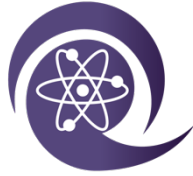




**QUEST TRUST**  
Supporting Young People from  
Early Years to Employment



**UNIVERSITY**  
Collegiate School

# Uniform and Dress Code Policy

University Collegiate School, Bolton

QUEST Schools  
Company Number 09306360

Spring 2026  
Next Review Date: Spring 2028

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## 1. Statement of intent

At the UCS we are proud of the uniform worn by our students across our school. We feel that the uniform adds to the schools' identity and gives our pupils/students a sense of belonging.

Our uniform policy is based on the belief that a school uniform:

- promotes a sense of pride in our school.
- engenders a feeling of community and belonging.
- is practical and smart.
- identifies our students with the school.
- is not distracting in class (high fashion/branded clothes may be considered a distraction).
- makes our students feel equal to their peers in terms of appearance.
- is regarded as suitable, and good value for money, by parents; and
- has been chosen with health and safety in mind.
- sets an appropriate tone for education.

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, and 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 pupils/students' families.

We believe that pupils 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 pupils/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 pupils/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 pupils/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 (2024) 'School uniforms: guidance for schools'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) 'Preventing hair discrimination in schools'

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

The Local Governing Board (LGB) are responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with school leaders and the 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 pupil/student because of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of parents, pupils/students and the wider school community regarding changes to the school's uniform.
- Ensuring that the school's 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.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- enforcing the school's uniform rules on a day-to-day basis.
- ensuring that Teachers understand this policy and what to do if a pupil/student is in breach of the policy.
- listening to the opinions and wishes of the school community regarding the school's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.
- providing pupils with a short-term exemption as appropriate, e.g. for a pupil/student who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting shirt.

Staff are responsible for:

- ensuring that pupil/student dress in accordance with this policy at all times.
- reminding all our pupils/students about the school expectations.
- ensuring that pupils/students understand why having a consistent and practical school uniform is important, e.g. school identity.

Parents are responsible for:

- providing their child/children with the correct school uniform as detailed in this policy.
- ensuring children attend school wearing the correct school uniform, appropriate to the weather conditions.
- informing the Headteacher if they would like to request an exemption to the uniform rules for their child for a period of time, with a reason why.
- ensuring that their child's uniform is clean, presentable and the correct size.
- Ensuring Students have a suitable school bag with minimum equipment of a pen, pencil and ruler at all times.

Pupils/Students are responsible for:

- always wearing the correct uniform, unless the Head of School has granted an exemption.
- looking after their uniform as appropriate.
- understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to the school, e.g. school identity and community.

### 4. Cost 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, considering 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 pre-loved uniforms are available for parents to acquire from the school office.

### *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 consider the opinions and situations of:

- Economically disadvantaged parents.
- Parents with multiple children who are, or will be in the future, pupils at the school.
- Parents of younger children, as they are likely to grow quickly and require new sets of uniform more frequently.
- Parents of pupils/students with protected characteristics that may impact their ability to access the uniform.
- 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 pupil/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 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 worn out 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 pupils, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.

The school will work with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated will be passed to parents where possible. The school does not have an exclusive single-supplier contract or cash-back arrangements. More information on supplier processes can be found in the '[School uniform supplier](#)' section of this policy.

The school will not make frequent changes to uniform requirements and will take the views of parents and pupils into account when considering any changes.

## **5. Equality principles**

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any pupil 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 pupils 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 pupils/students are consulted over any changes to school uniform, and that, where appropriate and with pupils' consent, views and advice are sought specifically from pupils/students, and parents of pupils, 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 Local Governing Board, and always in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

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

### *Gender*

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils 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 pupils/student of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by requiring female pupils to buy both trousers and skirts.
- Not indirectly requiring pupils/students of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by offering football in PE to only male pupils and requiring they buy football boots to participate.

The school will implement a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that pupils 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 pupils are supported to access the uniform that best reflects their gender expression.

### *Religion and belief*

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain religion, belief or culture, the school will ensure that there is flexibility to allow pupils 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 pupils will be weighed against any health and safety concerns appropriate to the circumstances, e.g. if safety headgear needs to be worn.

### *Race*

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils 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 pupil's ethnic origin, e.g. natural Afro hairstyles.
- Not banning hairstyles worn because of cultural, family and social customs, e.g. cornrows.
- Not banning head coverings related to a pupil's culture or ethnic origin, e.g. African heritage head wraps.

The school will follow the good practice guidance provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission on '[Preventing hair discrimination in schools](#)'.

### *SEND and medical conditions*

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils with SEND or medical conditions, the school will ensure its uniform policy takes into account the needs of these pupils. This includes:

- Ensuring the school uniform uses soft, stretchy fabrics and avoids intricate buttons or hard seams.
- Allowing variations to the standard uniform for pupils whose medical conditions may impact how they dress, e.g. pupils with casts who require loose-fitting clothing or pupils with hair loss-related conditions who wish to wear head coverings.

Where the needs of these pupils/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 school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The school will refer individuals who wish to complain to the Complaints Procedures Policy and request that they follow the procedures 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 pupils for choosing to breach the school's rules on appearance or uniform. The school expects this to be carried out in accordance with this policy. The school aims to deal with pupil non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

## **7. School uniform supplier**

The school's current school uniform can be ordered online or in store from Smart Clothing Ltd, Blackhorse Street, Bolton, BL1 1SY. Telephone: 01204 392610.

<https://www.smartschoolwear.co.uk/>

The Governing Board will be able to demonstrate how uniform is procured at the best value for money. The Headteacher 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.

