

Staff Dress Code

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1. Rationale

This policy sets out the expectations of St Michaels's CE High School in relation to dress code. These guidelines and expectations for staff dress and appearance are intended to strike a balance between individual choice and the need to maintain role-sensitive high standards in dress and appearance.

The dress code is necessary in order to:

- convey a professional image of the school and individuals;
- have regard to health and safety considerations for all staff;
- ensure staff and pupil dress codes are in-line with school policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff groups, including teaching staff, learning support practitioners, business/finance managers, office staff, administration staff, technicians, governors who are participating in an activity taking part within the school day, volunteers and students when working on school premises.

3. Introduction

A dress code will help staff maintain a smart, business-like appearance necessary to be effective in working with students and parents. Parental expectations regarding the professionalism of all staff should be satisfied from the very first impressions. The right clothing also shows we are serious and consistent. Students will tend to model what they see. In turn we as school staff have high and growing expectations of our students and are constantly trying to improve their appearance, reinforcing school as a place of work for children and adults. This policy will help develop this ethos further.

4. Implementation of the Dress Code Policy

The Dress Code Policy is designed to guide managers and staff on the school standards of dress and appearance. The appearance of all staff must be professional at all times within the work place and when representing the school at differing venues.

The policy is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of dress and appearance. Staff must use a 'common sense' approach in adhering to the principles underpinning the policy.

St Michael's School recognises the diversity of cultures, religions and disabilities of its staff and we take a sensitive approach when this affects dress requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety and security considerations and as such, risk assessments will take place as appropriate.

5. Responsibilities

Employees

Employees are individually responsible for their general presentation, appearance and personal hygiene and have a responsibility to consider how their appearance may be perceived by others. This means that staff should 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 of any political or otherwise contentious slogans;
- is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive;
- does not place themselves or others at risk.

Employees are responsible for following the standards of dress and appearance laid down in this policy and must understand how this policy relates to their working environment, health and safety, particular roles and duties and contact with others during the course of their employment.

Managers

All levels of leadership and management are responsible for ensuring the policy and dress code is adhered to at all times in respect of the staff they manage. Leaders and Managers must also ensure that all new members of staff are aware of the required standards of this policy following their formal induction process. Failure to adhere to the school's standards of dress and appearance may constitute misconduct and result in formal disciplinary proceedings.

6. The Policy

First appearances are important and staff should strive to set the example for each student. An effective member of staff will dress appropriately and so model the expectations we have of our young people. Schools are unique as being both places of work and also institutions which train for work. Furthermore, making a good impression on parents helps foster a productive relationship which will help the student be successful. Establishing oneself as an authority figure by following the Dress Code Policy and the rules of the school helps reiterate the serious business of education.

7. Expectations

Male Members of School Staff

- To maintain high standards of safeguarding, the school identification badge should be worn at all times.
- It is expected that all male teaching staff wear a shirt and tie at all times and to otherwise dress appropriately for their role.
- A smart jumper, smart cardigan or business suit jacket may be worn with the shirt and tie.
- Classroom-based staff should wear smart trousers or a suit. Jean/cargo type trousers are not acceptable as an appropriate form of dress. Smart business-like shoes, which are fit for purpose, should be worn. Flip flops or sandals are not suitable.
- Jewellery - staff are encouraged to use their professional discretion with regard to both how much jewellery is displayed / worn and the type of jewellery. Although the primary concern is that surrounding health and safety, an emphasis on a professional business like appearance should be considered.
- In order to maintain a sense of professional dress in keeping with the ethos and expectations of the school, **facial piercings/tongue studs are not suitable**. Consequently, and in line with a raising of professional standards across the school, it is expected that staff do not wear these items to work.
- Tattoos – it is recommended that any tattoos are covered during the normal working day.
- Nails - it is recommended these are sufficiently short to ensure safe pupil contact. A 'common sense' approach should be applied.

