Uniform Policy

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Links
Developing school uniform policy - GOV.UK
Cost of school uniforms - GOV.UK
Procuring school uniform supplies - GOV.UK

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Vantage CE Academy Trust believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital for:

- Promoting the ethos of a school.
- Providing a sense of belonging and identity.
- Setting an appropriate tone for education.

For the purposes of this policy, "uniform" includes the following elements of pupils' 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 school has taken to ensure a consistent, fair and inclusive uniform policy, and to implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all pupils, is affordable, and provides the best value for money for both the school and 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 a way that sets an appropriate tone for education.

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

- 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 pupils.
- 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 pupils 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 and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021
- DfE (2021) 'Cost of school uniforms'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2024) 'School uniforms: guidance for schools'
- DfE (2021) 'School uniforms'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) 'Preventing hair discrimination in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following trust/school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy

- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

POLICY AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Vantage Academy Trust School Uniform Policy is guided by our core values of Aspiration, Togetherness, and Service. The following aims and objectives set the strategic intent of the policy across all schools within the Trust:

1. **Aspiration**
We aim to set high standards for personal presentation that reflect ambition, pride, and preparation for future success.
Objectives:

- Promote high standards of appearance to support a culture of ambition and pride.
- Encourage pupils to take pride in their school identity and behave in a manner that reflects the Trust's aspirational ethos.
- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing through uniform choices that support comfort, mobility, and safety in all learning environments.
- Promote environmental responsibility by encouraging sustainable uniform options and the use of pre-loved or recycled garments.

2. **Togetherness**
We aim to foster unity and a shared identity across the Trust, while respecting the individual character and context of each school.
Objectives:

- Strengthen a sense of belonging and shared community across all Trust schools.
- Maintain a consistent framework for uniform expectations that supports cohesion while allowing flexibility for local variation.
- Promote a culture of collective pride and inclusion through common standards and shared values.

3**. Service**
We aim to ensure that uniform expectations are fair, inclusive, and considerate of all families, removing barriers to participation and supporting equality.
Objectives:

- Ensure equity and affordability by specifying cost-effective, durable uniform options and limiting the use of branded items.
- Support cultural, religious, and individual inclusion through flexible, respectful uniform guidance.
- Provide clear, accessible communication with families to support understanding and compliance with uniform expectations.
- Encourage systems for uniform recycling or assistance to reduce financial strain and promote sustainable practices.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The board of trustees is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the principal and school community, a practical and smart school uniform that accurately reflects the school's vision and values.

- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible, inclusive and does not disadvantage any pupil because 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 school's uniform.
- Ensuring that the school'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.
- Processing and approving all eligible School Uniform Assistance Application Forms.

The principal is responsible for:

- Enforcing the school's uniform rules 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 school community in regard to the school's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.
- Flexibility for pupils as appropriate, e.g. for a pupil who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting shirt.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that pupils dress in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Where appropriate to their role, reminding pupils and/or parents of the uniform policy.
- Ensuring that pupils understand why having a consistent and practical school uniform is important, e.g. school identity.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct school uniform as detailed in this policy.
- Informing the headteacher if their child requires an exemption to the uniform rules for a period of time, with a reason why.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Wearing the correct uniform at all times, unless there is a reason for non-uniform such as medical.
- Looking after their uniform as appropriate.
- Understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to the school, e.g. school identity and community.

COST OF UNIFORM

Each school will develop its uniform policy as part of this policy in relation to the following starting principles:

- The school will seek to ensure that the uniform is affordable. In so doing, the school 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 school will seek to keep the use of branded items to a minimum.
- The school 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 school will seek to ensure that good-quality second-hand uniforms are available for parents who may wish to access them.

Principles in practice

In accordance with the 'School Admissions Code', the principal will ensure that the school's uniform requirements do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

The school 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 school 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.
- Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.

