



Note to governors: Changes highlighted

February 2025
Review September 2025

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Statement of intent

Westhoughton High School believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital to promote the ethos of the school and provide a sense of belonging and identity for all students, regardless of their protected characteristics or socio-economic circumstances.

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 school 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 school and students’ families. We believe that students 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.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and 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 (2021) ‘School uniforms’
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) ‘Preventing hair discrimination in schools’

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Respect to Learn Code (R2L) & Behaviour Policy
- Equality Information & Objectives Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the headteacher 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 student because 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 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 headteacher 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 student 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.
- Providing students with an exemption letter as appropriate, e.g. for a student who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting shirt.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that 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 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.
- Ensuring that their child's uniform is clean, presentable and the correct size.

Students are responsible for:

- Wearing the correct uniform at all times, unless the headteacher has granted an exemption.
- Looking after their uniform as appropriate.

Understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to the school, e.g. school identity and community.

3. Cost principles

The school will ensure that its school uniform is affordable and accessible to all students, and does not place an unreasonable financial burden on parents.

In accordance with admission procedures, the headteacher 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, students at the school.
- 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.
- Looked after Children (LAC) and Previously Looked after Children (PLAC).

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 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 certain items, e.g. shirts and socks, to ensure their child can come to school in clean uniform every day.

The school will keep variations in school uniform for different groups of students, e.g. year group-specific items or house colours, to a minimum to ensure that students 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:

- Ensuring branded items are longer-lasting and unlikely to be grown out of quickly, e.g. ties.
- Making donated second-hand uniform available for purchase at a lower price.

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 students, 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. Any savings negotiated will be passed to parents where 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 this policy.

The school will not make frequent changes to uniform requirements and will take the views of parents and students into account when considering any changes.

4. Equality principles

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any protected characteristic very seriously. In line with this, the school will aim to ensure that its uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all students 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 students are consulted over any changes to school 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.
- 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 headteacher and governing board, and always in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Information on how the school 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 school 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 school will implement a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that students will not be required to wear specific items based on their gender, and may wear any of the uniform items listed in the '[School uniform](#)' section of this policy regardless of the legal sex recorded on the school'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 school 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 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 students 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 students 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 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 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 students with SEND or medical conditions, the school will ensure its uniform policy takes into account the needs of these students. This includes:

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

5. Complaints and challenges

The school will endeavour to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The school will refer individuals who wish to complain to the 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 behaviour policy. The school aims to deal with pupil non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

6. School uniform suppliers

The school's current school uniform suppliers are:

- **Whittakers Schoolwear** – 106 Deansgate, Bolton BL1 1BD. Tel: 01204389485
- **Smart Clothing** – Units 5, 6 & 7 Black Horse Street, Bolton BL1 1SY. Tel: 01204 392610
- **Andrew Leach Sports & Schoolwear** – 98 Winter Hey Lane, Horwich, BL6 7PJ. Tel. 01204 697624
- **Rainbow Uniforms** – 87-89 Bradshawgate, Leigh, WN7 4ND. Tel: 01942 609447
- **BL5 Schoolwear** - Westhoughton market, Westhoughton, BL5 3AZ. Tel: 07719 563593
- **Icon Embroidery** - 8 Market Street, Atherton, M46 0DN. Tel: 01942 665155

The governing body will be able to demonstrate how uniform is procured at the best value for money. The headteacher 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.

7. Uniform assistance

The school will support disadvantaged families in meeting the costs of uniforms. School uniform assistance will be provided via the Pupil Premium Wallet that can be spent on school clothing and other educational items. The budget for the school uniform assistance scheme will be derived from Pupil Premium Funding.

For parents to claim school uniform assistance, their children should be eligible for Pupil Premium. Eligibility will be determined by checking original documents from the relevant authority, detailing receipt of the benefit and the address of the student.

The school will hold second-hand school uniforms for parents to access; access to these uniforms will be made available upon request made to their child's Student Support Leader.

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

8. Non-compliance

Staff will be permitted to discipline students for breaching this policy, where relevant to their role, in accordance with the school's Respect to Learn Code (R2L).

The headteacher, or a person authorised by the headteacher, will be permitted to ask a student to briefly go home to remedy breaches to the school's uniform policy where this is deemed to be the most appropriate course of action. When deciding whether to allow a student to return home, the member of staff will consider 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 will be recorded as 'authorised'. If a student repeatedly breaches uniform rules, or takes longer than necessary to rectify the absence, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

Breaches of the uniform policy will be recorded on the student's uniform card and repeated breaches will result in a sanction. In some instances, for example inappropriate footwear, a student may be given a fixed period of time to resolve uniform issues – failure to resolve the issue within the timeframe given may result in a sanction being issued.

