



May 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

School Dress Code

I want to thank all parents, pupils and staff who have engaged in the school dress code consultation over the past couple of months.

The consultation has consisted of:

- Pupil focus groups
- Staff surveys
- Parental focus groups
- Parental questionnaires
- Raised at pupil and parent council

As a result, this feedback has been used to shape our new dress code policy.

Please find the following attached to this letter:

- 1) Overview: Consultation findings
- 2) Result: School dress code policy

Please note that I am waiting for Borders Embroidery to update their website with our new hoodies and their associated prices. The hoodies will range from £10 - £25 and further details of how to place an order will be sent to you shortly. Pictures of the school hoodies can be found in the consultation paper.

You will note that pupils are expected to wear school colours to school. All school hoodies include the school colours. If pupils chose not to wear a school hoodie then they are expected to wear a school tie. These can be purchased from the school office. These range from £4.50 - £6.50.

It is expected that all pupils will be following this new dress code by 16th of August 2023.

I appreciate that for some of our young people the idea of wearing a dress code to school is something new, due to their experiences of school, during and since the pandemic. We hope that this new dress code is not only clear but also flexible to support all pupils. Having said that, if there are any issues or questions around this new policy, please do not hesitate to get in touch using the email above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Ormerod', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Emma Ormerod
Headteacher



Overview: Consultation findings

Dress Code Policy Consultation

This consultation sought to come to a shared agreement about what the expectation of dress code is at Dalkeith High School.

As part of this consultation we have spoken to pupils, parents/carers and staff to collate their views.

Rationale:

Since the pandemic there has been a relaxation around school expectations on dress code. While this was necessary, as part of health and safety mitigations, we are now hopeful that we can return to a more identifiable school dress code.

Our focus at Dalkeith High School is and will always be on the learning experiences in and out of the classroom. Learning and teaching is a central feature of all improvement activities in the school and we will continue to strive for excellence in this area of school development.

It is fair to say that a school dress code alone will not have an impact on learning, but we feel that it is a part of a broader school improvement jigsaw, which includes the development of our school's ethos, culture and consistent approaches to school expectations, in and out of the classroom.

Consultation findings:

All stakeholders (pupils, parents/carers and staff) agreed that a school dress code:

- Enhances and improves the school's identity in the community
- Creates a sense of pride and belonging
- Helps to identify pupils on a shared campus, therefore improving the security of our school
- Reduces incidents of bullying and helps develop equity across the school

When considering a school dress code, the most important considerations for all stakeholders were:

- Comfort
- Cost
- Appropriate clothing for a professional setting

During the consultation period, it was clear that comfortable clothing was one of the main benefits to the 'more relaxed' dress code the school has had since the pandemic. Pupils reported that they feel they learn better when they feel comfortable.

With the cost of living rising, cost was an important factor for families and staff. Many pointing out the importance of being able to buy the majority of school items in any clothing store.

All stakeholders recognised that there have been a decline in standards of the school dress code at Dalkeith High School. It was agreed by pupils and staff that this was largely due to confusing communication about school dress code. Pupils, parents and staff spoke of the importance of wearing appropriate clothing to school. Pupils and staff commented on the number of young people arriving to school in belly tops, football shirts and inappropriate footwear, especially for practical classes, where health and safety is of the utmost importance.

For pupils, what they wear to PE classes was an important issue to address. Pupils like that they do not need to get changed for PE. However, they all recognised that the rule of being allowed to attend school in your PE kit,

that getting changed out of gym clothes is important for good hygiene. Nevertheless, the time associated with changing for PE has been a factor in this consultation and one we hope to address with the draft policy.

School dress code items were discussed as part of this consultation.

Blazers:

All stakeholders agreed that blazers are not an essential part of a school uniform. Parents spoke of the cost associated with blazers, especially as they were only worn for the final year of school. Pupils felt strongly that there should be no difference between junior and senior pupils, stating we all attend the same school.

Hoodies:

All stakeholders agree that hoodies would be a better option for school. Almost half of the school own a school hoodie and pupils report that these are comfortable to wear in class and in PE.