## **8. Finding and consulting suppliers**

If the school is considering changing its suppliers and seeks a list of available suppliers, it will consider the following options:

- Consulting an industry body
- Researching local suppliers
- Consulting with other schools and networks
- Having informal discussions with potential suppliers to help determine the school's own needs

If the school prepares to request bids from potential suppliers, it will consider the following elements:

- What products parents will need
- Existing contractual commitments
- Length of tender process
- The school's evaluation process

## **9. Template documents**

Schools will use the DfE's '[Procuring uniform supplies](#)' template documents to ensure that they undergo the procurement process correctly. The templates consist of an invitation to tender, a request for quotation, and a pricing schedule.

Schools will use the invitation to tender template to ask questions of suppliers. Schools will then use the pricing schedule to ask suppliers to submit their prices. Full instructions on how to use the templates are included in each of the documents.

## **10. Uniform assistance**

The school will hold pre-loved school uniforms for parents to access; access to these uniforms will be made available upon request made via the school office.

Parents will be invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it.

## **11. Non-compliance**

Staff will be permitted to discipline pupils for breaching this policy, where relevant to their role, in accordance with this Policy.

We understand that, on occasion, personal circumstances may mean that children may be unable to attend school wearing full school uniform. School carries a limited stock of good quality spare uniform which will be provided for children to borrow in this situation. Parents will be notified if this has taken place.

Hairstyle: Children who choose to style their hair in a manner deemed a fashion statement and not in line with that outlined in this policy, will be reminded of the school expectations. Persistent breaches will result in them taking their break and lunch time away from their peers, for a period of time.

Parents will be notified appropriately of breaches of school uniform, e.g. for serious or persistent incidences.

## **12. Trips and visits**

It is our policy that all children should wear school uniform (including PE uniform) when attending school and for PE or when participating in a school-organised event within and outside normal school hours. We ask children to wear their shirts tucked into their skirts or trousers and to take a pride in their personal appearance. If uniform isn't required, parents will be advised in advance.

### 13. School Uniform

The school uniform is as follows:

School Uniform				
Item	Optional or Required	BRANDING	How to purchase	Approximate Cost per item from school supplier
Blazer <b>Plain Black</b>	<b>Required</b>	School branding mandatory	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers.	Variable
Jumper <b>Plain Black – V Neck</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers.	Variable
Shirt/Blouse <b>Plain White</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers.	Variable
Trouser <b>Plain Black</b> and/or Skirt – knee length <b>Plain Black</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from school suppliers and from regular retailers	Variable
School Tie Lower School – Years 7-9 <b>Black Tie/White Stripe</b> Upper School Years 10-11 <b>Purple Tie/White Stripe</b> Student Leadership <b>Gold Tie (supplied by school)</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from school suppliers	Variable
Hijab/Shayla <b>Plain Black</b>		No branding		
Shoes – sensible <b>Plain Black</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from regular retailers	Various
Socks <b>Plain Black</b> or Tights <b>Plain Black (No pattern)</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from school supplier, pre-loved from the school office and from regular retailers	Various
PE KIT				
T Shirt <b>Black</b>	<b>Required</b>	School branding mandatory	Available from school supplier	Variable
Shorts/Skort <b>Plain Black</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from school supplier and regular retailers.	Variable
Plain Tracksuit Bottoms <b>Black</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers.	Various
Sweater <b>Black</b> <i>This must NOT be worn under a UCS Blazer at any time.</i>	<b>Required</b>	School branding mandatory	Available from school supplier and from regular retailers.	Variable
Trainers <b>Plain Black</b>	<b>Required</b>	No branding	Available from regular retailers.	Various

#### Footwear

We believe that it is inappropriate and contravenes health and safety for children to wear shoes with platform soles or high heels in school, so we do not allow this.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school wearing their PE kit on designated days.

### *Bags*

The school will discourage pupils/students from bringing high value/fashion bags to school. The school will not be liable for lost or damaged school bags.

### *Jewellery, Make-up and Nail Varnish/False Nails and Hair*

#### *Jewellery*

- Wearing stud earrings (ONE PAIR) is permitted – strictly no hooped or dangling earrings
- One Nose Stud is permitted to be worn.
- No other items of jewellery are permitted, this included rings or bracelets.
- Refusal to remove jewellery will result in confiscation.

#### *Make-Up and Nails*

- Subtle, natural looking make-up is permitted. The Headteacher (or those with delegated responsibility) have the right to instruct the removal of make-up should it be deemed unacceptable. False eye lashes are not permitted and will need to be removed. Extreme hair colours, styles or extensions are not permitted
- Nail polish, acrylic or false nails are not permitted.

#### *Hair*

Pupils with long hair must ensure that this does not impede their vision, cover their face, or cause a health and safety risk. It is recommended that long hair must be tied back. Hairbands, ribbons, bows, etc. should be plain. Headscarves/hijab/headwear worn for religious reasons must be plain black.

The school reserves the right to make a judgement on whether a pupil'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 pupil by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual pupil's scenario will be taken into account where any judgements on appropriateness are to be made.

### **14. Adverse weather**

All pupils will be advised to wear weather-appropriate clothing. Pupils will be advised not to wear jumpers or hoodies during heatwaves/hot weather.

During hot temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Long-lasting sunscreen, applied before school.
- Where deemed appropriate, sun hats and sunglasses with UV protection when outside.

For cold temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Scarfs, gloves, coats and hats when outside, strictly no coats to be worn inside the school.
- Warm jumpers.
- Trousers, or skirts and thick tights.

### **15. Labelling and lost property**

Parents will be advised to ensure that all clothing and footwear is clearly labelled with their name, school will not be held responsible for any lost property. All lost property will be retained for a month and will be disposed of if it is not collected within this time.

### **16. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **Spring 2028**.

The school will engage with parents and pupils when reviewing this policy. Any subsequent changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff, pupils, parents and other relevant stakeholders.