

# **The New School at West Heath**

## **Policy on Dress Code and Uniform**

### **Introduction**

This policy is relevant to both students and staff of the New School.

At the New School the rationale for having a school uniform is very clear and is outlined in the next section. It is not just that schools traditionally have a uniform. The original idea for ours came from the students themselves. They indicated that having one is important to them. A survey was conducted and the clear result was that a sweatshirt with or without a hood was seen as desirable. Samples in a variety of colours were obtained and a ballot revealed that all the students, with only one exception, expressed a willingness to wear them. This has now become an important tradition at the School.

### **Aims & Objectives**

A school uniform aims to serve a number of purposes that benefit the individual student, the school community and the family. The school body are encouraged to wear the uniform, but students would never be sanctioned e.g. sending home for not wear it.

- It simplifies the issue of what to wear, which can be very time consuming for some.
- It creates a sense of identity. Our students are, of course, individuals but they are also members of a community. People with emotional difficulties are often very self-centred and part of the school's role is to help them embrace the community dimension of life.
- It helps to create a sense of corporate identity when taking parties on school trips.
- It helps to prepare our students for the world of work by recognising that there is a difference between the worlds of leisure and work.
- It prevents the social divisiveness that would result if students were entirely free to choose according to their own resources and preferences.
- It prevents pressure on parents to provide according to current trends – what has become known as fashion victims.
- It helps our students conform to the school's health & safety requirements.

### **Strategies**

The following is an outline of the uniform and dress code of the school:

- All clothing must be safe and decent.
- Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times. They have flat and not high heels. Shoes and boots worn for outdoor activities must not be worn in the buildings and everyone must be careful not to bring mud into the buildings.
- The school sweatshirt is very strongly encouraged for years 7 to 10. Wearing one in year 11 wearing is a matter of individual choice but year 11 students

cannot be named as Senior Students or School Ambassadors unless they agree to wear the uniform.

- The wearing of jewellery is not encouraged. Large earrings or any other jewellery such as rings which pose health & safety risks are not permitted. Students may wear ear studs and other items provided they are small.
- There is a school hat with the logo, which is optional and available for purchase. Other hats are permitted. However they will not be worn in whole school events, formal occasions and in the dining room.
- T-shirts must not display inappropriate or offensive word, images or logos.
- Students consistently meeting the standards of dress described in this policy will have the privilege of representing the school as ambassadors and tour guides.
- If there is any doubt as to the acceptability of any item of clothing, footwear or jewellery the Principal's decision shall be final. Students must also take the guidance of specialist subject teachers in what they wear for their particular lessons and clubs.
- There are separate expectations for residential students which are described in their induction pack.
- There will be special occasions, for example notable visitors, when the Principal will request that all students to wear their uniforms for that day. This is a sign of respect and part of students' personal and social development.
- The expectations described in this policy are incorporated in the students' welcome pack.

## Resources

All students are given a sweatshirt or a polo shirt when they join the school. They are encouraged to buy another so that there is always something to wear when one is being washed.

## Special Circumstances

Particular requirements for specific curriculum areas:

**Swimming** in trunks or swimsuit sometimes causes embarrassment and a reluctance to take part. Such students are encouraged to bring a T- shirt and wear it over their costume and to participate fully in the lesson.

**PE, Games and dance:** Nobody is allowed to participate in skirts or jeans. However jogging bottoms, which allow freedom of movement, are acceptable. Jewellery is not permitted. Students must wear appropriate footwear - in particular only non-scuff sole shoes to be worn. The School holds stocks of PE kit, swimsuits and towels for any students who come unprepared.

**Bike riding and Skate boarding:** Appropriate protective clothing including hats must be worn during these activities.

**DT and constructional activities:** Lessons are conducted in normal clothing. Loose clothing and hair is tied back. Protective coats or aprons are worn. Goggles are used for those activities where there is a risk to the eyes.

**Food & Nutrition (including catering):** Students must have their hair tied back; a hat and wear aprons and no one may cook in open sandals.

**Science:** During practical lessons students must have hair tied back and wear goggles as appropriate.

**Art & textiles:** Students must have their hair tied back. If students are concerned that their clothes may be splashed they must wear an apron or overall.

**Non Uniform Days:** Throughout the year some days are designated as non-uniform days for the purposes of fund-raising. On such occasions both students and staff may wear appropriate casual clothes or fancy dress. Individuals may be sponsored to dress as a particular character or to remain in uniform.

### **Post 16 students:**

Post 16 students are not required to wear uniform but they must be mindful of setting a good example to other students and that they represent the School in other places. They must adhere to the guidance outlined in this policy and the values it enshrines.

### **Staff:**

The school is a place of work for both staff and students. As professionals, staff must be mindful of the need to set a good example to our students of smart and suitable dress (including jewellery) for a place of work. This relates to both modesty and health and safety. Staff should therefore think ahead to those duties that they might be asked to perform and dress accordingly. School sweatshirts, polo shirts and ties are available at cost from the school office. In particular female members of staff should not wear revealing tops or very short skirts. As a rule of thumb if in doubt staff should dress as they were interviewed and offered the job.

### **External links**

**Students on work experience and college placements must dress according to the requirements of both this policy and their particular placement. The placement requirement takes priority but on all other occasions school uniform should be worn.**

<b>Dress Code</b>	
<b>This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:</b> Ethics	
<b>Appendices:</b>	
<b>Monitoring of Policy Implementation is the responsibility of:</b> The Senior Leadership Team	
<b>Lead responsibility:</b>	Vice Principal – Student & Staff Welfare
<b>Annual Policy Review Required:</b>	Yes / No
<b>Approved by:</b> S.S. Committee	<b>Date approved:</b>
<b>Ratified by:</b> Trustees	<b>Date ratified:</b> 10:2004
<b>Reviewed – no changes</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Reviewed – with revisions</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Revision No.</b>	1.0