



Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Dear Parents,

## **Tarleton Academy School Uniform and Appearance Policy - Standards of Footwear**

At Tarleton Academy our uniform is an important way in which we identify ourselves as a school family. It promotes a strong, cohesive school identity which supports high standards and expectations in all areas of school life, including a genuine sense of readiness to work with a focused frame of mind. We believe that a school uniform is important, because it:

- looks smart
- is cost effective
- contributes to a sense of belonging
- fosters a feeling of pride
- reduces 'fashion competition' between students

As a school we pride ourselves on the impressive overall standard of uniform upheld by our young people. This clearly results from setting and maintaining high expectations in this regard and is reflected in the fact that members of the public regularly comment on how immaculately dressed our students are.

We have, however, of late seen an increase in the number of pupils not wearing appropriate footwear for school. This issue was raised with you, as parents, in November 2019 (Important Updates and Reminders letter) and again in December 2019 (End of Term Letter) referring to this and related uniform concerns.

As stated in our 'Uniform and Appearance Policy' plain, black, smart, sturdy shoes (boots, trainers with logos, flimsy ballet/court shoes, pumps, fabric or high heels are not acceptable) must be worn for school. As well as the points highlighted above, the health and safety of our students is extremely important. We must insist, therefore, that shoes are fit for purpose. We have noted an increase in the number of students being injured due to slips and falls whilst walking to and around the school site.

In order to support parents in making the correct choices with regard to styles, we have below provided more specific guidance as well as visual examples of what we deem to be acceptable and unacceptable footwear.

### **To be 'sturdy' and 'fit for purpose' shoes need to be:**

- all black
- plain
- leather (not rubber or a jelly style)
- low heeled
- be secure on the foot
- below the ankle
- no adornments
- no coloured markings/logo's
- no metal markings/logo's.

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## Pitfalls to avoid as parents purchasing footwear:

Some shops advertise a 'School Shoe' section, or state that items of footwear on sale are 'School Shoes'. Very often the footwear sold in these sections is not appropriate or acceptable as a school shoe at Tarleton Academy. There are 'grey' areas with regards to some 'smart casual' footwear currently advertised by retailers as appropriate for school. Tarleton Academy would like to state that, although these shoes may be classed as 'smart', they are not formal enough for our setting. Furthermore, footwear sold in most sports shops is inappropriate for school. Brand logos and designer labels should not, for example, be a feature.

## Inappropriate Footwear:

Trainers or variations of trainers are deemed as completely **inappropriate** for school and as such **should not** be purchased. This includes the examples below:

		
Kickers Tovni Lacer sneakers	Adidas Court Vantage Mono	Nike Air Force 1

The following types of footwear and their subtle variations, such as flimsy slip on ballerina flat soled shoes, and shoes which are adorned with labels or branding are inappropriate for school and as such **should not** be purchased or worn. As referred to earlier, we have notice a small rise in accidents and injuries around the school site linked to students slipping or losing their shoe directly due to the style of shoes shown below:

	
Ballerina style decorative Shoes	Vivienne Westwood Style designer Jelly shoes

## Appropriate Footwear:

Plain black office style footwear is acceptable. They may have laces and a very small heel, shoes should be sturdy and secure on the foot. These styles of shoe are acceptable.

		
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*Please note that the information above is 'guidance' only. It is impossible to give a definitive list. We would recommend that parents ask a member of the pastoral team if they are unsure about the suitability of footwear. The final decision of suitability, or not, of the appearance of students lies with the Headteacher.*

All students have been informed about footwear and explanation has been given to them that we would be writing to parents directly about this issue. In order to support parents from a financial perspective, we are giving time for footwear issues to be rectified. In this respect we will use the return from the February half-term as the point at which we expect changes to be made. From Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February we will implement the uniform and appearance policy in full. Thank you to those students and families who have already changed footwear in line with the policy.

We have recently asked tutors to remind students about the uniform and appearance policy and have noted any concerns that we currently have. We will write to parents individually clearly stating what our concerns are prior to the half-term break and how this should be addressed. We hope this process will reduce the need to speak to students about footwear and uniform issues and we welcome your support in this matter.

We understand that, with this time frame, there may be families who require financial support to rectify uniform issues. Please do not hesitate to contact the pastoral team if this is the case.

Yours sincerely,

*Mr M Cunniffe*

Head of School