Uniform Policy

DET Documentation Related to this policy
School Uniforms in NSW Government Schools - 2004

Context
The Department of Education and Training supports the wearing of school uniforms by students and the upholding of high standards of dress by students and staff. The Department recognises that NSW has a long history of school uniforms or dress codes being decided by the local school community.

Rationale
The wearing of school uniforms by students will assist school communities in:
- defining an identity for the school within its community
- developing students’ sense of belonging to the school community
- providing an opportunity to build school spirit
- enhancing the health and safety of students when involved in school activities
- promoting a sense of inclusiveness, non-discrimination and equal opportunity
- reinforcing the perception of the school as an ordered and safe environment
- increasing the personal safety of students and staff by allowing easier recognition of visitors and potential intruders in the school
- promoting positive community perceptions of public education
- making school clothing more affordable for families by eliminating the risk of peer pressure to wear transiently fashionable and expensive clothes.

Careful selection of a school uniform can contribute to the health and safety of students when engaged in school activities. A school uniform should reflect school community standards and expectations. It should be developed in consultation with and agreed upon by the school community. It should be based on a strong student and parent voice. The whole school community has a role to play in encouraging the meeting of these standards.

Principles
Decisions about school uniforms will be consistent with occupational health and safety, anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation. Aspects of the uniform related to safety, e.g. safe footwear and hats, will be enforced as appropriate.

The school’s uniform policy will be the result of formal consultation with students, teachers and parents or carers, including the Parents and Citizens' Association.

After a process of consultation with students, teachers and parents or carers, proposed changes in school uniform will be announced in the school year preceding the change and a reasonable time given to change to any new requirements.

The school’s uniform policy and uniform requirements will be formally endorsed by the school community before implementation.
The school's uniform policy will take into account the diverse nature of the student population in the school and not disadvantage any student.

Economic, personal, social and cultural factors affecting students and their families will be considered when deciding on items of uniform.

The school's uniform policy and school uniform requirements will be reviewed at least every five years and amended where necessary.

Groups within the school community may also seek a review when circumstances change significantly or issues arise.

Local uniform suppliers will be given adequate notice of any change to uniform items the year before any change takes place.

**Responsibilities and Delegations.**

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that the school uniform policy is developed and reviewed collaboratively with the school community.

When a school community agrees on a school uniform, the principal oversees the shared responsibility for ensuring that students are encouraged to wear school uniforms that meet agreed community standards and adhere to legislative requirements.

Principals must provide parents or carers with the school's uniform policy and school uniform requirements.

Principals who operate within the policy framework will be supported by the Department in the implementation of this policy.

**Implementing school uniform requirements**

- Positive reinforcement and encouraging responsible behaviour are the preferred approaches to ensuring students wear the school uniform. The school has awards and incentives for the correct wearing of the school uniform.
- Everyone has a role in setting the standards for the school. Teachers and other school staff model appropriate standards for students. They should dress in a professional manner at all times.
- Suspension or expulsion solely for non-compliance with uniform requirements will not occur.
- Students will not be disadvantaged where required uniform items are not available because of circumstances beyond their control.
- Conscientious objections by parents to the wearing of school uniform will be respected.
- If a student does not wear correct uniform to school, teachers will sensitively find out the reason from the student. If an unsatisfactory reason is provided, the teacher will send home an Out of Uniform note to the student’s parents seeking compliance or to arrange a meeting with the principal to discuss any issue related to the wearing of the uniform.
- When there is a change in uniform, parents will be notified and an appropriate timeframe set for implementation of any change, e.g. 18 months – 2 years. This will allow for students to out-grow their current uniform and replace items with the new requirements.
Arrangements with clothing suppliers

All parents or carers and, as far as is practicable, all retailers concerned must be notified of any change to the school uniform. The school will allow 1 year for any change to be phased in. This will allow suppliers with significant stocks of the uniform to be replaced to prepare for the change.