



MERCHANT TAYLORS'  
OXFORDSHIRE  
ACADEMY TRUST



# UNIFORM POLICY

November 2025

*Wellbeing  
Committee*

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## 1. Statement of Intent

Wallingford School believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital for:

- Promoting the ethos of the school.
- Providing a sense of belonging and identity.
- Creating a positive learning environment.

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, 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.

In writing and updating this policy, we have sought to:

- Engage with parents and students.
- Consider how this policy might affect groups represented in the school, especially those who share protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Consider how comfortable the uniform will be for students.
- Take a sensible approach to allow for exceptions to be made, e.g. during adverse weather.
- Ensure that the uniform is suitable and safe for students who walk or cycle to school.
- Choose a PE kit which is practical, comfortable, appropriate to the activity involved and affordable.
- Ensure the policy is easy to access and understand.

## 2. 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
- Behaviour Policy

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for:

- Monitoring that the school uniform in place is practical and smart and that it accurately reflects the school's vision and values.
- Confirming that the school has ensured the school uniform is accessible, inclusive, and does not disadvantage any student because of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Listening to feedback and recommendations from staff, students and families regarding the school uniform and policy.
- Monitoring that the school uniform is accessible and affordable.
- Reviewing financial information and reports to show best value has been achieved.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the governing body 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 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: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-school-uniforms/cost-of-school-uniforms>.

The senior leadership team and head of year team are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school uniform rules are enforced on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring that staff 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 with regard to the school uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.
- Processing and approving all eligible school uniform assistance applications.
- Providing students with an exemption letter as appropriate, e.g. for a student who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting shirt.

All 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 and carers are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct school uniform as detailed in this policy.
- Informing the tutor or head of year 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 they have been granted an exemption by the appropriate staff member (head of year or member of SLT).
- Ensuring uniform is clean and in good condition.
- Wearing uniform appropriately.
- Understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to the school, e.g. school identity and community.

## 4. Cost Principles

### i. Starting principles

The school will develop its uniform policy in relation to the following starting principles:

- The school will seek to ensure that the uniform is affordable. In so doing, the school will consider the total cost of school uniforms, taking into account all items of uniform or clothing parents will need to provide while their child is at the school.
- The school will seek to keep the use of branded items to a minimum.
- The school will seek to ensure that uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money, including the quality and durability of the garment.

- The school will seek to ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms will be published on the school's website.

## ii. Principles in practice

In accordance with the 'School admissions code', 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 and previously looked after children (LAC and 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. 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 suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. 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.

## 5. Equality Principles

### i. Overview

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any student very seriously.

In line with the above, 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 senior leadership team.

Information on how the school ensures its uniform policy does not discriminate against students with specific protected characteristics is outlined below.

### ii. 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.

### iii. 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.

### iv. 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.

The school will follow the good practice guidance provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission on '**Preventing hair discrimination in schools**'.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/public-sector-equality-duty/preventing-hair-discrimination-schools>

### v. 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:

- 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.

## 6. Complaints and Challenges

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

The school will refer individuals who wish to complain to the complaints procedure and request that they follow the procedure outlined therein.

When a complaint is received, the school will work with the complainant to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

In considering a complaint, parents should be aware that teachers can sanction students for breaching the school's rules on appearance or uniform. The school expects this to be carried out in accordance with the school's published behaviour policy. The school aims to deal with student non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

## 7. School Uniform Supplier

**School uniform supplier:** The school's current school uniform supplier is SWI (<https://www.swischoolwear.co.uk/>).

**School uniform shop:** However, for ties, blazers and PE sale items – items which are held in school – there is a separate school shop. This can be accessed via a link on the school website: <https://wallingfordschool.com/index.php/parents-2/uniform-regulations>.

The senior leadership team will ensure that a written contract is in place with the supplier for branded items. The school will tender the uniform contract every five years, whether changes to the uniform are made or not, in line with the MTOAT financial procedures manual.

The senior leadership team will be able to demonstrate how uniform is procured at the best value for money. The headteacher and senior leadership team 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. This will be documented and the reports reviewed by the governing body. The school will not sign contracts with suppliers before requesting visualisations and samples of proposed uniform.

