South Pennine Academies

An excellent education for everyone

Academy Uniform Policy 2026/2027

Policy Owner	Education Director
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Approved	
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1. Statement of intent

South Pennine Academies believes that a consistent academy uniform policy is vital for:

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

For the purposes of this policy, **"uniform"** includes the following elements of students' appearance:

- Clothing, including the academy uniform itself, variations of the academy uniform such as PE kits, and other clothing worn at academy, e.g. non-uniform.
- Hairstyles and headwear.
- Jewellery and other accessories.
- Cosmetics such as makeup and nail polish.

This policy lays out the measures the academy has taken to ensure a consistent, fair and inclusive uniform policy, and to implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all students, is affordable, and provides the best value for money for both the academy and students' families.

We believe that students 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 writing and updating this policy, we have sought to:

- Consider how this policy might affect groups represented in the academy, especially those who share protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensure branded items are kept to a minimum and the cost of academy uniform is reasonable and secures the best value for money.
- Consider how comfortable the uniform will be for students.
- 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 students who walk or cycle to academy.
- Choose a PE kit which is practical, comfortable, appropriate to the activity involved and affordable.
- Ensure the policy is easy to access and understand.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education (Guidance about Costs of Academy Uniforms) Act 2021
- DfE (2021) 'Cost of academy uniforms'
- DfE (2021) 'Academy Admissions Code'
- DfE (2024) 'Academy uniforms: guidance for academys'
- DfE (2025) 'Developing academy uniform policy'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) 'Preventing hair discrimination in academys'

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Holding the academy to account for:
    - Ensuring that the academy's uniform is accessible, inclusive, and does not disadvantage any student because of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
    - Listening to the opinions and wishes of parents, students and the wider academy community regarding changes to the academy's uniform.
    - Ensuring that the academy's uniform is accessible and affordable.
    - Demonstrating in this policy how best value for money has been achieved.
    - Ensuring compliance with the DfE's 'Cost of academy uniforms' guidance.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Implementing an up-to-date uniform policy which is clearly communicated to all key stakeholders
- Enforcing the academy's uniform rules on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring that teachers understand this policy and what to do if a student is in breach of the policy.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of the academy community in regard to the academy's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.
- Providing students with an exemption letter as appropriate, e.g. for a student who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting shirt.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that students dress in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Where appropriate to their role, disciplining students who are in breach of this policy.
- Ensuring that students understand why having a consistent and practical academy uniform is important, e.g. academy identity.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct academy uniform as detailed in this policy.
- Informing the Principal 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.

Students are responsible for:

- Wearing the correct uniform at all times, unless the Principal has granted an exemption.
- Looking after their uniform as appropriate.
- Understanding and respecting why a academy uniform is important to the academy, e.g. academy identity and community.

4. Cost principles

The academy will develop its uniform policy in relation to the following starting principles:

- The academy will seek to ensure that the uniform is affordable. In so doing, the academy will consider the total cost of academy uniforms, taking into account all items of uniform or clothing parents will need to provide while their child is at the academy.
- The academy will seek to keep the use of branded items to a minimum.
- The academy 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 academy will seek to ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms will be published on the academy's website.

Principles in practice

In accordance with the 'Academy Admissions Code', the Principal will ensure that the academy's uniform requirements do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

The academy will assess the overall cost implications of its uniform policy regularly, including prior to making any changes to the academy uniform. When evaluating whether costs are reasonable and proportionate, the academy will take into account the opinions and situations of:

- Economically disadvantaged parents.
- Parents with multiple children who are, or will be in the future, students at the academy.
- Parents of younger children, as they are likely to grow quickly and require new sets of uniform more frequently.
- Parents of students with protected characteristics that may impact their ability to access the uniform.
- LAC and PLAC.

The academy will evaluate the cost of its uniform based on the overall collection of uniform items that parents would need to purchase for a student, 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 academy in clean uniform every day.

The academy will keep variations in academy uniform for different groups of students, e.g. year group-specific items or house colours, to a minimum to ensure that students can get the most wear out of their uniform and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings.

The academy will keep branded uniform items to a minimal level that is reasonable for all members of the academy community. The academy 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 academy 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 longer-lasting and unlikely to be grown out of quickly, e.g. ties.
- Making donated second-hand uniform available for purchase at a lower price.

The academy will meet the DfE's requirements and recommendations on costs and value for money. Care will be taken to ensure that academy uniform is affordable for all current and prospective students, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.