The school 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.
The school will keep variations in school uniform for different groups of pupils, e.g. year group-specific items or house colours, to a minimum to ensure that pupils can get the most wear out of their uniform and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings.
The school will keep branded uniform items to a minimal level that is reasonable for all members of the school community. The school 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 school 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.
- Making donated second-hand uniform available.

The school will meet the DfE's requirements and recommendations on costs and value for money. Care will be taken to ensure that school uniform is affordable for all current and prospective pupils, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.
The school will work with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. The school will 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 each school's policy.
The school will not make frequent changes to uniform requirements and will take the views of parents and pupils into account when considering any changes.

EQUALITY PRINCIPLES

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any pupil very seriously.
In line with the above, the school will aim to ensure that its uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all pupils can access a school 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 school will ensure that parents and pupils are consulted over any changes to school uniform, and that, where appropriate and with pupils' consent, views and advice are sought specifically from pupils, and parents of pupils, who:

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

Parents' concerns and requests regarding school uniform and amendments to it are handled on a case-by-case basis by the principal and local advisory board, and always in accordance with the trust's Complaints Procedures Policy.
Information on how the school ensures its uniform policy does not discriminate against pupils with specific protected characteristics is outlined below.

Religion and belief
To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain religion, belief or culture, the school will ensure that there is flexibility to allow pupils to present themselves in a way that adheres to their dress requirements as far as possible, within the school's uniform policy.
The school will endeavour to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, the needs and rights of individual pupils will be weighed against any health and safety concerns appropriate to the circumstances, e.g. if safety headgear needs to be worn.

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

- Not banning hairstyles related to a pupil'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 pupil's culture or ethnic origin, e.g. African heritage head wraps.

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

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

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

COMPLAINTS

The school will endeavour to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the trust's Complaints Procedures Policy.
The school will refer individuals who wish to take their complaint further to the Trust Complaints Procedures Policy and request that they follow the procedures outlined therein.
When a complaint is received, the school will work with the complainant to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.
The school 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 pupils for breaching the school's rules on appearance or uniform. The school expects this to be carried out in accordance with the

school's published behaviour policy. The school aims to deal with pupil non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

SCHOOL UNIFORM SUPPLIER

Each school within the trust will have their own uniform provider. The appendices at the end of this policy outlines the following information for the school:

- Name of supplier
- Address of supplier
- Tel: phone number
- Email: email address

The school uniform supplier will accept school uniform assistance vouchers provided by a local authority.
The trust board will ensure that a written contract is in place with the supplier for branded items. The Trust, in conjunction with the school, will retender the uniform contract every five years, whether changes to the uniform are made or not, in line with the Tendering and Procurement Policy.
The local advisory board will be able to demonstrate how uniform is procured at the best value for money through updates from the principal. The principal will work to ensure that the 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 school will not sign contracts with suppliers before requesting visualisations and samples of proposed uniform.
Where the school is proposing to change suppliers, it will reach out to suppliers by October in the determination year.

CONSULTING WITH UNIFORM SUPPLIERS

If the school is considering changing its suppliers and seeks a list of available suppliers, it will consider the following options:

- Liaising with the Trust finance team
- Researching local suppliers
- Consulting with other schools and networks
- Having informal discussions with potential suppliers to help determine the school's own needs

If the school prepares to request bids from potential suppliers, it will consider the following elements:

- What products parents will need
- Existing contractual commitments
- Length of tender process – this to be in consultation with the trust finance team.
- The school's own evaluation of the current supplier.

TEMPLATE DOCUMENTS

Schools will use the DfE's 'Procuring uniform supplies' template documents to ensure that they undergo the procurement process correctly. The templates consist of an invitation to tender, a request for quotation, and a pricing schedule.
Procuring school uniform supplies - GOV.UK
Schools will use the invitation to tender template to ask questions of suppliers. Schools will then use the pricing schedule to ask suppliers to submit their prices. Full instructions on how to use the templates are included in each of the documents.