The school's priority is to ensure uniform remains affordable. As part of this, the school holds a stock of **second-hand uniform**. If families are struggling to meet the cost of uniform, we would advise them to contact their head of year in the first instance. The school also holds scheduled sales – usually once a year in summer term – which are published on the school website and are communicated via email and social media.

## 8. Meeting the Cost of School Uniform

The school's priority is to ensure uniform remains affordable. As part of this, the school holds a stock of second-hand uniform. If families are struggling to meet the cost of uniform, we would advise them to contact their head of year in the first instance.

The school also holds scheduled sales – usually once a year in summer term – which are published on the school website and are communicated via email and social media.

## 9. Non-compliance

Staff will be permitted to discipline students for breaching this policy, where relevant to their role, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

A member of the senior leadership team or head of year team, or a person authorised by the headteacher, will direct a student to the school store to loan or purchase the required uniform to rectify any transgressions.

Students will be given the opportunity to wear alternative uniform from the school store e.g. socks, shoes, skirt, jumper and ties. These items will be loaned to students on a temporary basis (for the school day). It is expected that the items are returned at the end of the school day, and students will be asked to sign for the loan of any items. Heads of year will contact home to follow up for any items that students do not return. A same-day uniform detention is to be issued to students who require uniform from the school store.

Students who decline the opportunity to wear alternative uniform from the school store will work in the isolation room until the issue can be resolved. Heads of year will make direct contact with parents and carers.

If a student refuses to comply with the uniform policy, the usual sanctions will apply. This can include sanctions such as isolation, suspension and referral to the school governors, as outlined in the behaviour policy.

If the principal driver of the defiance is the parent and/or carer, the school will consider the steps to take in consultation with members of the SLT and DSL.

## 10. School Uniform

### i. Clothing

The school uniform is as follows:

Item	Branding	Information	How to acquire
Blazer	School badge	Optional item Black with school badge.	Branded blazer available from school uniform shop or second-hand from school.
Jumper	School badge	Navy V-neck jumper with school badge. Must be worn if blazer is not worn.	Branded jumper available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Tie	House colour	Wallingford school tie with house stripe.	Available from the school uniform shop (via the school website) and second-hand from school.
Skirts	No branding	Black, pleated only and knee length.	Available from school supplier, second-hand from school, and from regular retailers.
Trousers	No branding	Black, ankle-length and tailored.	Available from school supplier, second-hand from school, and from regular retailers.
Shirt	No branding	White, short or long sleeved, buttoned to neck with tie worn.	Available from school supplier, second-hand from school, and from regular retailers.
Tights	No branding	Non-patterned and black in colour	Available from regular retailers.
Socks	No branding	Black and ankle length	Available from regular retailers.
Footwear	No branding	See uniform policy footwear guidance for information.	Available from regular retailers.

#### Some clarifications:

**Skirts** or **trousers** in denim, cord or canvas materials are not permitted, nor are jeans (e.g. with studs and/or patch pockets). Coloured t-shirts or t-shirts with logos should not be worn

under shirts. Students will not be allowed to wear non-uniform, jumpers, sweatshirts or hoodies in school. These are not an alternative to wearing a coat.

## ii. Footwear

Shoes are deemed to be acceptable if they are plain, black, not overly decorative and made of leather or similar weather-resistant material. They should be flat sensible school shoes. Velcro fastenings are permitted on shoes provided all other criteria are met.

Shoes are deemed to be unacceptable if they are not plain black, are made of canvas, are overly decorative or have white soles. Sports-branded footwear is not permitted. Trainers, boots and brands including – but not limited to – Vans, Converse, Nike and Adidas are also not permitted.

The final decision on the appropriateness of uniform rests with the senior leadership team. Photos of acceptable and unacceptable footwear can be found on the school website under school uniform guidance: <https://wallingfordschool.com/index.php/parents-2/uniform-regulations>.

## iii. PE Kit (Compulsory)

Parents and carers are responsible for providing their child with the necessary PE kit, and students must bring it into school when needed.

