

The Learning Trust Uniform Policy

Statement of intent

The Learning Trust believes that, within each of its schools, consistent school Uniform Guidelines are vital to promote the ethos of that school and provide a sense of belonging and identity for all students, regardless of their protected characteristics or socio-economic circumstances.

This Policy lays out, in general terms, the measures that each school has taken to ensure consistent, fair and inclusive Uniform Guidelines, and to implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all students, and is affordable and the best value for money for each school and students' families. It should be noted that this Policy should be read alongside each school's specific Uniform Guidelines.

The Trust Board reviews this Policy every three years.

The Headteacher/Principal and the LGB review the individual school's Uniform Guidelines annually.

We believe that students learn most effectively and achieve their best outcomes when they are comfortable, able to be themselves, and dressed in such a way that sets an appropriate tone for education.

Legal Framework

This Policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education Act 2011
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This Policy has due regard to all relevant guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2021) 'Cost of school uniforms'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2021) 'School uniforms'

This Policy operates in conjunction with the following individual school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Transgender Policy
- The Finance Manual

Roles and Responsibilities

Each school Local Governing Board is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the Headteacher/Principal and school community, a practical and smart school uniform that accurately reflects each school's vision and values.
- Ensuring that their school's uniform is accessible, affordable, and inclusive, and does not disadvantage any student by virtue 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 their school's uniform.
- Demonstrating how best value for money has been achieved in its Uniform Guidelines.
- Ensuring compliance with the DfE's 'Cost of school uniforms' guidance.

The Headteacher/Principal is responsible for:

- Enforcing their school's uniform on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring that teachers understand this Policy and their school's Uniform Guidelines, including what to do if a student is in breach of the Policy or Guidelines.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of each school community about their school's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.
- Providing students with an exemption letter as appropriate, e.g. for a student who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting top.

The Finance Team is responsible for:

- Processing and approving all eligible School Uniform Assistance Application Forms (see Appendix 1).

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that students dress in accordance with this Policy and their school's Uniform Guidelines at all times.
- Disciplining students who are in breach of this Policy or the school's Uniform Guidelines.
- Ensuring that students understand why having a consistent and practical school uniform is important, e.g. school identity.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct school uniform as detailed in their school's Uniform Guidelines.
- Informing the Headteacher/Principal if their child requires a more relaxed uniform for a period of time, including 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 the Headteacher/Principal has granted an exemption.
- Looking after their uniform as appropriate.
- Understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to each school, e.g. school identity and community.

Cost Principles

The Trust and its schools are committed to ensuring that each school's school uniform is affordable and accessible to all students, and does not place an unreasonable financial burden on parents.

In accordance with the 'School Admissions Code', the Headteacher/Principal will ensure that their school's Uniform Guidelines do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

Each school will assess the overall cost implications of its Uniform Guidelines regularly, including prior to making any changes to each school uniform. When evaluating whether costs are reasonable and proportionate, each 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 each 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 affect their ability to access the uniform due to costs.
- LAC and PLAC.

Each 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.

Each school keeps variations in school uniform for different groups of students, e.g. year group-specific items or house colours, to a minimum, where possible to ensure that students can get the most wear out of their uniform possible and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings.

Each school keeps branded uniform items to a minimal level that is reasonable for all members of each school community. Each school defines a branded uniform item as any item of clothing that cannot

be purchased at a range of retailers, including by virtue of logos, colours, design, and fabrics. Where each school decides to require an item of branded clothing, it will conduct an assessment to ensure prices are kept as low as possible, e.g. by offering sew- or iron-on logo badges for jumpers that can be bought at retailers instead of requiring special branded jumpers.

Each school is committed to meeting the DfE's recommendations on costs and value for money. Every care is taken to ensure that our uniforms are affordable for all current and prospective students, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.

Each school works with its suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated are passed to parents where possible.

Each school will not amend uniform requirements regularly and will take the views of parents and students into account when considering any changes to school uniforms.

Equality Principles

The Trust and each of its schools takes its legal obligation to avoid discriminating against any protected characteristic unlawfully very seriously, and aims to ensure that the schools' Uniform Guidelines are as inclusive as possible so that all students are supported to access a school uniform which is comfortable, suitable for their needs, and reflects who they are.

Each school will work to ensure that school uniform's cost does not disproportionately affect any students by ensuring that uniforms for all genders are as equal in price as possible and by adhering to the cost principles laid out in section 3.

Each school will ensure that parents and students are consulted over any changes to school uniform, and that views and advice is sought specifically from students, and parents of students, who:

- Are transgender, including non-binary students
- Have SEND and/or sensory needs.
- Are of a religious or cultural background that has dress requirements.

