School Uniform Policy

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy is effective for all Schools within The Mead Educational Trust, the Teaching School, the SCITT and all other activities under the control of the Trust and reporting to the Trust Board.

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Revision History:

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
1.0	Feb 2023	ET	New policy
2.0	May 2025	CFR	Amendments to items not allowed
3.0	Nov 2026	TWO	• Additional reference to School Uniforms Act 2021, • Addition of reviewing supplier costs, • Addition of support for financial hardship, • Addition of clarification of reasonable adjustments Addition of tailored shorts, long black skirts to allowed uniform • Removal of nail varnish and stipulated colours of head scarf and turbans from items not allowed • Expectations section expanded to explain loaning procedures and sanctions (5.1)

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Contents

1. Aims **3**

2. Our School's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 ..... **3**

3. Limiting the cost of School uniform **3**

4. Expectations for School uniform **4**

4.1 Our School's uniform 4

4.2 Where to purchase it 5

5. Expectations for our School community **5**

5.1 Scholars 5

5.2 Parents and carers 5

5.3 The School 5

5.4 Governors 6

6. Monitoring arrangements **6**

7. Links to other policies **6**

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Set out our approach to requiring a uniform that is of reasonable cost and offers the best value for money for parents and carers
- Explain how we will avoid discrimination in line with our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010
- Clarify our expectations for School uniform

2. Our School's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include sex, race, religion or belief, and gender reassignment.

To avoid discrimination, our school will:

- Avoid listing uniform items based on sex, to give all scholars the opportunity to wear the uniform they feel most comfortable in or that most reflects their self-identified gender
- Make sure that our uniform expectations, and thus costs, are the same for all scholars within the school
- Allow all scholars to have long hair (though we reserve the right to ask for this to be tied back)
- Allow all scholars to style their hair in the way that makes them feel most comfortable, as long as it is not offensive to anyone
- Allow scholars to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons. Schools will consider each request individually and make reasonable adjustments where possible. It will remain the school's decision to allow any change
- Allow scholars to wear headscarves and other religious or cultural symbols
- Allow for potential adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality and protected characteristics by asking scholars or their parents to contact their child's Head of Year who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests. Reasonable adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis for scholars with disabilities, medical needs, religious requirements or other protected characteristics.

3. Limiting the cost of school uniform

Castle Mead Academy has a duty to make sure that the uniform we require is affordable, in line with the School Uniforms Act 2021 and the Department for Education statutory guidance on the cost of School uniform.

We understand that items with distinctive characteristics (such as branded items, or items that must have a school logo or a unique fabric/colour/design) cannot be purchased from a wide range of retailers and may limit parents' ability to 'shop around' for a low price.

With this in mind, we will make sure that our uniform:

- Is available at a reasonable cost
- Limits the number of branded items required
- Provides the best value for money for parents/carers

We will do this by:

- Limiting any items with distinctive characteristics where possible: for example, blue bottoms for PE and any trainers are permissible for PE
- Limiting items with distinctive characteristics to low-cost or long-lasting items, such as ties and blazers
- Avoiding specific requirements for items scholars could wear on non-school days, such as coats, and bags
- Keeping the number of optional branded items to a minimum including PE kit
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for different year groups
- Avoiding frequent changes to uniform specifications and minimising the financial impact on parents of any changes
- Ensuring that uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money (including the quality and durability of the garment)
- Making sure that arrangements are in place for parents to acquire second-hand uniform items
- Consulting with parents and scholars on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy and carefully considering any complaints about the policy

4. Expectations for school uniform

4.1 Our school uniform

Our Uniform is:

- Navy suit blazer from Uniform Direct
- White shirt/blouse, tucked in at all times
- Grey suit trousers or tailored grey shorts.
- Castle Mead kilt skirt from Uniform Direct
- Long black skirt
- Castle Mead tie from Uniform Direct
- School shoes are to be plain black, formal and made of either matt leather or polishable material only. No open toe, heels, pumps, trainers, canvas, boots with fur collar, designer or footwear resembling trainers.
- Scholar ID card
- An outdoor coat is allowed during bad weather. Coats should not be worn indoors

These items are also allowed:

- School jumper from Uniform Direct
- Plain black tights may be worn under a skirt.
- Jewellery is permitted in the form of stud earrings and nose stud only.
- Turbans should be secured with small pins.
- Make up must be minimal and discreet.

