Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust

Uniform Policy

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Approved by	**Board of Trustees**
Policy Owner	**Rachel Morgan**
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Version 1 – Date of Review	**October 2024**
Version 1 – Revision summary	**New policy document**

BATH & WELLS
Multi Academy Trust

Context

The Bath & Wells Diocesan Academies Trust (the Trust) is a complex learning community. In order to ensure that the Trust is a safe, supportive environment where pupils and staff can learn and thrive, there needs to be clear procedures, structures, and expectations in place. Trust policies are a formal way of documenting the procedures and values of the Trust and are designed to provide an instant picture of the principles of the Trust. They form an important framework that will ensure consistency in applying the agreed values and principles across all elements the Trust.

The Trust believes that pupils learn most effectively and achieve their best outcomes when they are dressed in such a way that sets an appropriate tone for education. The Trust feels that a uniform policy is vital to promote the ethos of the Trust and provide a sense of belonging and identity for all pupils across all schools in the Trust, regardless of pupils' protected characteristics or socio-economic circumstances.

This uniform policy lays out the measures to be taken in schools to ensure a consistent, fair and inclusive dress code. The Board of Trustees also wishes to ensure the cost of each school's uniform is reasonable and secures the best value for money.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to create a framework which will support schools in developing their own uniform guidelines. Trustees want their uniform policy to be as inclusive as possible, and want schools to be considerate in the implementation of their uniform guidelines so that all pupils are able to wear the uniform.

Trustees wish to ensure that no school uniform should be so expensive as to leave pupils or their families feeling unable to apply to or attend a Trust school of their choice due to the cost of the uniform.

In developing this policy, Trustees have carefully considered how their uniform policy will affect groups represented in the Trust's schools, especially those who share protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

The Trust is sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and has acted reasonably in accommodating these needs within this policy. Trustees feel that it should be possible for most religious requirements to be met within schools' uniform guidelines.

Through this policy, the Trust emphasises the importance of schools engaging with their parents and pupils when developing their uniform guidelines to ensure that each school's guidelines are suitable for their respective school communities, recognising that communities may change over time.

Trustees have identified the following principles which schools must take into account when developing their own guidance based on this policy:

- Parents should not have to think about the cost of a school uniform when choosing which school(s) to apply for. Therefore, schools need to ensure that their uniform is affordable.

- In considering cost, schools will need to think about the total cost of school uniforms, taking into account all items of uniform or clothing parents will need to provide while their child is at the school.
- Schools should keep the use of branded items to a minimum.
- A school's uniform guidelines should be published on the school's website, be available for all parents, including parents of prospective pupils, and be easily understood.
- Schools should ensure that their uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money (including the quality and durability of the garment).
- Single supplier contracts should be avoided unless regular tendering competitions are run where more than one supplier can compete for the contract and where the best value for money is secured. This contract should be retendered at least every 5 years.
- Schools should ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms should be clear for parents of current and prospective pupils and published on the school's website.
- Schools should engage with parents and pupils when they are developing their school uniform guidance.

Scope

This policy relates to all schools in the Bath & Wells Diocesan Academies Trust.

Trust Alignment

This policy is linked to Pledge 1 of the Trust's Strategic Plan and the strategic priority: *High quality and inclusive education that ensures excellent outcomes for all children.*

Other Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following national & Trust policies:

i) Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021
ii) Developing School Uniform Policy (DfE 2024)
iii) Cost of school uniforms (DfE 2021)

Monitoring

This policy is owned by the DCEO and will be subject to annual review by the Board of Trustees. As part of this annual review, the DCEO will provide a report to Trustees on the impact of the policy.