

Uniform Policy Guidance

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| Approval Body: | MST Standards Committee |
| Approval Date: | March 2026 |
| Implementation Date: | May 2026 |
| Review Date: | March 2027 |
| Policy Version: | 6 |

Version Control

| Version | Reviewed | Changes since the last version |
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| 1 | 2019 | Existing Policy |
| 2 | 2022 | Changes have been made to reflect the latest DfE Non Statutory Guidance on Uniform and Statutory Guidance on the Cost of School Uniform published in November 2021. |
| 3 | 2023 | Changes have been made to reflect additional items. The guidance now includes supplier details. |
| 4 | 2024 | Bulleted points changed to numbers for ease of reference |
| 5 | Apr 2025 | School jumpers and cardigans updated as these are optional items, school tie and Salwar Kameez added |
| 6 | Mar 2026 | <p>Updated to take into account new statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education regarding limiting number of branded school uniform items. Relevant website links also added.</p> <p>Deleted duplicate references to second-hand uniform.</p> <p>Included clear reference to seeking Trust Board approval if uniform changes are required.</p> <p>Added new section: 'Changes to compulsory branded items'</p> <p>East Sussex uniform supplier added.</p> |

This policy has been adopted by the Mulberry Schools Trust “The Trust” and will be applied to all schools which belong to the Mulberry Schools Trust.

Rationale

The Mulberry Schools Trust has high expectations of all pupils who belong to its schools. A high standard of conduct characterizes the behaviour and relationships with others of any child or young person who attends one of its schools. Having a school uniform is a very important part of the way in which the Trust promotes good behaviour and develops community cohesion, respect for others and oneself, and belonging. It also prepares pupils for their adult lives in wider society and the world of employment.

The Mulberry Schools Trust also believes in the importance of some freedom to express individuality in the way they dress with regard to religion or belief, ethnicity and culture in a diverse and plural society. In its policies on school uniform, the Trust balances this with the need to prioritise community cohesion and health and safety. In being inclusive, the Trust promotes belonging and mutuality amongst its pupil body. It has an agreed way of navigating the freedoms of individuals whilst building community identity in its schools.

Decisions about uniform are made in Local Governing Bodies for each school. Each school in the Trust has its own uniform policy agreed with the principal and pupil body. However, Trust schools must follow this guidance when reviewing and amending their policies. Any new school seeking to join the Trust must also adhere to this guidance.

The guidance in this policy statement follows that of the latest Department for Education guidance dated November 2025 which can be found here: [School Uniform: Guidance for Schools](#). It is non-statutory guidance that highlights best practice. The guidance also included the statutory and draft statutory guidance on Cost of School Uniform updated in October 2025 [which can be found here](#). The draft statutory guidance relates to the proposed limit on the number of branded items of school uniform and PE kit that schools can require. The government intends to make this a legal requirement from September 2026 through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. The draft statutory guidance currently requires all state schools to limit the number of compulsory branded uniform items to three for primary schools and four for secondary schools (including a tie) by September 2026.

Guidance

When deciding on changes to uniform, Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) must adhere to the following general principles:

1. Adherence to the ethos and values of the Trust, as set out in its strategy and mission statement
2. Cost effectiveness for parents and carers, particularly taking into account affordability for families
3. Schools should limit the number of compulsory branded uniform items to three for primary schools and four for secondary schools (including a tie) by September 2026.
4. Schools should ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire and the information should be clearly signposted and published on the school's website.
5. Decision-making processes when making any significant changes must be consultative and transparent, taking into account the views of families, pupils and staff
6. Supply of uniform – no one provider may have a monopoly on supply of uniform. When sourcing providers, school leaders must explore best value for money
7. Appropriateness relating to age and activity
8. Mindfulness of different groups within the school's community
9. Realistic time-frames for families when making any changes
10. A school's uniform policy should be published on the school's website, be available for all parents, including parents of prospective pupils, and be easily understood.