Ties:

All pupils and parents believe that ties can be difficult to put on and take off. Some pupils report that these can be uncomfortable. There was much discussion around changes to dress code in professional settings, in relation to ties specifically. Pupils unanimously agreed that ties should not be the main feature of a school dress code. However, senior pupils and some parents believed that there are times that wearing a more formal uniform is a good thing. For example when representing the school at award ceremonies, school visits, conferences etc. Both pupils and parents suggested a tie bank for pupils to use if such an occasion presented itself. All stakeholders felt that identity and security was one of the main benefits to a uniform, if pupils chose not to wear a hoodie, then a tie would be necessary to ensure the school colours were identifiable.

Shoes:

All stakeholders agreed that comfort was most important when considering shoes for school. All pupils agreed that trainers would be a preferred option.

All other school dress code items:

During focus group sessions with pupils and parents, choice in what is worn to school was discussed, especially when considering an individual's comfort level. It was recognised by parents and pupils during focus groups that too much choice often leads to inconsistencies in following an expected dress code. Pupils and parents agreed that streamlined colours would be useful. All agreed that these colours should be black and white as they are easily accessible in all shops.

Conclusion:

- School colours should be obvious on school dress code
- Hoodies with the school badge to be part of the school dress code
 - Two choices of hoodie to be made available ranging from £10 - £25 plus postage



- Removal of blazers from the school dress code
- Ties are not expected as an everyday item of school dress code, unless pupils chose not to wear a school badged hoodie.
 - Pupils who are representing the school in any way will be supplied with a tie
- Plain, white clothing to be worn under the school hoodie
- Black jeans/trousers/skirt to be part of the school dress code
- Black trainers/boots/shoes to be part of the school dress code

Please see below a draft dress code policy for all year groups. The intention is that this will run from August 2023.

Dalkeith High School Dress Code Policy

Rationale

A clearly defined dress code is important because it:

- Enhances and improves the school's identity in the community
- Creates a sense of pride and belonging
- Helps to identify pupils on a shared campus, therefore improving the security of our school
- Reduces incidents of bullying and helps develop equity across the school

Core expectations

School colours must be obvious no matter the option chosen below.

All pupils are expected to follow the school's dress code as noted below:

All pupils are expected to wear the following items to school:	The following items <u>must not</u> be worn to school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School hoodie (<i>no expectation to wear a tie</i>) Or • Plain black jumper (<i>expected to wear a shirt and school tie with this option</i>) Or • Plain black cardigan (<i>expected to wear a shirt and school tie with this option</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No logos on t-shirts • No logos on jumpers/cardigans • Baseball caps/hats • Sports/football tops • Tracksuits/sportswear (tops or jogging bottoms) • Blue/Grey faded denim • Ripped jeans • Cropped tops that show midriff • Leggings on their own (leggings can be worn with a skirt) • Sports leggings • Coloured trainers • Crocs/sliders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School tie (<i>only if pupil is not wearing a school hoodie</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain, white, full length t-shirt or • White shirt or • White blouse Or • Plain, white polo shirt 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain black jeans Or • Plain black trousers Or • Plain black skirt 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black trainers (white sole/stripe acceptable) Or • Black shoes Or • Black boots 	
Please note pupils will be asked to remove outdoor wear, including coats and hats when in class	

Representing the school

If pupils are representing the school at an event or awards ceremony, pupils will be expected to wear the following items:

White shirt
School tie (<i>this will be made available to all pupils for the occasion</i>)
Black jeans/trousers/skirt
Black trainers/shoes/boots

PE Kit

All pupils are expected to wear appropriate PE kit during their PE lessons. Please see a note below:

During PE lessons pupils are expected to wear:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A full length t-shirt
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ShortsOr
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LeggingsOr
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jogging bottoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trainers

Pupils are expected to get changed for PE.

Therefore, please note pupils should not wear PE kit to school.

This includes days which pupils have PE as part of their timetable.

The school has a 'uniform bank' which pupils can access at any point.

Dress code will be monitored by classroom teachers, if there is persistent non-compliance (ie: 3 times in one week) a text message will be sent home.