UNIFORM ASSISTANCE

Parents and carers who require assistance with school uniform are encouraged to contact the school at their earliest convenience. All enquiries will be handled confidentially. The school will hold second-hand school uniforms in the school for parents to access; access to these uniforms will be made available upon request to the school.
Parents will be invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it.

NON-COMPLIANCE

The principal, or a person authorised by the principal, will be permitted to remind a pupil of the school expectations for uniform and where relevant, contact made with parents/carers.

USE OF DATA AND RECORD KEEPING

All information about pupils and students in our schools will be kept in accordance with the Trust's Records Management Policy and Data Protection Policy.

The trust will adhere to the Pupil Confidentiality Policy at all times.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the School Improvement Team in conjunction with the trustees; any changes made to the policy will be communicated via the Trust website and each school's website.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2026.

APPENDIX A

The information in this section will be updated in accordance with the expectations of each school by the school principal and approved by the Local Advisory Board.

St AUGUSTINE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS

The information below outlines the expectations for school uniform at SS Simon and Jude CE Primary School.

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire	Cost per item from school supplier
Regular school uniform				
Blue sweatshirt	Optional	School logo on left-hand side	Branded school sweatshirt or cardigan can be purchased from school supplier.	£13.00
Blue Cardigan	Optional	School log on left-hand side	Branded school cardigan can be purchased from school supplier.	£13.00
Royal blue sweatshirt or Royal blue cardigan	Required	No branding	Plain Royal blue cardigans and sweatshirts available from many different suppliers	Varies
White shirt (Y6 only)	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier, and from regular retailers	varies
Eg White polo shirt	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers	varies
PE kit				
Plain white T-shirt	required	No branding	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers	varies
Black shorts or tracksuit bottoms	required	No branding	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers	varies
Black hoodie or tracksuit top	optional	No branding	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers	varies

Accessories				
bookbag	optional	School logo	Availible from school supplier	£7.00

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

Jewellery

The school rules on jewellery are as follows:

- One pair of stud earrings may be worn – no other piercings are permitted.
- An analogue watch may be worn.

Pupils will be advised that jewellery is their personal responsibility and not that of the school. Lost or damaged items will not be refunded. All jewellery must be removed during practical lessons, including PE lessons and science experiments.

Bags

Pupils must use an appropriately sized waterproof bag to carry their books and equipment.
School bags featuring inappropriate images, slogans or phrases will not be permitted.
The school will discourage pupils from bringing valuable bags to school. The school will not be liable for lost or damaged school bags.

Hairstyles and headwear

The school reserves the right to make a judgement on whether a pupil's hairstyle, hair colour or headwear is inappropriate for the school environment; however, the school will ensure that any such judgements do not discriminate against any pupil by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual pupil's scenario will be taken into account where any judgements on appropriateness are to be made, and parents will always have the freedom to complain via the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
Pupils with long hair must ensure that this does not impede their vision, cover their face, or cause a health and safety risk. Long hair must be tied up during practical lessons, e.g. during PE/science.
The following hairstyles, hair colours and headwear are not considered appropriate for school:

- Brightly coloured dyed hair
- Headwear with bold patterns or colours
- Headwear featuring inappropriate words or images

Makeup and cosmetics

The school rules on makeup and cosmetics are as follows:

- Only natural-looking makeup is permitted (this is for Secondary schools). No make-up permitted at primary school
- False nails and nail extensions are not permitted
- Temporary tattoos are not permitted

Pupils wearing excessive makeup will be asked to remove it.

Pupils will be advised to wear weather-appropriate clothing. For example, in hot temperatures, removing jumpers and/or blazers. In cold weather, wearing coats/warm jumpers.

Parents will be advised to ensure that all pupils' clothing and footwear is clearly labelled with their name and year group.

Any lost clothing will be taken to the lost property box within each block. All lost property will be retained for one month and will be disposed of if it is not collected within this time.