Liberty Academy Trust

Uniform Policy

Date	September 2026
Written By	Director of Safeguarding
Approved Date	
Review Date	September 2027

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1. Aims

1.1. We believe that wearing a school uniform is important for our pupils, as it not only looks smart but gives each young person a sense of belonging and community, and a feeling of equality amongst their peers. Our uniform is designed to be practical and comfortable for our pupils and inclusive of pupils with sensory processing differences and neurodivergent needs.

1.2. The Trust recognises that the application of this policy forms part of its wider safeguarding responsibilities. Uniform expectations will be applied in a manner that promotes welfare, inclusion, dignity and attendance. Where concerns arise regarding a pupil's wellbeing, vulnerability, attendance, neglect, exploitation, poverty or other safeguarding factors, staff will prioritise the child's welfare and follow safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

1.3. This policy aims to:

- Set out our approach to requiring a uniform that is of reasonable cost and offers the best value for money for parents and carers
- Explain how we will avoid discrimination in line with our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010
- Clarify our expectations for school uniform

2. Our school's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

2.1. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include age, sex, disability, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

2.2. To avoid discrimination, our school will:

- Avoid listing uniform items based on sex, to give all pupils the opportunity to wear the uniform they feel most comfortable wearing.
- Make sure that our uniform costs the same for all pupils
- We welcome afro-textured hair worn in all styles, including but not limited to, afros, locs, twists, braids, cornrows, fades, hair straightened through the application of heat or chemicals, weaves, wigs, headscarves and wraps. However, if staff are supporting a child who is at increased risk to pull or grab hair, appropriate consideration should be made and appropriate measures put into place to reduce risk of harm to staff which may mean covering or securing loose hair.
- Allow pupils to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons or if they are experiencing discomfort related to their sex, gender or gender reassignment
- Certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by students when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity. Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred to the Principal, whose decision will be final, subject to the complaints procedure.

- Allow pupils with sensory or physical needs to make reasonable adaptations to their uniform depending on their specific needs

- Allow for reasonable adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality by asking pupils or their parents to get in touch with the School Principal who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The school will not enforce uniform in a way that causes distress or discomfort to pupils with protected characteristics.

- Not tolerate bullying, discriminatory behaviour, harassment or peer-on-peer abuse relating to uniform, appearance, cultural dress, religious dress, disability-related adaptations, hairstyles or protected characteristics. Such concerns will be managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2.3. Some restrictions on clothing, jewellery or footwear may be necessary for health and safety reasons during specific lessons, practical activities, educational visits or work-related learning. Any restrictions will be proportionate, explained clearly and applied consistently.

2.4. When applying this policy, the Trust will have due regard to the needs of pupils with SEND, children in care, previously looked after children, children in kinship care, young carers and other pupils who may face additional barriers to participation or attendance.

3. Limiting the cost of school uniform

3.1. In accordance with the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, the school will not require more than three branded uniform items, excluding ties where the tie forms part of the school's compulsory uniform. The Trust will regularly review uniform requirements to ensure compliance with statutory guidance and affordability expectations.

3.2. Our school has a duty to make sure that the uniform we require is affordable, in line with statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the cost of school uniform.

3.3. We understand that items with distinctive characteristics (such as branded items, or items that have to have a school logo or a unique fabric/colour/design) cannot be purchased from a wide range of retailers and that requiring many such items limits parents' ability to 'shop around' for a low price.

3.4. We will make sure our uniform:

- Is available at a reasonable cost
- Provides the best value for money for parents/carers
- We will do this by:

- Carefully considering whether any items with distinctive characteristics are necessary
- Limiting any items with distinctive characteristics where possible

- Limiting items with distinctive characteristics to low-cost and/or long-lasting items, such as ties
- Considering cheaper alternatives to school-branded items, such as logos that can be ironed on, as long as this doesn't compromise quality and durability
- Avoiding specific requirements for items pupils could wear on non-school days, such as coats, bags and shoes
- Keeping the number of optional branded items to a minimum, so that the school's uniform can act as a social leveller
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for different year/class/house groups
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for extra-curricular activities
- Considering alternative methods for signalling differences in groups for interschool competitions, such as creating posters or labels
- Making sure that arrangements are in place for parents to acquire second-hand uniform items
- Avoiding frequent changes to uniform specifications and minimising the financial impact on parents of any changes
- Consulting with parents and pupils on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy and carefully considering any complaints about the policy

4. Expectations for school uniform

4.1. Our school's uniform

Add details of your school uniform to this section, including:

- Which branded items are required
- Which branded items are optional
- Where you'll accept generic items instead of branded ones
- Expectations for PE and swimming kit
- Expectations for jewellery and hairstyles (taking into account the requirement described above to avoid discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010)
- Expectations for shoes, bags and coats
- Which items are only required in specific circumstances or at certain times of the year

4.2. Where to purchase it

4.2.1. School uniform and related items can be purchased from the Mapac website:

- Church Lawton

4.2.2. Any items of uniform with the school logo on must be purchased from Mapac, however should you wish to shop elsewhere for the other items you

are welcome to do so.