Item	Branding	Information	How to acquire
Top Vapour	School badge	With school logo.	Available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Top Haze	School badge	With school logo.	Available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Outdoor rugby shirt	School badge	With school logo.	Available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Shorts	School badge	With school logo.	Available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Skort	School badge	With school logo.	Available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Sport socks	School badge	With school logo.	Available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Gum shield	None	Fitted	Available from regular retailers.

Shin pads	None	Fitted	Available from regular retailers.
White socks	None	Ankle length	Available from regular retailers.
Football boots	None	Correctly studded	Available from regular retailers.
Sports trainers	None	Must be laced. Leisure and skateboarding trainers are not permitted.	Available from regular retailers.

#### iv. PE Kit (Optional)

Item	Branding	Information	How to acquire
Qtr zip training top	School badge	With school logo.	Available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Training pants	Not branded	Without school logo.	Available from school supplier or second-hand from school.
Base layer top	Not branded	Without school logo.	Available from regular retailers.
Leggings	Not branded	Can only be worn in conjunction with shorts or skorts	Available from regular retailers.

#### v. Jewellery

Students may wear one watch and one pair of plain silver or gold ball stud earrings. The earrings are to be no more than 3mm in diameter and are to be worn in the lower ear lobes (one in each ear). Earrings must be removed for practical subjects and PE at the discretion of teachers. Nose studs and other body piercings including ear stretchers are not permitted.

Staff are permitted to confiscate any additional jewellery items and, under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, cannot be held liable for damage or loss to items confiscated lawfully. Items of jewellery, especially valuable pieces, should not be brought into school. A member of staff may ask the student to remove an item and may take the item into their care for the day. Members of staff will endeavour to take reasonable care of confiscated items, but it may not always be possible to label jewellery and staff are not expected to issue duplicate receipts for confiscated items. It is the responsibility of the family to retrieve the item.

### Guidance on appropriate earrings



#### vi. 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 discourages students from bringing valuable bags to school. The school will not be liable for lost or damaged school bags.

#### vii. 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 Trust's complaints procedures policy.

To maintain a respectful and safe learning environment, students are expected to follow these guidelines regarding hair and headwear:

- Hair must be of natural colours only. Unnatural shades such as red, green, purple, blue or similar are not permitted.
- Hair should not be excessively short.
- Students with long hair must ensure it does not obstruct their vision, cover their face, or pose any health and safety risks.

- Long hair must be securely tied back during practical activities, such as Physical Education (PE).

The following styles and accessories are deemed inappropriate for school:

- Brightly dyed or unnatural hair colours e.g.: red, green, purple and blue.
- Headwear with bold patterns or vivid colours. Navy or black are acceptable colours.
- Excessive or oversized hair accessories.
- Headwear displaying inappropriate language or imagery.

### **viii. Makeup and cosmetics**

The school rules on makeup and cosmetics are as follows:

- Makeup is not permitted.
- False eyelashes are not permitted.
- False nails, nail extensions and acrylic nails are not permitted.
- Nail varnish is not permitted.

Students wearing makeup will be required to remove it.

### **ix. Outdoor wear**

A waterproof outdoor garment/coat is desirable; this must be a coat or anorak with sleeves.

- Denim jackets are not permitted.
- Students are not permitted to wear non-uniform sweatshirts, jumpers or hoodies.
- Clothing with badges or excessively logoed items and emblems are not permitted.
- Accident prevention groups recommend light colours or fluorescent and reflective strips for better visibility whilst commuting to and from school.

## **11. Seasonality of Uniform**

There are no seasonal changes to the school uniform. Any adaptations due to extreme weather will be communicated to students and families as needed (e.g. appropriate footwear during heavy snow / removing jumpers during very warm weather).

## **12. Labelling and Lost Property**

All belongings, including clothing and footwear, should be clearly named to facilitate swift return if items are lost. Any lost property will be taken to the school office and if unclaimed after a period of time, will be disposed of or offered for re-sale.



### **13. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed and updated regularly – approximately every year or where there are changes in statutory guidance, if feedback from the school community indicates issues or if suppliers or cost considerations change.