory guidance on cost of school uniforms, including the government's proposed limit on compulsory branded items from September 2026.

## Concerns and responses

Concerns about clothing should be addressed privately, respectfully and relationally. Staff should avoid shaming language. Where the issue is safety or offence, staff may ask the young person to change, cover the item, remove the risk or use alternative clothing. Persistent concerns should be reviewed through keyworker, safeguarding or behaviour-support processes as appropriate.

## Key statutory and regulatory framework

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE 2025), statutory guidance for schools and colleges.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and reasonable-adjustment duties.
- DfE statutory guidance on the cost of school uniforms, including updated 2025 statutory and draft 2026 guidance.

Where statutory guidance changes, the CEO, DSL, CFO and/or relevant policy owner will review the affected policy and bring amendments to the Trust Board or appropriate committee at the earliest practical point.

## Approval and review

<b>Approved by</b>	Trust Board
<b>Date approved</b>	11 May 2026
<b>Next review date</b>	May 2027 or sooner if statutory guidance changes
<b>Policy owner responsible for review</b>	CEO / Senior Leadership Team