

# Dunstable Ickniel Lower School

## School Uniform Expectations

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## Statement of intent

**Dunstable Icknield lower School (DILS)** believes that consistent school uniform is vital for:

- Promoting the ethos of a school.
- Providing a sense of belonging and identity.
- Setting an appropriate tone for education.

For the purposes of this document, “**uniform**” includes the following elements of pupils’ 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.
- School book bags / back packs.

This document lays out the measures the school has taken to ensure a consistent, fair and inclusive uniform for all, and to implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all pupils, is affordable, and provides the best value for money for both the school and pupils’ 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 setting out these expectations, we have sought to:

- Engage with pupils.
- Consider how the uniform 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.
- 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 who walk or cycle to school.
- Choose a PE kit which is practical, comfortable, appropriate to the activity involved and affordable.
- Ensure this document is easy to access and understand.

## 1. Legal framework

This document 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'

This document operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Single Equalities Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Establishing 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 because of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of parents, pupils and the wider school community regarding changes to the school's uniform.
- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible and affordable.
- Demonstrating 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 uniform expectations and what to do if a pupil is in breach of these expectations.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of the school community in regard to the school's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that pupils dress in accordance with expectations at all times.

- Where appropriate to their role, disciplining pupils who are in breach of expectations.
- Ensuring that pupils 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 this document.
- Informing the headteacher if their child requires an exemption to the uniform rules for a period of time, with a reason why.
- Ensuring that their child's uniform is clean, presentable and the correct size.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Wearing the correct uniform at all times, unless the headteacher 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.

### **3. Cost principles**

The school will develop its uniform 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, taking into account 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 second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire.

#### **Principles in practice**

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 regularly, including prior to making any changes to the school uniform. When evaluating whether costs are reasonable and proportionate, the 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, 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 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, 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 variations in school uniform for different groups of pupils, e.g. year group-specific items or house colours, to a minimum to ensure that pupils can get the most wear out of their uniform and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings.

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 kept to a minimum e.g. school jumper, school bag
- Making donated second-hand uniform available for families who need them.

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 will not enter into cash-back arrangements.

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.

#### **4. 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 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 are consulted over any changes to school uniform, and that, where appropriate and with pupils' consent, views and advice are sought specifically from pupils, 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 governing board, and always in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Information on how the school ensures its uniform expectations do 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:

- Not directly requiring pupils of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by requiring female pupils to buy both trousers and skirts.
- Not indirectly requiring pupils 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.
- Not holding pupils of different genders to different uniform standards, e.g. by banning certain hairstyles for only one gender.

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 document regardless of the legal sex recorded on the school's records.

### **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 expectations.

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 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.

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 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 cannot be met in the standard uniform, 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.

## **5. 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.

The school has an agreed procedure in place with its uniform supplier to deal with complaints about the supply and quality of uniforms.

In considering a complaint, parents should be aware that teachers can sanction pupils for breaching the school's rules on appearance or uniform. The school expects this to be carried out in accordance with the school's published behaviour policy. The school aims to deal with pupil non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

## **6. School uniform supplier**

The school's current school uniform supplier is:

- Best Look
- BESTLOOK, BL House, High Street North, Dunstable, LU6 1LE
- 01582 603 603
- info@bldirect.co.uk

The school uniform supplier will school uniform assistance letters.

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.

The school will request visualisations and samples of proposed uniform from suppliers before they are agreed.

## **7. 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

## **8. 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.

## **9. Uniform assistance**

The school will support disadvantaged families in meeting the costs of uniforms. Contact the school office on uniform assistance.

The budget for the school uniform assistance scheme will be derived from pupil premium funds.

For parents to claim school uniform assistance, their children should be eligible for FSM. Eligibility will be determined by checking original documents from the relevant authority, detailing receipt of the benefit and the address of the pupil.

Families who meet the criteria will be asked to contact Central Bedfordshire Council to register.

The school will hold second-hand school uniforms for parents to access; access to these uniforms will be made available upon request made to the headteacher.