Where there are frequent violations of the school uniform policy relating to skirt length the school will direct learners to wear school trousers for school instead. This will be communicated to parents via Synergy (Appendix A).

Parents will be notified of students' breaches of school uniform in all cases. School staff will work closely with families to resolve uniform breaches as quickly as possible and will ensure that support is offered where required.

9. School uniform

Clothing

Our uniform consists of the following items:

Sensible black shoes without markings or brand names. Shoes should be full and cover the whole foot with a sturdy sole for health and safety reasons. Any sportswear brand (adidas, nike etc) is not accepted as a suitable shoe. Shoes should be entirely black and leather or a leather style in appearance. Canvas shoes, high heels and boots are not permitted.

- Navy blue school blazer, badged (compulsory)
- Navy blue school tie, with stripes worn below the knot:

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Year 7 = Green Stripe

Year 8 = Blue Stripe

Year 9 = Red Stripe

Year 10 = White Stripe

Year 11 = Gold Stripe

- Plain white school shirt (tucked in to skirt/trousers)
- Navy blue V-necked jumper with school logo (Optional item)
- Plain black opaque tights
- Mid-grey tailored **school modest length** wide-pleated skirt/Mid-grey tailored **school knee-length** Shorts or mid-grey/charcoal or black **straight tailored school** trousers, which must have:
 - A **front** zip fastening
 - A waistband

Skirts should be a modest length. They should be loose fitting and have a boxed pleat. NB Skirts in all waist sizes and in all lengths are available through our suppliers – please refer to your child’s Student Support Leader if you are experiencing difficulty in sourcing the correct length of school skirt.

If a student chooses to wear a skirt, plain black opaque tights must be worn, socks are not permitted.

PE/Games Kit

Jewellery must not be worn during PE lessons

- Polo Shirt – Navy/Sky Blue with Badge
- Shorts – Navy Blue with Badge or/ Leggings – Navy Blue with WHS branding
- Socks – Navy/Sky Blue Top or/ plain trainer socks
- Swimsuit – One Piece, Navy Blue Preferred or Swimming Shorts, Navy Blue Preferred
- Trainers – Any Colour
- Towel – Any Colour
- Track Suit – Navy with School Badge (optional)
- Rugby Jersey – Navy/Sky Blue with Badge (optional)

Jewellery

The school rules on jewellery are as follows:

- One pair of stud earrings may be worn – no hanging or loop earrings other piercings are permitted.
- A smart and sensible wrist watch may be worn.

Students 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

Students must use an appropriately-sized waterproof bag to carry their books and equipment. It must hold A4-sized workbooks comfortably without causing any damage.

School bags featuring inappropriate images, slogans or phrases will not be permitted.

The school will discourage students 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 student'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 student by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual student'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.

Students 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.

The following hairstyles, hair colours and headwear are not considered appropriate for school:

- Unnatural coloured hair
- Extreme hairstyles
- Excessive hair accessories
- Caps

Scarves which are prescribed as part of religious dress may be worn as deemed appropriate.

Makeup and cosmetics

The school rules on makeup and cosmetics are as follows:

- Makeup may be worn if it is natural in appearance. Excessive make-up, tanning products and false eyelashes are not permitted.
- Nail polish may be worn if it is natural in appearance. Coloured polish, acrylic and false nails are not permitted.

10. Adverse weather

All students will be advised to wear weather-appropriate clothing.

For hot temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Tops that cover the shoulder area.
- Sunglasses with UV protection when outside.

Students will be advised not to wear any jumpers or blazers during heatwaves. If outside during break times, students will be advised to stay in an area protected from the sun.

For cold temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Scarfs, gloves, coats and hats when outside.

- Warm jumpers.
- Trousers, or skirts and thick tights.

11. Labelling and lost property

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

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

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the chair of governors and the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2025.

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

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

Appendix A

Model message for parents/carers

Dear Parent / Carer,

There have been a number of instances over recent weeks where (learners name) has been reminded about expectations for length of school skirt. Short skirts are not appropriate for a working environment. Our policy states that skirts should be of a modest length. Your child frequently wears their school skirt significantly shorter than is stated in the policy. Should this continue we have made them aware today that they will be required to wear school trousers for school instead.