THE HOWARD
Academy Trust

UNIFORM POLICY

Applicable to:	All THAT Primary Academies
Dissemination:	The policy will be available to staff via iAM Compliant and Trust website
Training:	Available to staff on request
Review Frequency:	This policy will be reviewed annually
Agreement Author:	Kyle Taylor – Chief Executive Officer
Executive Policy Owner:	Caron Johnson – Director of Primary Education, Inclusion and SEND
Approval by:	Level 1 – Board of Directors
Approval Date:	November 2026
Next Review Date:	November 2027

THE HOWARD
Academy Trust

Contents

Contents 3
Purpose of This Policy 4
Policy Statement 4
Rationale 4
Aims and principles 4
Uniform Expectations by Phase 5
Primary 5
Secondary ..... Error! Bookmark not defined.
Alternative Provision ..... Error! Bookmark not defined.
Primary SEND Provisions ..... Error! Bookmark not defined.
Personal Appearance, Jewellery, and Hair 5
Religious, Cultural, and SEND Adjustments 5
Equality, Inclusion and Reasonable Adjustments 6
Footwear 6
Non-Compliance 6
Financial Support 6
Roles and Responsibilities 6
Monitoring and Review 7

Purpose of This Policy

This uniform policy establishes consistent expectations for all academies within The Howard Academy Trust including Primary, Secondary, and Alternative Provision settings.

Its primary purpose is to ensure that uniform requirements support an environment conducive to learning while remaining accessible, inclusive, and affordable for all families.

Policy Statement
The Howard Academy Trust believes that school uniform should promote belonging, pride and readiness to learn. Uniform requirements must be affordable, inclusive and respectful of the diverse needs of pupils and families. The Trust is committed to ensuring that no child experiences disadvantage, exclusion or reduced access to education because of uniform expectations.

Rationale
The Department for Education's statutory guidance on school uniform (2025) sets out that uniform costs must be reasonable and must not act as a barrier to attendance or school choice, and this Trust-wide policy is written to comply fully with those expectations.

It also aligns the Trust with the legal requirements within the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, which took effect in September 2026, which limits the number of branded items schools may require as part of their uniform.

Aims and principles
This policy is based upon The Howard Academy Trust values of

Inclusivity
The Trust ensures that uniform is accessible and affordable for all families, in line with DfE requirements on cost, branded-item limits, and availability of low-cost and second-hand options. Uniform expectations are designed so every pupil—regardless of need, background, or circumstance—can participate confidently and without barriers.

Dignity
Uniform decisions across the Trust must protect each pupil's dignity. Schools will treat all adjustments and any uniform difficulties with sensitivity, fairness, and privacy, ensuring that pupils are never singled out or disadvantaged because of personal, financial, medical, or cultural circumstances.

Respect
Uniform expectations must demonstrate respect for pupils' identities, safety, and wellbeing. Clothing and footwear should support safe movement and full participation in learning while recognising the diverse cultural, religious, and personal needs of pupils within reasonable, consistent boundaries.

Ambition
The Trust's ambition is for uniform to promote pride, belonging, and high expectations. While Trust-wide standards ensure fairness and compliance, each school maintains its own identity through colours and design, and AP settings may adopt practical variations that support pupils' learning and future pathways.

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Uniform Expectations by Phase

Primary

In Primary settings, the Trust expects pupils to wear a sweatshirt or cardigan in the schools agreed colour, whether branded or unbranded depending on the school's published uniform list. This is worn with a white or school-colour polo shirt or shirt, and black or grey trousers, skirts, or pinafores.

Smart black shoes should be worn. Summer options, such as tailored shorts or checked dresses in the school colours, may be permitted according to each school's uniform list.

Where outdoor learning, OPAL play provision, forest school activities or practical curriculum experiences take place, pupils may wear appropriately protective footwear, including wellington boots or outdoor shoes.

PE kit must be entirely generic—typically a plain T-shirt, shorts or joggers, and trainers—in line with DfE guidance discouraging branded PE wear in Primary schools and the legal caps on branded items.

Outdoor Learning and Play

The Howard Academy Trust recognises the educational benefits of outdoor learning and play, including approaches such as OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning). Where schools provide regular outdoor learning opportunities, pupils may be required to bring practical outdoor clothing appropriate to the weather and planned activities.

Schools may request that pupils have access to items such as waterproof coats, waterproof trousers, wellington boots or other suitable outdoor footwear. These items are considered part of a school's provision for outdoor learning and are not regarded as branded uniform requirements.

Schools will ensure that expectations remain reasonable and affordable and will provide support where financial hardship may otherwise prevent participation.

Personal Appearance, Jewellery, and Hair

Across all phases, jewellery should be minimal, usually limited to a single small stud in each ear and a watch.

Facial piercings are not permitted across all phases
Hairstyles must not compromise safety or disrupt learning, though reasonable expressions of identity are respected.
Religious head coverings are fully permitted and must be worn in safe and simple styles suitable for the school environment.

Religious, Cultural, and SEND Adjustments

Every academy within the Trust is expected to consider and implement reasonable adjustments to uniform where needed. These include accommodations for religious observance, cultural identity, sensory or physical needs, medical conditions, or gender identity.

Academies must treat all requests sensitively and maintain records of agreed adjustments. These expectations reflect statutory duties under equalities and human rights legislation as recognised and referenced within DfE guidance.

Equality, Inclusion and Reasonable Adjustments

Schools must consider requests for adjustments relating to SEND, disability, medical conditions, religious observance, cultural identity and gender identity. Reasonable adjustments may include alternative fabrics, footwear, fastenings, clothing styles or adaptations to PE kit.

Footwear

Footwear must provide support and safety for everyday school activities. The Trust expects pupils in Primary and Secondary schools to wear plain black shoes, while trainers may be worn only for PE or in AP settings unless a medical exception has been agreed.

Open-toed shoes, high heels, or footwear that compromises safety are not permitted.

Non-Compliance

When a pupil is unable to comply with uniform expectations, staff are expected to address the matter respectfully and proportionately.

Conversations should aim to resolve barriers

DfE guidance advises that schools should consider the relationship between uniform issues, attendance, wellbeing, and financial hardship, and schools must apply these considerations carefully and sensitively.

Financial Support

Each school must maintain a supply of pre-loved uniform and must make hardship assistance available where families face financial difficulties.

DfE statutory guidance requires schools to ensure that uniform costs do not become excessive or prevent pupils from applying or attending the school, and the Trust fully endorses this requirement.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board oversees compliance with statutory requirements and reviews the policy annually.

The CEO and Executive Team oversee uniform expectations across the Trust and ensure compliance with national regulations, affordability requirements and DfE guidance.

Principals are responsible for day-to-day implementation and ensuring staff apply the policy fairly.
Parents and carers support their children in meeting uniform expectations, and pupils are encouraged to wear their uniform with respect for their school community.

THE HOWARD
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Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed each year to ensure continued compliance with legislation, including the statutory cap on branded items from September 2026, updates to DfE guidance, and feedback from pupils, families, and staff.

Consideration is also given to safeguarding, equality, and financial impact on families to ensure the policy remains fair, inclusive, and sustainable.