



Rye College Policy

Policy Title:	Uniform
Leadership Responsibility:	Deputy Headteacher
Review Body:	Head Teacher
Date:	January 2024
Review:	January 2025

Statement of intent

Rye College (the Academy) believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital for:

- Promoting the ethos of the Academy.
- Providing a sense of belonging and identity for all students, regardless of their protected characteristics or socio-economic circumstances.
- Setting an appropriate tone for education.

For the purposes of this policy, “uniform” includes the following elements of students’ 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 the Academy has taken to ensure a consistent, fair, and inclusive uniform policy, and to implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all students, is affordable and provides the best value for money for both the Academy and students’ families.

We believe students 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.

In writing and updating this policy, we have sought to:

- Engage with parents and students.
- 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 students.
- 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 students 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. Legal framework

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
- Education Act 2011
- Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021
- DfE (2021) 'Cost of school uniforms'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2021) 'School uniforms'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) 'Preventing hair discrimination in schools'
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This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Academy Complaints Policy
- Academy Behaviour Management Policy
- Trust Pupil Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Financial Procedures Manual (Trust)

Roles and responsibilities

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the school community, a practical and smart uniform that accurately reflects the Academy's vision and values.
- Ensuring the Academy's uniform is accessible and inclusive, and does not disadvantage any student by virtue of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of parents, students, and the wider school community regarding changes to the Academy's uniform.
- Ensuring the Academy's uniform is 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.
- Considering all applications for assistance.

The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for:

- Enforcing the Academy's uniform on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring teachers understand this policy and what to do if a student breaches the policy.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of the school community about the Academy's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the Head Teacher.
- Providing students with exemption, as appropriate, e.g., for a student who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting top.

Colleagues are responsible for:



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

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct uniform as detailed in this policy.
- Informing the Head Teacher if their child requires a more relaxed uniform policy for a period, including why.
- Ensuring their child's uniform is clean, presentable and the correct size.

Students are responsible for:

- Always wearing the correct uniform, unless the Head Teacher has granted an exemption.
- Looking after their uniform, as appropriate.
- Understanding and respecting why a uniform is important to the College, e.g., College identity and community.

Cost principles

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

- The Academy will seek to ensure that the uniform is affordable. In so doing, the Academy 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 Academy will seek to keep the use of branded items to a minimum.
- The Academy 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 Academy will seek to ensure that pre-loved uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on pre-loved uniforms will be published on the website.

Principles in practice

In accordance with the 'School Admissions Code', the Head Teacher will ensure that the Academy's uniform requirements do 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, students at the Academy.
- Parents of younger children, as they are likely to grow quickly and require new sets of uniform more frequently.
- Parents of students with protected characteristics that may impact their ability to access the uniform due to costs.
- Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC).



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

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, e.g., supermarkets, due to the item's logo, colour, design, fabric or other unique element. Where the Academy 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 grown out of quickly, e.g., ties.

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 students, 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 we do not enter 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 students into account when considering any changes to school uniforms.

Equality principles

The Academy takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any protected characteristic very seriously.

In line with the above, the Academy aims to ensure its uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all students are supported to access a uniform which 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.

The Academy will ensure parents and students are consulted over any changes to uniform, and that, where appropriate, and with students' consent, views and advice are sought specifically from students, and parents of students, who:

- Are transgender or non-binary, have SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and/or sensory needs.
- Are of a religious or cultural background that has specific dress requirements.

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



Information on how the Academy ensures its uniform policy does not discriminate against students with specific protected characteristics is outlined below.

Gender

To avoid disproportionately impacting students of a certain gender, the Academy 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 students of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g., by requiring female students to buy both trousers and skirts.
- Not indirectly requiring students of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g., by offering football in PE to only male students and requiring they buy football boots to participate.
- Not holding students of different genders to different uniform standards, e.g., by banning certain hairstyles for only one gender.

The Academy implements a gender-neutral uniform, meaning students are not required to wear specific items based on their gender, and may wear any of the uniform items listed in **Appendix A** regardless of the legal sex recorded on the Academy's records. Transgender students are supported to access the uniform that best reflects their gender expression.

Religion and belief

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

The Academy endeavours to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, will ensure the needs and rights of individual students are weighed against any health and safety concerns appropriate to the circumstances and for the entire school community.