Wherever possible, each school implements a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that students are not required to wear specific items based on their gender, and may wear any of the uniform items listed in the school's Uniform Guidelines 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 in line with the Transgender Policy.

Each school ensures that students who are required to follow certain dress requirements, e.g. by virtue of their membership of a particular religious or cultural group, are afforded flexibility to allow them to wear a uniform that adheres to their requirements as far as possible. Each school endeavours to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, will ensure that the needs and rights of individual students are weighed against any health and safety concerns for the entire school community.

Parents' concerns and requests regarding religious clothing are dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher/Principal and Governing Board, and always in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Each school ensures that the needs of students with SEND and/or sensory difficulties are considered in their Uniform Guidelines, e.g. ensuring soft, stretchy fabrics and avoiding intricate buttons or hard seams; however, where the needs of these students cannot be met in the standard Uniform Guidelines, individual adaptations to the uniform will be considered and permitted wherever possible.

Complaints and Challenges

Each school endeavours to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Procedures Policy.

To make a complaint, parents should refer to the Trust's Complaints Procedures Policy and follow the stipulations outlined.

When a complaint is received, each school works with parents to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

Governors are willing to consider reasonable requests for flexibility to allow a student to accommodate particular social and cultural circumstances.

Uniform Assistance

The Trust and its schools support vulnerable families in meeting the costs of uniforms. School uniform assistance is provided on an individual needs basis. The budget for the school uniform assistance scheme comes from **Pupil Premium funds**.

To claim school uniform assistance, the school should be in receipt of Pupil Premium for the student. Eligibility is determined by checking school records.

Families who meet the criteria should email finance@tltrust.co.uk.

Each school holds limited stocks of second-hand school uniforms in the school's office for parents to access; access to these uniforms is available upon request made to the Headteacher/Principal or Pastoral Lead. Parents are invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it.

Non-Compliance

Staff members are permitted to discipline students for breaching the school's Uniform Guidelines, in accordance with each school's Behaviour Policy.

The Headteacher/Principal, or a person authorised by the Headteacher/Principal, is permitted to ask a student to briefly go home to remedy breaches to the school's Uniform Guidelines.

When deciding whether to allow a student to return home, each school considers the student's age and vulnerability, the length of time it will take, and the availability of the student's parents.

Where a student has been sent home to rectify uniform breaches, the absence is recorded as 'authorised'.

If a student repeatedly breaches uniform rules, or takes longer than necessary to rectify the absence, the absence is counted as 'unauthorised'.

Parents will be notified in all cases.

School Uniform

Each school's Uniform Guidelines are available on the school's website.

Adverse weather

All students are required to wear weather-appropriate clothing that covers as much of their skin as possible during adverse weather.

For hot temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Loose-fitting and lightweight shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered necklines.
- Over the knee skirts, shorts or trousers.
- Tops that cover the shoulder area.
- Sunglasses with UV protection when outside, where possible.

Students are advised not to wear any jumpers or blazers during heatwaves. If outside during break times, students not wearing sun-safe clothing are advised to stay in an area protected from the sun, or spare clothing is provided.

For cold temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Scarfs, gloves, coats, and hats when they are outside.
- Warm jumpers that conform to each school's uniform policy.
- Trousers or thick tights with skirts.

Labelling

All students' clothing and footwear should be clearly labelled with their name.

Any lost clothing is to be taken to the lost property box in each school office.

Approved by Trustees 11 July 2023



School Uniform Assistance Application Form

Children are eligible for school uniform assistance if the school is in receipt of Pupil Premium for the student.

This scheme is open to children in Years 1-11. The allowance is for buying suitable school wear and is paid once a year.

Part 1: Details of parent

Your full name:	
Title:	
National insurance number:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Mobile no.:	
Landline no.:	
Email address:	

By supplying us with a phone number or email, you agree to being contacted to let you know if you are eligible.

Part 2: Details of each dependent child you are applying for

Surname	Other names	Date of birth	Name of school attended

Please read this declaration before you sign it

- I declare I am the parent of the child(ren) that I am applying for.
- I declare that all the information I have given is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.
- The school receives Pupil Premium for my child.
- I am aware that I have a duty to notify the school in writing immediately of any changes in my circumstances, which might affect my entitlement to school clothing assistance.
- I understand that information taken from this form will be stored electronically on the school's computers. The school is permitted to do this under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. A copy of the school's registration is held for inspection.

Please return this completed form to the Finance Team – finance@tltrust.co.uk.

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

What happens next?

The Finance Team will contact you to discuss your application for Uniform Assistance.