The Mulberry Schools Trust has an overarching identity that characterises its schools and so the following requirements are currently in place for local governing bodies when considering changes to their uniform policies:

11. Blazers from school suppliers stitched with the school's logo for secondary school pupils must be worn, bearing in mind affordability.
12. Jumpers or cardigans are optional for secondary schools. If stitched with the school's logo or bears a trim in school colours then these must be worn, bearing in mind affordability.
13. School tie in school colours for secondary school pupils must be worn, bearing in mind affordability.
14. For primary pupils, the requirement is a polo shirt and jumper stitched with the school's logo (available from school suppliers). However primary schools may determine that parents/carers can purchase similar items from a supplier of choice.
15. The Trust has identified a colour palette for branded school uniform to which schools must adhere.
16. Skirts must be worn below the knee and above the ankle. They must be worn with tights not socks or leggings.
17. Trousers may not be fashion trousers, short trousers (shorts) or jeans
18. For health and safety reasons, requirements for modest dress mean that long flowing garments such as the burkha or gathered skirts may not be worn in school or on school visits. Long hair must be tied back at all times.
19. Shoes must be black, formal and water-proof. Boots, trainers or plimsolls are not allowed except as part of PE or outdoor education.

20. Where head-coverings are a religious requirement such as turbans or bandanas for Sikhs, the hijab for Muslim women or the kippah or yamulka for Jewish boys, they may be worn. The hijab must be secured with pins to ensure it does not catch on equipment. Sports hijabs or swimhoods should be worn for PE and other physical activity if necessary as pins are a danger. The niqab is not a religious requirement and so is not part of school uniform.
21. Salwar Kameez for girls is optional if worn, but must be in the school style and stitched with the school's logo for secondary school pupils, bearing in mind affordability.
22. Jewellery and make-up are not permitted as part of school uniform with the exception of small plain ear studs for pierced ears.
23. Coats should be formal and provide protection for inclement weather. Denim, leather jackets are not part of school uniform. Sports and leisure wear are only permitted for PE and outdoor education.

Where pupils will be undertaking employment-related activities, such as at the UTC, dress should be appropriate to the sector. For example, in construction steel capped boots, helmets and high visibility jackets should be worn (provided by the school or employer). In science laboratory work, lab coats should be worn for experiments and clinical work. In technical theatre and film, black tee shirts and trousers are worn as standard working uniform. In catering, chef's whites and hair nets / hats should be worn (provided by the school or employer).

PE uniform should be practical, comfortable, appropriate to the activity and affordable and consists of:

24. PE t-shirt from school suppliers stitched with the school's logo/identity for secondary school pupils must be worn, bearing in mind affordability.
25. PE polo shirt from school suppliers for primary pupils, stitched with the school's logo. However primary schools may determine that parents/carers can purchase similar items from a supplier of choice.

School policies must:

26. Be agreed with the school community within the requirements above.
27. Describe the uniform and its appearance clearly so that parents and carers are informed.
28. Consider reasonable requests to vary uniform, in particular to meet the needs of any pupil to accommodate their religion, belief, ethnicity, disability or other special requirements.
29. Consider carefully the risk of a challenge to the policy, ensuring insurance would cover the costs of any challenge.
30. Undertake regular reviews of the policy – at least every three years.
31. Avoid frequent changes.
32. Ensure that pupils are not barred from joining the school by costly uniform requirements.

Where there is real hardship, parents and carers may contact the school to see if any financial support can be given. Cases are considered individually and the principal's decision is final.

Schools may consider running a uniform shop for recycling uniform in good condition.

Where breaches of uniform by pupils occur, schools should follow the Behaviour Policy and Exclusion Policy when deciding how to deal with this.

Changes to compulsory branded items

- Schools must not make any changes to their list of compulsory branded uniform items without prior approval from the Mulberry Schools Trust. This includes:
 - adding new compulsory branded items;
 - removing existing compulsory branded items;
 - changing logos, colours, styles, fabrics, or introducing new items that families are required to purchase;
 - altering the uniform in a way that affects affordability or contradicts DfE statutory guidance.

- Any proposed changes must be:
 - discussed and agreed with the Headteacher's line manager;
 - evidenced with a clear rationale, including affordability considerations and alignment with the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill;
 - discussed with the Trust's senior leadership team before any communication is shared with families. Once this has been discussed, it must be agreed by the Mulberry Schools Trust Board.
 - Schools must not communicate or implement any uniform amendments until formal written approval has been issued by the Trust.

School suppliers

School uniform items bearing a logo/style (blazer, jumper, cardigan, tie, polo shirt and PE items) can be obtained from the suppliers below.

London schools

Khalsa Schoolwear

388 Bethnal Green Road
London
E2 0AH

Tel: 020 7729 3286

Ocean Designs Schoolwear Ltd

10 Watney Market
London
E1 2PR

Tel: 020 7702 8881

East Sussex schools

Super Stitch 86

7 Castleham Road

St Leonards on Sea
East Sussex
TN38 9NR

Tel: 01424 852225

Parents/carers can purchase all other uniform items from a supplier of their choice.