4.2.3. Each school will maintain arrangements for families to access good quality second-hand uniform. Information about obtaining second-hand uniform will be available from the school office and website. Requests for support will be handled confidentially.

4.3. School uniform and sensory needs

4.3.1. Some pupils may find it difficult to wear specific items of clothing or school uniform because of specific sensory needs. Liberty Academy Trust do not wish any child to be uncomfortable and understand that if a child is not comfortable because of their school uniform this may cause physical and emotional discomfort and may impede learning.

4.3.2. Common issues may include specific textures or fabrics or even colours. Clothing tags, seams and waistbands can also be distracting and distressing. Where this is the case, the pupil and parent can discuss these issues with the school on admission or when the need arises. An agreement can be sought regarding reasonable adjustments. Adjustments may include alternative fabrics, removal of labels or tags, alternative fastenings, adapted footwear, alternative PE clothing, modified formal wear requirements or other agreed arrangements. These adjustments will be considered individually and in partnership with parents, carers and relevant professionals where appropriate.

5. Expectations for our school community

5.1. Pupils

5.1.1. Pupils are expected to wear the correct uniform at all times (other than specified non-school uniform days) while:

- On the school premises
- Travelling to and from school
- At out-of-school events or on trips that are organised by the school, or where they are representing the school (if required)

5.1.2. Pupils are also expected to contact their keyworker or form/class teacher who will pass their request on to the school Principal if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to their protected characteristics.

5.2. Parents and carers

5.2.1. Parents and carers are expected to make sure their child has the correct uniform and PE kit, and that every item is:

- Clean
- Clearly labelled with the child's name
- In good condition

5.2.2. Parents are also expected to contact the school Principal if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to:

- Their child's protected characteristics
- The cost of the uniform

5.2.3. Where families are experiencing financial hardship, they are encouraged to contact the school at the earliest opportunity. The school will work sensitively with families to identify available support and ensure that financial difficulties do not become a barrier to education.

5.2.4. Parents are expected to lodge any complaints or objections relating to the school uniform in a timely and reasonable manner.

5.2.5. Disputes about the cost of the school uniform will be:

- Resolved locally
- Dealt with in accordance with our school's complaints policy

5.2.6. The school will work closely with parents to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

5.3. Staff

5.3.1. Staff will closely monitor pupils to make sure they are in correct uniform. They will give any pupils and families breaching the uniform policy the opportunity to comply but will follow up with the headteacher if the situation doesn't improve.

5.3.2. Staff will address uniform concerns sensitively and privately wherever possible. Pupils will not be publicly shamed, isolated or treated in a manner that negatively impacts their dignity, wellbeing or education.

5.3.3. Ongoing breaches of our uniform policy will be dealt within accordance with our school behaviour policy.

5.3.4. In cases where it is suspected that financial hardship has resulted in a pupil not complying with this uniform policy, staff will take a mindful and considerate approach to resolving the situation. Uniform issues should never become a barrier to attendance. Staff will work proactively with pupils and families to resolve uniform concerns whilst supporting regular school attendance.

5.3.5. Where concerns arise regarding persistent poverty, neglect or unmet need, staff will consider whether early help or safeguarding support may be appropriate in line with the Trust's safeguarding procedures.

5.4. Governors

5.4.1. The governing board will monitor compliance with the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, including limits on branded uniform items and the overall affordability of school uniform.

5.4.2. The governing board will review this policy and make sure that it:

- Is appropriate for our school's context

- Is implemented fairly across the school
- Takes into account the views of parents and pupils
- Offers a uniform that is appropriate, practical and safe for all pupils

5.4.3. The board will also make sure that the school's uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money, for example by avoiding single supplier contracts and by re-tendering contracts at least every 5 years.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Liberty Academy Trust. As part of the review process, consideration will be given to affordability, equality impact, safeguarding implications and whether any aspects of the policy have had a disproportionate effect on pupils with protected characteristics or other vulnerable groups.

7. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives statement
- Anti-bullying policy
- Complaints policy
- EDI policy