The academy will work with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated will be passed to parents where possible. The academy will not enter into exclusive single-supplier contracts or cash-back arrangements. More information on supplier processes can be found in the 'Academy uniform supplier' section of this policy. The academy will not make frequent changes to uniform requirements and will take the views of parents and students into account when considering any changes.

5. Equality principles

The academy takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any student very seriously.
In line with the above, the academy will aim to ensure that its uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all students can access a academy 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 academy will ensure that parents and students are consulted over any changes to academy uniform, and that, where appropriate and with students' consent, views and advice are sought specifically from students, and parents of students, 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 academy 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 academy's Complaints Procedures Policy.
Information on how the academy ensures its uniform policy does not discriminate against students with specific protected characteristics is outlined below.

Gender
To avoid disproportionately impacting students of a certain gender, the academy will ensure that the cost of uniform is as equal in price as possible across items for all genders.

This includes:

- Adhering to the procedures laid out in the 'Cost principles' section of this policy.
- Not directly requiring students of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by requiring female students to buy both trousers and skirts.

- Not indirectly requiring students of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by offering football in PE to only male students and requiring they buy football boots to participate.
- Not holding students of different genders to different uniform standards, e.g. by banning certain hairstyles for only one gender.

The academy will implement a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that students will not be required to wear specific items based on their gender, and may wear any of the uniform items listed in the 'Academy uniform' section of this policy regardless of the legal sex recorded on the academy's records. Transgender students are supported to access the uniform that best reflects their gender expression.

Religion and belief
To avoid disproportionately impacting students of a certain religion, belief or culture, the academy will ensure that there is flexibility to allow students to present themselves in a way that adheres to their dress requirements as far as possible, within the academy's uniform policy.
The academy will endeavour to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, the needs and rights of individual students will be weighed against any health and safety concerns appropriate to the circumstances.

Race
To avoid disproportionately impacting students of a certain race, the academy will ensure that its uniform policy does not constitute unlawful indirect discrimination through blanket rules.

This includes:

- Not banning hairstyles related to a student'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 student's culture or ethnic origin, e.g. African heritage head wraps.

The academy will follow the good practice guidance provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission on 'Preventing hair discrimination in academys'.

SEND and medical conditions
To avoid disproportionately impacting students with SEND or medical conditions, the academy will ensure its uniform policy takes into account the needs of these students. This includes:

- Ensuring the academy uniform uses soft, stretchy fabrics and avoids intricate buttons or hard seams.
- Allowing variations to the standard uniform for students whose medical conditions may impact how they dress, e.g. students with casts who require loose-fitting clothing or students with hair loss-related conditions who wish to wear head coverings.

Where the needs of these students cannot be met in the standard uniform policy, individual adaptations to the uniform will be considered and permitted where appropriate.

The academy will ensure that it works with a supplier that acts in accordance with the academy's values and principles on equality and inclusion.

6. Complaints and challenges

The academy will endeavour to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the academy's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The academy 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 academy will work with the complainant to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

The academy 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 students for breaching the academy's rules on appearance or uniform. The academy expects this to be carried out in accordance with the academy's published behaviour policy. The academy aims to deal with student non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

7. Academy uniform supplier

The academy's current academy uniform supplier is:

- **Natasha's School Wear**
- **2 Buxton Way, Huddersfield, HD1 2UL**
- **Tel: 01484 431260**
- **https://www.natashaschoolwear.co.uk**

and

- **Bridge School Wear**
- **Milnsbridge, Huddersfield, HD3 4PE**
- **Tel: 01484 655655**
- Beaumont Primary Academy – BRIDGE SCHOOL WEAR

The governing board will be able to demonstrate how uniform is procured at the best value for money. The Principal 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.

8. Finding and consulting suppliers

If the academy 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 academys and networks
- Having informal discussions with potential suppliers to help determine the academy's own needs

If the academy 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 academy's evaluation process

9. Procurement

Academys 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.
Academys will use the invitation to tender template to ask questions of suppliers. Academys 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.

10. Uniform assistance

The academy will hold second-hand academy uniforms at the academy for parents to access; access to these uniforms will be made available upon request to the Principal or Head of Year.

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

11. Non-compliance

Staff will be permitted to discipline students for breaching this policy, where relevant to their role, in accordance with the academy's Behaviour Policy.

The Principal, or a person authorised by the Principal, will be permitted to ask a student to briefly go home to remedy breaches to the academy's uniform. When deciding whether to allow a student to return home, the member of staff will consider the student's age and vulnerability, the length of time it will take, and the availability of the student's parents. A parent will always be contacted before sending the student home – if contact with the student's parent cannot be made, the student will remain in academy.