These items are not allowed:

- Jogging bottoms under school trousers
- Hooded or zip tops (other than official academy uniform)
- Baseball caps
- Jogging bottoms, jeans, jeggings or leggings.
- Nail extensions.
- Nose rings (stud only).
- Hoops other large earrings (studs only)

4.2 Where to purchase it

- Our uniform is available from Uniform Direct. Uniform Direct, 54-56 Humberstone Gate, Leicester, LE1 3PJ, 0116 251 1844. Uniform can be purchased from the Uniform Direct website – https://www.uniform-direct.com/acatalog/Castle-Mead-Academy.html
- The school will also arrange a second-hand uniform sale, at the end of the Summer Term. This will include information sent to incoming, Year 6 scholars.
- The school regularly reviews supplier arrangements and costs to ensure value for money for families.
- Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to contact the school to discuss available support including second-hand uniform, hardship funding or other assistance where available.

5. Expectations for our school community

5.1 Scholars

Our scholars wear the Castle Mead uniform with pride. The uniform is an important part of our school's identity and standing within our community. We ask that scholars wear their uniform correctly at all times including:

- On the school premises
- Travelling to and from school
- At out-of-school events or on trips that are organised by the school, or where they are representing Castle Mead Academy (unless given explicit permission for non-uniform)

If scholars do not have an item of uniform upon arriving to school, they are expected to swap an item such as a phone for an item of school uniform on a temporary basis. They swap will be reversed at the end of the day without sanction. If scholars do not take up this option or choose to wear their uniform incorrectly following this, the behaviour policy will be implemented and a D3 sanction actioned.

Scholars are also expected to contact their Head of Year, using their school email address, if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to their protected characteristics.

5.2 Parents and carers

We ask that parents and carers work in partnership with the school by ensuring that their child has the correct uniform and PE kit, and that every item is:

- Clean
- Clearly labelled with the child's name
- In good condition

Parents are also expected to contact their child's Head of Year if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to:

- Their child's protected characteristics
- The cost of the uniform

The school is committed to working with parents to resolve any concerns regarding school uniform. Parents are expected to lodge any complaints or objections relating to the school uniform in a timely and reasonable manner and the school will work closely with parents to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome. Any disputes about the cost of uniform will be:

- Resolved locally
- Dealt with in accordance with our school's complaints policy

5.3 The School

The school will ensure that the expectations for scholars, and for parents and carers are clearly communicated; the school uniform policy will be published on the school's website, and be made available for all parents, including parents of prospective scholars.

To support parents and families the school will:

- assess the overall cost implications of the uniform policy for parents and carers
- ensure that uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money (including the quality and durability of the garment).
- put in place arrangements for parents and carers to acquire second-hand uniform items

The school will work proactively with parents and scholars to ensure that uniform expectations are met. Where a scholar is not wearing the expected uniform, the school will put in place support to rectify this, for example through the loaning of uniform. Where accessing uniform is not a barrier and where appropriate, the school will apply the use of sanctions as outlined in the school behaviour policy.

5.4 Academy Council

The Academy Council will review this policy and make sure that it:

- Is appropriate for our school's context
- Is implemented fairly across the school
- Takes into account the views of parents and scholars
- Offers a uniform that is appropriate, practical, and safe for all scholars

The Council will also make sure that the school's uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money and be able to demonstrate that they have obtained the best value for money from suppliers.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed biannually by the Vice Principal, Behaviour. At every review, it will be approved by the Principal.

7. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives statement
- Anti-bullying policy
- Complaints policy.