

Downham Market Academy



School uniform policy

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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 pupils the opportunity to wear the uniform they feel most comfortable in or that most reflects their self-identified gender
- Make sure that our uniform costs the same for all pupils
- Allow all pupils to have long hair (though we reserve the right to ask for this to be tied back)
- Allow all pupils to style their hair in the way that is appropriate for school yet makes them feel most comfortable
- Allow pupils to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons
- Allow pupils to wear headscarves and other religious or cultural symbols
- Allow for adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality by asking pupils or their parents to get in touch with the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Uniform (Contact details available on the school website), who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests

3. Limiting the cost of school uniform

Our school has a duty to make sure that the uniform we require is affordable, in line with statutory [guidance](#) from the Department for Education on the cost of school uniform.

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

We will make sure our uniform:

- Is available at a reasonable cost
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- Provides the best value for money for parents/carers

We will do this by:

- Carefully considering whether any items with distinctive characteristics are necessary
- Limiting any items with distinctive characteristics.
- Limiting items with distinctive characteristics to low-cost or long-lasting items, such as ties
- Considering cheaper alternatives to school-branded items, such as logos that can be ironed on, as long as this doesn't compromise quality and durability
- Avoiding specific requirements for items pupils could wear on non-school days, such as coats, bags and shoes
- Keeping the number of optional branded items to a minimum, so that the school's uniform can act as a social leveler
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for different year/class/house groups
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for extra-curricular activities
- Considering alternative methods for signaling differences in groups for interschool competitions, such as creating posters or labels
- Making sure that arrangements are in place for parents to acquire second-hand uniform items
- Avoiding frequent changes to uniform specifications and minimising the financial impact on parents of any changes
- Consulting with parents and pupils on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy and carefully considering any complaints about the policy

4. Expectations for school uniform

4.1 School uniform:

- Navy blazer with Academy logo
 - As an alternative to the blazer, students in Year 11 can wear a DMA Leavers' Hoodie from the official uniform supplier. Other sweatshirts or hoodies are not acceptable.
- Tie in House colour
- Navy V-neck jumper (this is optional during colder months as an additional layer)
- White shirt tucked in and top button fastened (short or long sleeved)
- Grey trousers (tailored, not tight-fitting, stretchy or denim) or Grey skirt (straight fit, worn at knee length) or Grey shorts (smart style, knee length)
- Plain black shoes (plain black trainers are acceptable but must not have any visible logos, colours, ticks or stripes)
- Black, brown or navy belt with a discreet buckle
- Socks of any colour and style may be worn, although black, charcoal grey and navy socks are recommended.
- Tights are optional. If worn, they should be natural tan, plain black or plain charcoal grey.
- Students may choose their own coats and bags, but these should not include any logos or mottos that could be deemed offensive or inappropriate for school.
- In poor weather (e.g. snow) the Academy will advise students about appropriate footwear. At any time students can, of course, wear boots (for example) to school and then change in to their plain black shoes, provided they do so as soon as they arrive at the Academy without being prompted by staff.

4.2 PE kit:

- PE polo shirt and 1/4 Zip fleece top with Academy logo and House colour side panels. There is also an optional PE rugby top, again with the Academy logo and House colour side panels.
- Plain black PE shorts/leggings and/or tracksuit bottoms
- Plain black rugby/football socks
- Indoor trainers or studded boots depending on sports activity
- Plain black, fitted t-shirt, leggings for dance
- Protective items such as gum shields and shin pads
- Plain black base-layer to be worn under PE shirt (optional)

4.3 Jewellery and makeup:

- The wearing of a small amount of makeup, discreetly applied, is permitted.
- Clear, nude or French manicure nail varnish that is natural in appearance.
- One small stud earring may be worn in each ear and a watch (no smart watches) may be worn. These are the only items of jewellery permitted.

If you wish your child to wear alternative items of clothing for religious or cultural reasons, please contact the Academy to discuss directly.

4.4 Equipment:

All students should be fully equipped for lessons and must have the following items with them at all times:

- School ipad that is fully charged and stored in the protective case supplied.
- Pens (at least two, black or blue ink)
- Pencils
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Sharpener
- Scientific calculator
- Glue stick
- Highlighters
- Maths equipment including a protractor, compass, set square

4.5 What is not permitted:

- Tops, for example, T-shirts and vests, should not be visible under the school shirt. For this reason, coloured T-shirts and vests or those with writing on that render them visible must not be worn under the white school shirt.
- Coats must not be worn in classrooms, unless there are exceptional circumstances, as decided by the teacher. If coats are worn without permission this will be treated as defiance and students will be issued an end of day detention.

