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Initial approval:	
Approved by:	
Review frequency:	

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Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that our expectations:

- A. Do not impose unreasonable cost on families and constitute best value.
- B. Are not discriminatory, in line with our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

Schools are strongly encouraged to have a uniform but the Department for Education (DfE) as it can play a key role in:

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

This policy confirms Maiden Erlegh Trust's expectations for school uniform and standards of appearance. In summary:

- Our mainstream and special schools will have uniforms
- Our sixth forms have dress codes
- Alternative Provision settings may have uniforms
- All settings will have expectations of personal appearance

Principles

A. Limiting the cost of school uniform and providing best value

All schools will follow the following principles in order to limit costs and provide best value:

- Carefully considering whether any items with distinctive characteristics and/or branding are necessary (e.g.: no more than two branded items and a single school tie requirement).
- Ensuring that all other items can be found easily on the high-street and/or in supermarkets.
- Being clear about our expectations so that parents do not mistakenly purchase items which contravene them.
- 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/students could wear on non-school days, such as coats, bags, and shoes.
- Keeping the number of optional branded items to a minimum (e.g.: sports kit, bags) so that the school's uniform can act as a social leveller.
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for different year/class/house groups.
- Having clear arrangements for parents to acquire second-hand uniform items.
- Avoiding frequent changes to uniform specifications.
- Consulting with parents and pupil/students on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy and carefully considering any complaints about the policy (through the Complaints Policy).

B. Meeting our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

To avoid discrimination, our schools will:

- Avoid listing uniform items based on sex, to give all pupils/students the opportunity to wear the uniform in which they feel most comfortable.
- Ensure that our uniform costs the same for all pupils/students in the same phase within a school.
- Ensure that expectations of personal appearance are age-appropriate and do not present a barrier to responsible cultural/religious expression (eg: we will set limits with regard to piercings, for safety and context purposes, but will work with parents and pupils/students where there are religious or cultural implications).
- Require pupil/students to tie back long hair in contexts where it is safer to do so (eg: in laboratories, workshops and for PE etc).
- Facilitate pupils/students wearing headscarves and other religious or cultural clothing and accessories. Where possible these should be in school or neutral colours (including appropriate sports/swimwear).
- Consider other adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality by asking pupils/students or parents to get in touch with their school's Headteacher, who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests.

Expectations for school uniform

Each school will determine the specific requirements of its uniform taking the following into consideration:

- The socio-economic status of your school community.
- Pupil demographics.
- Uniform of expectations in other schools in the Trust.
- Views of stakeholders.
- Which items are only required in specific circumstances or at certain times of the year.

Transparency

Each school will publish the following on its website:

- The specific expectations for their school uniform and personal appearance, including how it can be adapted for religious/cultural reasons.
- Where parents can obtain the uniform, including where items are only available from a specific retailer or can be bought more widely, e.g., from 'high-street' retailers
- Information about how to purchase second-hand uniform.
- The outcome of any consultations and actions taken.
- Who to contact with any questions about school uniform, personal appearance and how the school is implementing expectations in school.

Each school will pro-actively communicate any changes to parents and pupils/students.

Expectations for our school community

Pupils/Students

Pupils/students are expected to wear the stated uniform correctly 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 (unless informed in writing that this is not required).

Parents and carers

Parents are expected to ensure 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 ensure their child maintains the stated standards of personal appearance (e.g.: if their child has additional piercings, they remove them before coming to school, even if the piercing is recent).

Requesting amendments

Parents and/or pupils/students must contact their school's Headteacher or Head of School in writing if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to:

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

Any complaints or objections relating to their child's school uniform should be made through the Complaints Policy.

Staff

Staff will closely monitor pupils/students to make sure they are in correct uniform and have the stated standards of personal appearance.

The school will endeavour to support pupils/students and families who breach the uniform policy initially and give them the opportunity to comply in a timely way.

Ongoing breaches of the uniform policy will be dealt with through the Behaviour Policy, however.

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

Governance

The Trust Board will review this policy and make sure that it complies with [DfE School uniforms: guidance for schools](#) (2021) and Equality Act 2010 and the DfE guidance for schools: [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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.

The Local Advisory Board will review this policy and make sure that it:

- Is appropriate for their school's context.

- Is implemented fairly across the school.
- Takes into account the views of parents and pupils/students.
- Offers a uniform and personal appearance expectations that are appropriate, practical, and safe for all pupils/students.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every five years by the Trust Board (or earlier if one or more schools proposes significant changes). At every review, it will be approved by the Culture and Environment Trust Committee.

Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives statement
- Anti-bullying policy
- Complaint's policy

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ANNEX 1: UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS FOR [SCHOOL NAME HERE]

Mandatory branded items:

TBD

Mandatory branded items:

TBD

Optional branded items:

TBD

Optional generic

TBD

Expectations of personal appearance

TBD

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