



The Circle Trust Document: **Uniform Policy**

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Approver:	Local Advisors
Owner:	Resources Committee
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Changes History:

Version	Date	Amended by:	Substantive changes:	Purpose
1.0	4.5.22	AH	New Document	First release
1.1	15.11.22	AH		Update
1.2				
1.3				

1. Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1. The position of The Circle Trust is clear: the unique ethos of every school in the Trust should be preserved in perpetuity. Consequently, individual school uniform expectations are therefore set out on individual school websites.
- 1.2. Each school's uniform decisions are determined by the Headteacher approved by governance in line with DfE best practice guidance and under the principles set out in this policy.
- 1.3. Respecting the unique ethos of each school, the Circle Trust supports all schools in their approach to uniform. It may therefore be that a school has a less formal dress code rather than a specific uniform policy.
- 1.4. The Circle Trust adheres to the DfE statutory guidance [statutory guidance on the cost of school uniforms](#) , and with our obligations under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). Additionally we follow the good practice set out in the DfE [non-statutory guidance](#) when determining school uniform expectations.
- 1.5. The Circle Trust recognises the value of having a uniform for the following reasons:

1.5.1. Safety

If all the pupils in a school wear a clearly recognisable uniform it is easy to identify strangers. On the way to and from the school it also affords a degree of safety as the pupils are part of a large body of young people who will look out for each other.

1.5.2. Preparation for the future

Many jobs require staff to wear a uniform and even if there isn't a uniform there is often a dress code. Uniform helps young people get used to dressing to a prescribed standard. It also helps them know and enjoy the difference between formal and informal dress.

1.5.3. Value for money and sustainability

Good quality uniform is in general a cost-effective way of dressing children and young people for school. It relieves individuals from the "pressure" to purchase and wear expensive, fashionable items. School uniform reduces "throw away fashion" purchases and recycling via in school second hand uniform pieces supports our sustainability ambitions and duty.

1.5.4. Ready to learn

Putting on the uniform is a signal you are preparing to learn.

1.5.5. A sense of pride and belonging

The Circle Trust wants to support the conditions where children and young people feel a sense of belonging and feel proud to be part of their school community.

2. The Aims and Objectives of the Uniform Policy

2.1. The Circle Trust has developed this policy to be clear about the Trust's expectations for school uniform. This policy:

- 2.1.1. Shows all stakeholders that The Circle Trust adheres to statutory duty and best practice in a transparent, consistent, considered and responsible way
- 2.1.2. Gives clarity regarding the responsibilities of Trustees, the Executive Headteacher, Local Advisory Boards and Headteachers
- 2.1.3. Sets out our approach to requiring a uniform that is of reasonable cost and offers the best value for money for parents and carers
- 2.1.4. Covers all students in each school up to Year 11.
- 2.1.5. Covers students Sixth Form who may follow a dress code rather than a uniform policy.

3. The Benefits of an effective Uniform Policy

3.1. An effective Uniform Policy will add value to The Circle Trust, supporting the Trust's objectives by:

- 3.1.1. Acting in accordance with the Trust's core value of inclusion
- 3.1.2. Ensuring appropriate stewardship of all Trust finances
- 3.1.3. Protecting the Trust's reputation
- 3.1.4. Ensuring compliance with all legislation

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The Trustees have a fundamental role to:

- 4.1.1. Approve the Uniform Policy ensuring the policy is in line with The Circle Trust's core values

- 4.1.2. Regularly review the Uniform Policy and approve changes or improvements to key elements of its processes and procedures taking into account duties in respect of the Equalities Act 2010.

4.2. The Executive Headteacher will:

- 4.2.1. Operationally adhere to the Uniform Policy
- 4.2.2. Monitor and review the implementation of the Uniform Policy
- 4.2.3. Provide a mechanism for any changes to the Uniform Policy to be disseminated and discussed by Local Advisors and Headteachers

4.3. The Local Advisors will:

- 4.3.1. Adhere to this Uniform Policy
- 4.3.2. Approve the uniform expectations and rules associated with appearance for their school and in doing so consider:
 - 4.3.2.1. How comfortable the uniform is for children and young people
 - 4.3.2.2. How uniform in their school might affect groups represented in the school, especially those who share protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- 4.3.3. Be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important school policies and routine, such as school safety or discipline. Legal judgments have not supported the absolute right of people of faith to wear garments or jewellery to indicate that faith
- 4.3.4. Engage with parents and carers when developing or making any significant changes to the uniform policy and consider these views in determining the policy
- 4.3.5. Consider the environmental impact in the manufacturing of the school uniform
- 4.3.6. Approve suppliers of uniform and ensure that if the school has in place a contract with a specific supplier the supplier has an agreed procedure to deal with complaints about the supply and quality of uniforms.

