

Policy Title:	Uniform
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THE OXFORD ACADEMY

The Oxford Academy is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We promote care and respect and expect high standards in all aspects of Academy life.

We aim to build a community clearly based on a Christian ethos, recognising the integrity and the unique value of each individual and that many people of all faiths and none share and support the beliefs and values of this Christian ethos. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution and protect the vulnerable. We are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy.

Our vision for The Oxford Academy is based on the following beliefs:

- Education matters in society: the provision of a well ordered, stimulating learning environment is a common right for all our children
- The Academy should articulate social and moral values and respect for others, irrespective of their class, gender, race or religion
- The Academy will promote the highest achievement in youngsters, irrespective of their abilities or self-expectations. Competition and collaboration are both equally important to learning. The aspirations of all our students will be nurtured
- The Academy will celebrate students' achievements and challenge fixed notions of ability. We will value and reward young people's verbal, practical, academic, sporting, artistic and leadership skills
- An effective and flourishing Academy should be "public" rather than "private", explaining to parents what is being taught and how the curriculum is being interpreted. It should be open to praise and constructive feedback in a genuine spirit of partnership
- An effective Academy should work closely with neighbouring schools to improve opportunities for children and young people
- The work of the Academy will be underpinned at all times by its ultimate aim – to improve standards, achievement and the life chances of young people. The Oxford Academy is, first and foremost, a place of high quality learning and teaching for young people aged 11-19

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

Uniform

1. Aims and Purpose

Uniform plays a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of an Academy and setting an appropriate tone. Most schools and academies in England have a uniform or a dress code and other rules on appearance. The Department for Education strongly encourages schools to have a uniform as it can instil pride, support positive behaviour and discipline, encourage identity with, and support for, the school/academy ethos, ensure students of all races and backgrounds feel welcome, protect children from social pressures to dress in a particular way and nurture cohesion between different groups of students. Above all, many schools believe that school uniform supports effective teaching and learning.

2. DfE Guidance

DfE guidance states that the essential factor to be taken into consideration when determining uniform policy is that schools should act “fairly and reasonably”, bearing in mind their duties under the Human Rights Act 1998 and anti-discrimination legislation.

3. Considerations in Establishing the Policy

The Academy, whilst setting its Uniform Policy, has:

- consulted widely on the proposed Academy Uniform policy. The new uniform, introduced in September 2008, was agreed in consultation with the existing School Council
- considered how the proposed Uniform policy might affect each group represented in the Academy
- considered the concerns of any groups about the proposed policy and whether the proposed policy amounts to an interference with the right to manifest a religion or belief, or whether they are discriminatory
- described the Uniform policy clearly and publicised it well, including on the Academy website, in Academy rules and prospectus and by producing an “easy to glance” Uniform Card
- agreed to consider carefully any request that is made to vary the policy to meet the needs of any individual student to accommodate their religious beliefs
- Agreed to consider carefully any request that is made to vary the policy to meet the needs of an individual student because of temporary or permanent medical conditions

The cost of the purchase of the Academy Uniform and other items in accordance with Academy rules can be a challenge, particularly for low income and large families. In

deciding the design of the Academy uniform, in accordance with DfE guidance, the Governing Board has given high priority to cost considerations. The Academy uniform should not be so expensive as to leave students or their families feeling unable to apply to or attend the Academy, or forgoing necessities in order to meet the cost of uniform.

4. Academy Uniform Details

The following personal appearance and uniform requirements have been approved by the Governing Board for students of the Academy and should be adhered to by all students at all times while attending the Academy, attending Academy activities at other locations and whilst en route to or from the Academy or Academy activities.

4.1 General Requirements

Body Adornment – Jewellery and Make-up

Students must not wear expensive jewellery. One ring only is permitted. Necklaces and chains must be kept to the minimum. One small plain sleeper or one set of stud earrings are permitted in the ear (1 earring in each ear). Facial or nose studs and body piercings are not allowed.

Hairstyles must be appropriate for Academy life, ie no shaved designs. This includes Un-natural colours and shaved areas as well as the whole head.

Coloured nail polish, false nails and excessive make-up including false eye lashes are not permitted.

Seasonal variations:

For boys and girls: a black or dark coloured anorak or top coat, can be worn during colder weather – hoodies, tracksuit tops, denim or leather coats are not permitted.

Outdoor wear in classrooms

Outdoor garments such as coats and scarves must be removed when indoors and in class. Similarly, hooded tops should not take the place of jackets or coats and are not to be worn at the Academy.

Caps are not part of the Academy uniform and must not be worn within the confines of the Academy.

4.2 General Uniform

Each student in year 7 (other year groups joining the Academy will be expected to pay for all items) will be provided with one set of the following items free of charge on entry to the Academy:

Academy Uniform

- 1 x Blazer embroidered with logo
- 1 x Academy tie

PE Kit

- 1 x Polo shirt embroidered with logo
- 1 x Fleece

Students are required to provide the following items:

- Black shoes (plain with a low heel, no trainers, boots, sandals, canvas shoes or high heels)
- White shirts and blouses
- Trousers and skirts
- Black or grey socks for normal wear
- Girls' tights – plain black
- Trainers, black shorts and white socks for PE
- Football boots for outside sport

5. Cultural, Race and Religious Considerations

While students must adhere to the Academy's Uniform Policy, the Academy will endeavour to be considerate to the needs of different cultures, races and religions.

Various religions require their adherents to conform to a particular dress code, or to otherwise outwardly manifest their belief. Some religions require adherents to wear or carry specific religious artefacts, others may hold a belief that they should not cut their hair and a number of religions require their followers to dress modestly, for example, by wearing loose fitting clothing or covering their head.

The Governing Board recognises that it may be possible for many religious requirements to be met within the Uniform policy and that the Academy will act reasonably in accommodating religious requirements.

However, in fulfilling its obligations, the Academy may at times have to balance the rights of individual students against the best interests of the Academy community as a whole.

6. Gender and Sex Discrimination Considerations

The Academy will ensure that its Uniform policy does not discriminate on the grounds of gender. For example, girls will normally be allowed to wear trousers. The Academy's uniform rules will not disadvantage one gender compared with the other.

7. Physical Education

The uniform adopted by the Academy also includes clothing required for Physical Education (PE). In determining the kit for PE/Games, the Academy has adopted a sensitive, flexible approach bearing in mind the equalities issues outlined in the DfE guidance. There is some evidence to suggest that participation and enjoyment of sport is enhanced where students feel comfortable about their PE clothing, particularly girls.

The Academy has chosen a PE/games uniform which is practical, comfortable and appropriate to the activity involved.

8. Breaches of the Uniform Policy

Students not wearing full and correct uniform will be sent home to change. Contact will be made with parents or loan stock used. Form tutors will refer students to the appropriate Vice Principal. The Vice Principal or Learning Mentor will first telephone home to ascertain permission for the child to leave the premises; if no reply is obtained, the student is to be kept separate from the rest of the class and a letter sent home that evening outlining the problem. A standard letter is provided for this purpose.

Where there is a genuine case of hardship, financial assistance may be considered and the Finance Director will organise this with the parents.

Senior staff can discipline students for breach of the Uniform policy. However, the DfE does not consider exclusion to be an appropriate response to breaches of uniform policy, except where they are persistent and defiant.

Where a student repeatedly refuses to comply with the Academy's Uniform policy but does not otherwise display poor behaviour, the Academy believes that exclusion could be an appropriate response, depending on the circumstances of the case. Each case will be reviewed by the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and/or Governing Board as appropriate.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Board will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.