Race

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

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

The Academy 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 students with SEND or medical conditions, the Academy will ensure its uniform policy takes into account the needs of these students. This includes:

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

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

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

Complaints and challenges

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

The Academy will refer individuals who wish to complain to the Complaints Policy and request that they follow the procedures outlined therein. When a complaint is received, the Academy works with parents to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

The Academy has an agreed procedure in place with its uniform supplier to deal with complaints about the supply and quality of uniforms.

In considering a complaint, parents should be aware that teachers can sanction students for breaching the Academy's policy on appearance or uniform. The Academy expects this to be carried out in accordance with the Academy's published Behaviour Management Policy. The Academy aims to deal with student non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

School uniform supplier

Our current school uniform supplier is:

Superstitch 86
7 Castleham Road
ST LEONARDS-ON-SEA
TN38 9NR

www.superstitch86.co.uk

The uniform supplier will accept school uniform assistance vouchers.

The Head Teacher will ensure a written contract is in place with the supplier for branded items.

The Academy will retender the uniform contract every five years, whether changes to the uniform are made or not, in line with the Financial Procedures Manual (Trust). The Head Teacher will be able to demonstrate how uniform is procured at the best value for money. The Head Teacher will work to



ensure items are procured as cheaply as possible without compromising on the quality, e.g., by requesting standard-style items from the supplier rather than more intricate and unique designs.

The Academy does not sign contracts with suppliers before requesting visualisations of proposed uniform, as well as fabric samples.

Where the Academy is proposing to change suppliers, it will reach out to suppliers by October in the determination year.

Uniform assistance

The Academy can go some way to supporting vulnerable families in meeting the costs of uniforms. To request uniform assistance, families should be eligible for free school meals in the first instance. Requests should be made in writing to the Head Teacher.

Second-hand uniform is sold seasonally, at St. Michael's Hospice Charity Shop:

St. Michael's Hospice Charity Shop
31 Cinque Ports Street
RYE
TN31 7AD

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

Non-compliance

Colleagues are permitted to discipline students for breaching this policy, where relevant to their role, in accordance with the Academy's Behaviour Management Policy.

Students who arrive at College in incorrect uniform:

- Incorrect shoes – plimsolls will be provided to wear for the day.
- Incorrect shirt/polo shirt – a plain black polo shirt will be provided for the day.
- Incorrect skirt /trousers /shorts – a skirt or trousers will be provided for the day.
- Incorrect jumper – this will be confiscated for the day, if worn on site.

If a student refuses to accept the alternative, parents will be contacted and the student placed in solo study for the day, unless parents are able to bring the correct item for their child to wear.

The Head Teacher, or a person authorised by the Head Teacher, is permitted to ask a student to briefly go home to remedy breaches to the uniform.

When deciding whether to allow a student to return home, the Academy considers the student's age and vulnerability, the length of time it will take, and the availability of the student's parents. A parent will always be contacted before sending the student home – if contact with the student's parent cannot be made, the student will remain in school.

Where a student has been sent home to rectify uniform breaches, the absence is recorded as 'authorised'.

If a student repeatedly breaches uniform rules, or takes longer than necessary to rectify the problem, the absence is counted as 'unauthorised'.



Parents will be notified of students' breaches of school uniform in all cases.

School uniform

College colours

Our College colours (as in the tie) are as follows:

- Black
- Peacock/teal, ivory and red (as in the Academy's 's tie)

Clothing

The school uniform is detailed in Appendix A.

Shoes/trainers must be **plain black with no visible logos**. No boots, heels, logos, stripes, or coloured markings.

Skirts must be knee-length. No leggings, jeggings, cargo trousers, jeans or jogging / tracksuit bottoms are permitted.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child brings their PE kit to College when needed.

Jewellery

For health and safety jewellery is limited to watches and stud earrings. Other piercings are not allowed and students will be asked to remove them.

Jewellery is the responsibility of the student and not the Academy. Lost or damaged items will not be refunded. All jewellery must be removed during practical lessons, including PE lessons and science experiments. Students wearing excessive jewellery are required to remove it, and the items may be confiscated.

School bag

Students are expected to carry bags that are suitable for holding books and equipment. Bags should be plain, with no obtrusive logos, slogans or patterns and be large enough to carry an A4 folder. Rucksacks and backpacks are best for good back health if worn over both shoulders.

Bags featuring inappropriate images, slogans or phrases are not permitted.