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



## 10. Non-compliance

Staff will be permitted to discipline pupils for breaching uniform expectations, where relevant to their role, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher, or a person authorised by the headteacher, will send a note home to parents detailing breaches to the school's uniform so it can be remedied for the next school day onwards.

Parents will be notified of pupils' breaches of school uniform in all cases.

## 11. School uniform

### Clothing

The school uniform is as follows:

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire
<b>Regular school uniform</b>			
Red sweatshirt	Required	School logo	Branded sweatshirt, available from Best Look. Required for PE and can be worn every day.
Red jumper or cardigan	Optional	School logo	Branded, jumper and cardigan available from Best Look.
White polo shirt	Required	School logo	Branded polo shirt available from Best Look. Plain white polo shirts without the logo can be purchased from regular retailers.
School tie	Optional	School colours	Branded polo shirt available from Best Look.
White button shirt	Optional	No branding	Available from regular retailers.
Grey trousers, shorts, pinafore or knee-length grey skirt	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers.
Sensible, plain black covered toe <b>shoes</b>	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers – laced only for children who can tie laces independently
Grey socks or tights	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers.
Head coverings – plain white, red or grey only.	Optional	No branding	Available from regular retailers. These should be close fitting.

Red checked summer dress	Optional	No branding	Available from regular retailers. Optional after Easter break until October half-term break only.
<b>PE kit</b>			
Red sweatshirt	Required	School logo	Branded sweatshirt, available from Best Look. Required for PE and can be worn every day.
Plain t-shirt in house colour	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers
Plain black shorts, leggings or jogging bottoms	Required	No branding or design	Available from regular retailers
Plain trainers – Velcro fastening recommended for all	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers – laced only for children who can tie laces independently
<b>Accessories</b>			
School book bag or backpack	Optional – required from Sept 2025	School logo	Available from school supplier

The school will not consider trainers or boots (including ankle boots) suitable everyday footwear in school.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child brings their PE kit to school when needed.

### **Jewellery**

The school rules on jewellery are as follows:

- One pair of stud earrings may be worn – no other piercings are permitted.
- A smart and sensible wristwatch may be worn.

Pupils will be advised that jewellery is their personal responsibility and not that of the school. Lost or damaged items will not be refunded. All jewellery must be removed during practical lessons, including PE lessons and active science experiments.

### **Book Bags and Backpacks**

Pupils must use an appropriately sized waterproof bag to carry their books and equipment. No additional accessories are allowed on school bags (such as key chains/rings).

School bags featuring inappropriate images, slogans or phrases will not be permitted.

The school will discourage pupils from bringing valuable bags to school. The school will not be liable for lost or damaged school bags.

## **Hairstyles and headwear**

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, and parents will always have the freedom to complain via the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Pupils with long hair must ensure that this does not impede their vision, cover their face, or cause a health and safety risk. Long hair must be tied up during practical lessons, e.g. during PE.

The following headwear items are not considered appropriate for school:

- Oversized, themed or excessive hair accessories
- Hair accessories (bands, clips, headbands) in colours other than red, white, grey or black
- Headwear with patterns or colours other than white, red or grey

## **Makeup and cosmetics**

The school rules on makeup and cosmetics are as follows:

- Makeup is not permitted
- False nails and nail extensions are not permitted
- No nail varnish may be worn
- Temporary tattoos are not permitted

## **12. Adverse weather**

All pupils will be advised to wear weather-appropriate clothing.

For hot temperatures:

Pupils will be advised not to wear any jumpers during heatwaves. If outside during break times, pupils not wearing sun-safe clothing will be 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 outside.
- Warm jumpers.
- Trousers, or skirts and thick tights.
- Boots or wellies can be worn to school; children change into school shoes on entering.

## **13. Labelling and lost property**

Parents will be advised to ensure that all pupils' clothing and footwear is clearly labelled with their name and year group.

Any lost clothing will be taken to lost property in the school reception area. All lost property will be retained for one month and will be disposed of if it is not collected within this time.

#### **14. Monitoring and review**

Any changes to these expectations will be communicated to all staff, pupils, parents and other relevant stakeholders.