4.4. The Headteacher will:

- 4.4.1. Operationally adhere to the Uniform Policy

- 4.4.2. Engage with pupils when developing or making any significant changes to the uniform policy
- 4.4.3. Ensure the Uniform expectations and rules associated with appearance are displayed on the school website and communicated to all stakeholders. A link stating uniform expectations must be added as an appendix to the end of this Policy.
- 4.4.4. Take a considered approach for uniform exceptions to be made in extreme weather including ventilation requirements in classrooms
- 4.4.5. Ensure information is provided to parents/carers where uniform can be sourced as well as ensuring second hand uniform sales are arranged and promoted

5. Communicating with parents/carers, children and young people regarding uniform

- 5.1. A school's uniform policy, expectations and rules associated with appearance must be:
 - 5.1.1. Displayed on the school's website, available for all parents, including parents of prospective pupils, and be easily understood.
 - 5.1.2. Explained to children, young people and staff

6. Cost of Uniform

- 6.1. All schools in The Circle Trust need to make sure that their uniform is affordable. Parents/carers should not have to think about the cost of a school uniform when choosing which school(s) to apply for.
- 6.2. In considering cost, the Headteacher and Local Advisors must consider the total cost of school uniform, considering all items of uniform or clothing that parents or carers will need to provide for their child while they are at the school. This must include PE kit.
- 6.3. Schools should keep the use of branded items to a minimum. Schools are advised to limit any branding to long-lasting or low-cost items, meaning parents should be able to buy most uniform items from a wide range of shops. Branded items do need to be bought from specific shops but schools will be required to make sure that cost and value for money are given the highest priority when appointing suppliers for these items. Schools are advised to keep branded items to a minimum and allow high street items.

6.4. Schools should make sure that arrangements are in place so that second-hand school uniforms are available for all parents. Schools can participate by signposting parents to an already established second hand uniform scheme, or they can set up their own provision. Information on second-hand uniforms should be clear for parents of current and prospective pupils and published on the school's website.

7. Compliance to wear the school uniform

7.1. It is a duty placed on Headteachers and governance that all policies promote good behaviour and discipline.

7.2. Children and young people are expected to wear their school's uniform correctly at all times (other than specified non-school uniform days) while:

7.2.1. On the school premises

7.2.2. Travelling to and from school

7.2.3. At out-of-school events or on trips that are organised by the school, or where they are representing the school (if required)

7.3. Where there is non-compliance in wearing the uniform correctly then there will first be encouragement to do so and contact with parents/carers to understand if there are any barriers in doing so. Where possible the school will seek to work in partnership with parents/carers to resolve uniform issues.

7.4. Where the non-compliance of wearing uniform is a behavioural issue the matter will be dealt with in line with The Circle Trust's Behaviour Policy. In accordance with DfE guidance [School uniform - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-uniform) "The Headteacher can discipline your child for not wearing the school uniform. Your child can be suspended or expelled if they repeatedly ignore the uniform rules."

7.5. Headteachers have the authority to agree individual adaption to school uniform (which can be time limited or permanent) for reasons such as a child or young person with a special educational need with a significant sensory issue.

8. Equalities Act 2010 and public sector duty

8.1. The Equality Act does not deal specifically with school uniform or other aspects of appearance such as hair colour and style, and the wearing of jewellery and make-up. It is for a Local Advisory Board of a school to decide on school uniform expectations and other rules relating to appearance. In doing this a Local Advisory Board will have regard to their statutory obligations.

- 8.2. The Circle Trust appreciates that there are evolving societal norms around dress. As with most schools currently the difference in uniform requirements for male and female children and young people is standard. This is not considered to be discriminatory unless one gender is particularly disadvantaged, both should have the same “overall” standard of dress.
- 8.3. Headteachers will consider whether flexibility is needed in relation to uniform to meet the needs of a child or young person, for example who is undergoing gender reassignment.
- 8.4. The Circle Trust recognises that some children or young people may wish to wear distinctive garments for religious reasons. This could include wearing or carrying specific religious artefacts, not cutting their hair, dressing modestly, or covering their head. Children and young people have the right to manifest a religion or belief, but not necessarily at all times, places or in a particular manner. Local Advisory Boards will be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important school policies, such as school safety or discipline. It should be possible for most religious requirements to be met within a school uniform policy and a Local Advisory Board will act reasonably through consultation and dialogue.
- 8.5. When regularly reviewing this policy Trustees, Local Advisors and Headteachers will take in to account changing societal views and will review parental/carer, children and young peoples’ views.

9. Complaints and challenges to school uniform policy, expectations and rules associated with appearance

- 9.1. Disputes about school uniforms should be resolved in accordance with The Circle Trust’s Complaints Policy.
- 9.2. Where the subject of a complaint is due to a child or young person’s protected characteristic, Local Advisors should carefully consider requests to vary their uniform policy.

Appendix

[School Uniform - St Crispin's - Excellence for all](http://www.crispins.co.uk)