The Academy encourages students to bring non-valuable bags to school. The Academy will not be liable for lost or damaged bags.

Hairstyles and make-up

Natural looking make-up only; no false eye lashes, spray tans or exaggerated eyeliner.

For health and safety, no nail varnish or nail extensions.

Hair should be a natural colour; bright colour hair dye is not acceptable.

No excessive hair accessories.

Students with long hair must ensure it is tied up during practical lessons, e.g., during PE, Science.



The Academy reserves the right to make a judgement on where students' hairstyles or hair colours are inappropriate for the College environment; however, will ensure any such judgements do not discriminate against any student by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual student's scenario will be considered where any judgements on appropriateness are to be made, and parents will always have the freedom to complain via the College's Complaints Policy.

Students wearing excessive makeup are required to remove it. Failure to do so will result in solo study.

Other

- In severe weather, suitable waterproof top-coats should be worn.
- Plain headscarves in college colours may be worn for religious or cultural beliefs.
- Hats may not be worn indoors.

Students who arrive at College in incorrect uniform:

- Incorrect shoes – plimsolls will be provided to wear for the day.
- Incorrect shirt/polo shirt – a plain black polo shirt will be provided for the day.
- Incorrect skirt /trousers /shorts – a skirt or trousers will be provided for the day.
- Incorrect jumper – this will be confiscated for the day, if worn on site.

If a student refuses to accept the alternative, parents will be contacted and the student placed in solo study for the day, unless parents are able to bring the correct item for their child to wear.

Adverse weather

All students are required to wear weather-appropriate clothing that covers as much of their skin as possible during adverse weather.

For hot temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Loose-fitting and lightweight shirts or covered necklines.
- Knee-length skirts, shorts, or trousers.
- Tops that cover the shoulder area.
- Sunscreen with UV protection when outside, where possible.

Students will be advised not to wear any jumpers or blazers during heatwaves. If outside during break times, students not wearing sun-safe clothing are advised to stay in an area protected from the sun, or spare clothing is provided.

For cold temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Scarfs, gloves, coats, and hats when they are outside.
- Warm jumpers that conform to the uniform policy.
- Trousers, or thick tights with skirts.

Labelling

All students' clothing and footwear should be clearly labelled with their name.



Any lost clothing is be taken to the lost property box in the Student Hub. All lost property is retained for one term (six weeks) and is disposed of if it is not collected within this time.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head Teacher.

The Academy will engage with parents and students when reviewing this policy.

Any subsequent changes to this policy will be communicated to all colleagues, students, parents and other relevant stakeholders.



Appendix A: Clothing list

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire	Cost per item from school supplier
Regular uniform				
College blazer	Required	College logo on left-hand side	Branded blazer available from school supplier, or second hand from St Michael's Hospice Charity Shop.	£29.99 - £34.99
White shirt	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier or high street retailers	£14.99 - £17.99
College tie	Required (worn with shirt)	Branded	Available from school supplier or St Michael's Hospice Charity Shop.	£4.99
Black V neck jumper	Optional	Teal accent at neck	Branded available from school supplier, or second hand from St Michael's Hospice Charity Shop.	£16.99 - £19.99
Black trousers or black skirt	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier or high street retailers	Trouser £11.99 - £29.99 Skirt £16.99 - £24.99
Sensible, plain black shoes or trainers	Required	No branding	Available from high street retailers	N/A
Black polo shirt	Optional for summer term	College logo on left-hand side	Branded polo available from school supplier, or second hand from St Michael's Hospice Charity Shop.	£9.99 - £10.99
Plain black or grey tailored shorts	Optional for summer term	No branding	Available from school supplier or high street retailers	N/A
PE Kit				
Red t-shirt	Required	College logo on left-hand side	Branded available from school supplier, or second hand from St. Michael's Hospice Charity Shop.	£12.99 - £14.99
Black shorts	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier or high street retailers	£7.75 - £9.30
Black tracksuit bottoms		No branding	Available from school supplier or high street retailers	£11.95 - £14.35
Black sports leggings		No branding	Available from school supplier or high street retailers	£15.99 - £19.99
Red zip tracksuit top	Optional	College logo on left-hand side	Branded available from school supplier	£17.99 - £19.99
Optional Accessories				
PE bag	Optional	College logo	Available from school supplier	£4.99



PE socks	Optional	No branding	Available from school supplier or high street retailers	£4.99 - £5.99
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