



Staff Dress Code



The Stour Federation

1. RATIONALE

It is important that the image projected by all staff in The Stour Federation reflects the high expectations of the organisation. We understand and value the public's perception of us as mentors and role models for pupils and colleagues.

We need to be mindful that although there is a difference in circumstances, pupils will always compare what staff are wearing with what they are expected to wear. Consistent standards of professional attire help set out a purposeful and professional atmosphere.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the dress code is to establish basic guidelines to help employees understand the required standards of dress and appearance to:

- Present a professional and positive image of our organisation.
- Respect religions, racial and gender-specific clothing requirements and the requirements of those employees with disabilities where possible.
- Take account of security and safeguarding requirements.
- Contribute to the highest standards of health and safety suitable for the environment in which we choose to work.
- Present positive role models for pupils and colleagues.
- Ensure that staff dress is such that it inspires the confidence of parents, visitors and the wider community.

3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All staff must abide by the dress code and dress appropriately for their particular role.

Clothing must be clean and in a good state of repair.

If you can see up it, down it or through it, it is not appropriate.

The policy is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of dress and appearance, and employees must use common sense in adhering to the principles underpinning the policy. School Leaders at each school will be the sole judge of what is and is not appropriate for the purposes of this policy. If a staff member's clothing or appearance is not deemed appropriate, a school leader will have a discrete conversation with the person concerned to address the issue, in the first instance.

The Trust recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. There are some situations where a temporary adjustment to dress code requirements may be needed, e.g. pregnancy, menopause, broken limb. Priority will be given to health and safety, security and safeguarding.

Staff are in a position of responsibility and trust and therefore they must be attired to appropriately meet safeguarding procedures, both to protect the children and to protect themselves.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time. Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken.

4. EXPECTATIONS

Staff should dress smartly at all times during the working day.

Staff should wear their identity lanyards at all times if working in a general classroom situation or undertaking a 'normal' working day based in a school or office. If staff are working in a situation where the lanyard would constitute a risk to health and safety, it is for them to make a professional judgement as to the safest place to have their identity badge.

Employees who are required to wear a uniform and/or protective clothing must ensure that they do so during working hours, unless advised otherwise by their line manager. Uniforms must always be clean and worn in a presentable fashion. Employees must take responsibility to ensure that good care is taken of them.

As part of safeguarding for staff and pupils, it is important that staff wear clothing which is:

- Appropriate to their role.
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- Is absent from any political or otherwise contentious slogans.
- Is not discriminatory.

5. CLOTHING, JEWELLERY AND FOOTWEAR

A smart skirt/trousers/dress and blouse or other smart top as appropriate. Skirts and dresses must be of an appropriate length.

A suit or smart trousers with a collared shirt (and tie). In some situations, a tie may present a safety risk and so should be removed for such activities.

Clothing should not be dirty, frayed or torn. The following are examples of what should not be worn during the working day and when representing the Trust.

- Baseball caps.
- Cropped tops.
- Low cut tops or with bare shoulders/spaghetti straps.
- Transparent garments.
- Beach wear.
- Tracksuits/jogging bottoms/sportswear (unless teaching PE).
- Any colour denim items.
- Short miniskirts.
- Shorts (unless tailored to the knee).
- Leggings with short tops.
- Underwear being revealed, e.g. low waisted trousers.

Forms of traditional or religious dress including headscarves, sari, turbans, skullcaps, salwar

kameez and hijabs are allowed. In order to support effective communication, it is not appropriate for staff to wear full face veils or anything which covers the face when teaching or delivering training.

Any jewellery must not be excessive, unconventional or present a health and safety risk.

Footwear that is appropriate, comfortable and safe for walking around the school premises is vital. Stiletto heels, backless shoes and flip flops/sliders are not allowed. Open toe shoes are permissible.

6. EXCEPTIONS

This dress code does not apply on training days, non-uniform days, dressing up days, sports days or during educational visits where pupils are not required to wear uniform. Likewise, it is acceptable for staff working during school holiday periods to have a relaxed dress code.

However, it does apply when staff are attending external training during a school day. When attending professional development courses or meetings away from school, staff should maintain a high standard of smart dress. There may be exceptions e.g. courses for PE, art, Forest Schools etc. where alternative clothing is specified.

When on a school trip or residential visit, the attire of staff should mirror that of the children. For example, if pupils are wearing school uniform, then staff should wear their regular school clothes. If children have been asked to wear specific clothing or dress down, then staff should mirror the expectations, ensuring their choice of clothing is deemed safe, decent and appropriate.

Employees who are involved in timetabled PE lessons or sporting activities may dress in appropriate sports clothing for the day. Staff should change for sporting extra-curricular activities.

During practical lessons, staff should either wear suitable protective clothing (e.g. apron) or tuck loose items such as ties/scarves into shirts/tops or remove them.