- Hair and beards should not compromise health and safety. Long hair should be tied back when handling food, or when undertaking physical interventions with children. Beards must be neatly trimmed, unless this reflects the individual's religion, in which case it must be tidy.
- Hair colour should be natural-looking. It is acceptable for hair to be dyed or highlighted, however staff must use a 'common sense' approach when dying hair.

Female Members of School Staff

- To maintain high standards of safeguarding, the school identification badge should be worn at all times.
- Classroom-based staff should wear smart trousers. Jean/cargo type trousers are not acceptable as an appropriate form of dress. Leggings are not acceptable as an appropriate form of dress.
- Classroom-based staff should wear a smart skirt or dress. The length of the skirt/dress should be considered as there is an expectation that these are professional and no shorter than 1 inch above the knee.
- A smart jumper, smart cardigan or business suit jacket may be worn with an appropriate blouse/top.
- Consideration should be given to the style and lengths of tops worn. Very low or strappy tops are not suitable. Tops which contain large, visible logos are not considered suitable professional attire, and nor are low backed tops/clothing with bra straps showing.
- Shoes – smart business like shoes, which are fit for purpose, should be worn. Flip flops or very high heels are not acceptable.
- Jewellery - staff are encouraged to use their professional discretion with regard to both how much jewellery is displayed/worn and the type of jewellery. Although the primary concern is that surrounding health and safety, an emphasis on a professional business like appearance should be considered.
- In order to maintain a sense of professional dress in keeping with the ethos and expectations of the school, **facial piercings/tongue studs are not suitable**. Consequently, and in line with a raising of professional standards across the school, it is expected that staff do not wear these items to work.
- Tattoos – it is recommended that any tattoos are covered during the normal working day.
- Nails - it is recommended these are sufficiently short to ensure safe pupil contact. A 'common sense' approach should be applied to nail colour and decorations.
- Hair styles and hair length should not compromise health and safety. Long hair should be tied back when handling food, or when undertaking physical interventions with children.
- Hair colour should be natural looking. It is acceptable for hair to be dyed or highlighted. However, staff must use a 'common sense' approach when dying hair.
- Scarves worn for religious reasons should be suitable for the work environment. The face should not be covered as this may interfere with the clear communication required by adults in the school.

8. Exceptions

The exception to the description above is where a staff team have an agreed 'uniform' for the role within school that they undertake e.g. PE staff, Science and DT Teachers and Technicians. Uniforms are agreed with the Headteacher and designed to allow safe effective working where the clothing described above may not be suitable for day to day contact with pupils. A Science Technician, for example should take appropriate precautions to ensure personal safety by wearing flat shoes, a laboratory coat and eye goggles when necessary. A DT Teacher, working within a workshop, should wear steel toe cap boots and ensure all loose items are removed, for example a tie, school keys and an ID badge.

9. Health and Safety considerations

Nail varnish including clear nail varnish, nail decorations and false nails are not permitted in food preparation/serving areas where the wearing of such would present a risk to health. Nails must be sufficiently short to ensure safe child contact.

In some situations, a tie may represent a safety risk and so should be removed for such activities. Staff are requested to use their professional judgement in such situations.

Footwear that is appropriate and safe for walking around the school site is vital. Shoes that are open or have high heels may make some situations awkward or dangerous. All staff members are responsible for ensuring that their footwear does not prevent them carrying out their duties or activities in a safe and effective way. For example, offering support to a colleague in a science laboratory or dealing with an incident on the other side of the school field.

10. Dress Code for INSET

INSET days are exceptions to this code although clothes should be appropriate for the activities to be undertaken and also reflect the likelihood of meeting with parents and other professionals. If any member of staff is unclear on what to wear during an INSET day, please ask your Manager what would be considered appropriate.

11. Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 replaced and unified all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It aims to ensure that people have equality of opportunity in accessing and experiencing public services. Schools when carrying out their day to day work should have regard to the following:

- eliminating discrimination;
- advancing equality of opportunity;
- fostering good relations across all stakeholders.

Schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against staff because of their disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Protection is now extended to staff who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment. This policy aims to not be discriminatory against any member of staff and we ask all staff to use their 'common sense' and a business-like approach when dressing for work.