Where a student has been sent home to rectify uniform breaches, the absence will be recorded as 'authorised'. If a student repeatedly breaches uniform rules, or takes longer than necessary to rectify the absence, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

Parents will be notified of students' breaches of academy uniform in all cases. *Sending a student home (secondary) will only be used as a last resort and only where it does not pose safeguarding risks. Prior to any such decision, the academy will ensure clear communication with the parent/carer, and agreement reached before the student is sent home.*

12. Academy uniform

Clothing

The academy uniform is as follows:

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire	Cost per item from academy supplier
Regular academy uniform				
Navy blue crew neck sweatshirt or sweatshirt cardigan	Required	Academy logo on right-hand side	Branded sweatshirt and cardigan available from academy supplier or second-hand from Uniform Exchange.	£8.99 - £13.99
Plain grey or black skirt/pinafore dress/tailored knee length shorts/tailored trousers/leggings or joggers	Required	No branding	Available from academy supplier, second-hand from Uniform Exchange, and from regular retailers, including supermarkets	£6.99 - £16.00
Light blue polo shirt	Required	No Branding	Available from academy supplier, second-hand from Uniform Exchange, and from regular retailers including supermarkets	£3.99
Blue checked/gingham school dress may be worn in summer	Optional	No Branding	Available from regular retailers, including supermarkets	N/A
Plain black, navy, grey or white socks or thick grey navy or black tights	Required	No Branding	Available from regular retailers, including supermarkets	N/A
Plain black sensible, flat shoes or trainers (no pumps)	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers, including supermarkets	N/A

Headscarf – Navy blue or grey	Optional	No branding or decoration	Available from regular retailers, including supermarkets	N/A

PE and Forest School				
Black/grey jogging bottoms	Required	No Branding	Available from academy supplier, second-hand from Uniform Exchange, and from regular retailers, including supermarkets	£8.99 - £9.99
School T-shirt	Required	No Branding	Available from academy supplier, second-hand from Uniform Exchange, and from regular retailers, including supermarkets	£3.99
Wellies	Required	No Branding	Available from regular retailers, including supermarkets	N/A
Waterproof coat (with hood)	Required	No Branding	Available from regular retailers, including supermarkets	N/A
Accessories				
Academy book bag	Optional	Academy logo	Available from academy supplier	£6.99
Water bottle	Optional	No Branding	Available from regular retailers, including supermarkets	N/A

The academy will not consider trainers or high heels suitable academy shoes.

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

Jewellery
The academy rules on jewellery are as follows:

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

- Students must remove personal effects (including all piercings) during PE to ensure a safe working environment.

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

Bags
Students must use an appropriately-sized waterproof bag to carry their books and equipment. It must be able to hold A4-sized workbooks comfortably without causing any damage.
Academy bags featuring inappropriate images, slogans or phrases will not be permitted.
The academy will discourage students from bringing valuable bags to academy. The academy will not be liable for lost or damaged academy bags.

Hairstyles and headwear
The academy reserves the right to make a judgement on whether a student's hairstyle, hair colour or headwear is inappropriate for the academy environment; however, the academy will ensure that any such judgements do not discriminate against any student by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual student'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 academy's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Students 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 hairstyles, hair colours and headwear are not considered appropriate for academy:

- Hair accessories
- Headwear featuring inappropriate words or images
- Brightly coloured dyed hair
- Headwear with bold patterns or colours (must be in line with the academy uniform colours)

We are committed to ensuring that our uniform and appearance expectations comply with the Equality Act 2010. In line with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) guidance, the academy will not restrict cultural or religious headwear.

Makeup and cosmetics
The academy rules on makeup and cosmetics are as follows:

- Only natural-looking makeup is permitted. Makeup must be minimal and discreet (e.g., light foundation or concealer).
- False nails and nail extensions are not permitted
- Only clear nail varnish may be worn
- Temporary tattoos are not permitted

Students wearing excessive makeup will be required to remove it.

13. Adverse weather

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

For hot temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Tops that cover the shoulder area.
- Sunglasses with UV protection when outside.

Students will be advised not to wear any jumpers or blazers during heatwaves. If outside during break times, students 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.

14. Labelling and lost property

Parents are advised to ensure that all students' clothing and footwear is clearly labelled with their name and year group.
Any lost clothing will be taken to the lost property box in the **academy office**. All lost property will be retained for **one month** and will be disposed of if it is not collected within this time.

15. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal and Behaviour lead.

The academy will engage with parents and students when reviewing this policy.

Any subsequent changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff, students, parents and other relevant stakeholders.