- Leggings are not permitted as an alternative to either tights or school trousers. If worn for PE or drama, students must change back in to their correct uniform afterwards.
- Skirts should not be of a tight fitting or stretchy style
- Excessive makeup, for example false eyelashes is not permitted for any student. Academy staff will determine what constitutes “excessive”
- Brightly coloured or patterned nail varnish, including false nails and extensions.
- Large belt buckles with brands and/or logos.
- Hats must not be worn inside the school buildings. If a hat is worn inside the school building this will be treated as defiance and students will be issued an end of day detention.
- Extreme hair styles and colours are not permitted. Students may not dye their hair a colour that is not natural (for example blue, green, pink etc.). Academy staff will decide whether a hair style is extreme but examples of extreme hair styles are patterns shaved into the hair and “Mohicans”. A student who is thinking of a particular hair style but is unsure whether it would be allowed should check with a member of the Senior Leadership Team before they have it done.
- The Halo Code
 - Our school champions the right of staff and students to embrace all Afro-hairstyles. We acknowledge that Afro-textured hair is an important part of our Black staff and students’ racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious identities, and requires specific styling for hair health and maintenance.
 - We welcome Afro-textured hair worn in all styles including, but not limited to, afros, locs, twists, braids, cornrows, fades, hair straightened through the application of heat or chemicals, weaves, wigs, headscarves, and wraps.
 - At this school, we recognise and celebrate our staff and students’ identities. We are a community built on an ethos of equality and respect where hair texture and style have no bearing on anyone’s ability to succeed.
- No shoes, other than plain black, are permitted. Shoes must not bear logos, ticks, stripes etc., and if there is a heel it should be low, for reasons of safety. Boots, sandals and fashion shoes such as sling-backs, kitten heels and court shoes etc., are not permitted.
- Permanent and temporary tattoos such as “henna” are not permitted.
- Jewellery, other than a single stud earring in each ear and a wristwatch, is not permitted. This includes ‘dangly’ or hoop earrings and all visible piercings including facial piercings. Retainer bars are not acceptable for facial piercings.

4.6 What happens if a student is incorrectly dressed?

- If a student cannot wear the correct uniform for any reason, the parent/carer must provide their child with a note on the first day explaining the problem and the date by which their child will be back in correct uniform. We expect a student to be back in the correct uniform within 2 or 3 days. During that time, students will borrow the correct uniform from the school to ensure that the correct uniform is worn at all times.
- If a student has a genuine reason for being incorrectly dressed but was unable to bring a note from the parent, for example due to the parent leaving the house early, the student will borrow correct uniform from the school and the student must bring in a parents’ note for the form tutor the next day to explain the non-compliance.
- Any student not in the correct uniform should report to J1 (Removal Room) straight away in the morning to borrow Academy uniform for the day.
- If a student is wearing incorrect uniform and has no note from the parent with no genuine reason, the student will borrow uniform from the school and the student will be given a one-hour detention at the end

of the day. Where a parent is unable to rectify the problem due to financial hardship, the Academy may be able to provide financial support.

- Students with extreme hair styles may be required to spend an extended period of time in J1 (Removal Room) until the problem is resolved.
- Items of clothing or jewellery that are not permitted in the Uniform Policy will be confiscated for parents/carers to collect.

4.7 Where to purchase uniform

Branded items that must include the school logo can be purchased from our school uniform supplier:

<https://www.totalclothingshop.co.uk/dma/>

The branded items which must be worn are:

- Navy blazer with Academy logo
 - As an alternative to the blazer, students in Year 11 can wear a DMA Leavers' Hoodie from the official uniform supplier. Other sweatshirts or hoodies are not acceptable.
- Tie in House colour
- PE polo shirt and 1/4 Zip fleece top with Academy logo and House colour side panels. There is also an optional PE rugby top, again with the Academy logo and House colour side panels.

All other school uniform items are available from local high street retailers or supermarkets.

4.8 Financial hardship

Families that are experiencing financial hardship or qualify for Pupil Premium funding can request uniform to be purchased for them on an annual basis. Parents/carers should contact the member of staff with responsibility for Pupil Premium funding (Contact details available on the school website) to request a purchase order form in relation to this.

At Downham Market Academy we run a uniform exchange scheme where parents can exchange items of uniform that have been outgrown for a different size, providing that the item being exchanged is clean and is good condition.

There is also the possibility to purchase items of uniform from our uniform exchange at a reduced cost compared to purchasing new items.

5. Expectations for our school community

5.1 Pupils

Pupils are expected to wear the correct uniform at all times (other than specified non-school uniform days) while:

- 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 the school (if required)

Pupils are also expected to contact the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Uniform (Contact details available on the school website) if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to their protected characteristics.

5.2 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to make sure 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 the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Uniform (Contact details available on the school website) if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to:

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

Parents are expected to lodge any complaints or objections relating to the school uniform in a timely and reasonable manner.

Disputes about the cost of the school uniform will be:

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

The school will work closely with parents to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

5.3 Staff

Staff will closely monitor pupils to make sure they are in correct uniform. They will give any pupils and families breaching the uniform policy the opportunity to comply, but will follow up with the headteacher if the situation doesn't improve.

Ongoing breaches of our uniform policy will be dealt with as 'failure to meet expected standards'. As outlined in the school's behaviour policy, this means that an after-school detention will be issued.

In cases where it is suspected that financial hardship has resulted in a pupil not complying with this uniform policy, staff will take a mindful and considerate approach to resolving the situation.

5.4 Governors

The governing board 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 pupils
- Offers a uniform that is appropriate, practical and safe for all pupils

The board will also make sure that the school's uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money, for example by avoiding single supplier contracts and by re-tendering contracts at least every 5 years.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Uniform. At every review, it will be approved by the governing body to ensure it is reasonable and meets current guidance.

7. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- › Anti-bullying policy
- › Behaviour policy
- › Complaints procedure
- › Equality and diversity policy
- › Transgender policy