



Dress & Appearance Policy

The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust

Approved by: Chief Executive Officer **Date:** September 2025

Last reviewed on: August 2025

Next review due by: August 2028

DRESS & APPEARANCE POLICY

This policy should be read alongside:

- The Staff Code of Conduct;
- The Health & Safety Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust (The Trust) believes that all members of staff are representatives of the Trust, and through their appearance will have an impact on the image the school projects to pupils, parents and visitors. We therefore need to create and maintain a standard appropriate for a learning environment for effective teaching and learning.

This Policy establishes the Trust's position regarding standards of dress and appearance for all employees including those with temporary contracts, agency workers and volunteers. The Dress and Appearance Policy is necessary in order to:-

- Convey a professional image of the Trust, school and individual.
- Have regard to Health and Safety considerations for staff.
- Ensure staff and pupil dress codes are in-line with the Trust policy.

This policy applies wherever or whenever anyone is working as a Trust representative. If in doubt, discuss with the Headteacher or your line manager.

2.0 AIMS

The aim in having a dress code for staff is to ensure:

- Clear expectations and guidelines are laid down for staff, students and volunteers in school.
- Staff are suitably attired to meet safeguarding procedures.
- That all students have appropriate role models for professional dress.
- Students understand the importance of appropriate dress at relevant times (e.g. changing for P.E, covering clothes for art etc.).

3.0 SCOPE

The Policy applies to all staff groups, including those staff who are seconded, supply agency staff, governors, contractors, volunteers and students when working on school premises.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DRESS AND APPEARANCE POLICY

The Policy is designed to guide managers and staff on the Trust standards of dress and appearance. All staff appearance must be professional at all times both within the workplace and when representing the school at differing venues.

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

The Trust recognises the diversity of cultures, religions and disabilities of its staff and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress requirements. However, priority will be given to health, safety and security considerations. Risk Assessments will take place as appropriate.

All staff will be supplied with a school identity security badge that should be worn and visible at all times both when in school or outside the premises on school business and should only be removed for safety reasons. Staff working within the community must carry their school I.D. badges with them at all times. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to inform their manager if their I.D. badge is lost/stolen or if details on the badge need altering e.g. for a name change.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 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.

Where a uniform is provided, it should be worn unless agreed with your line manager/Headteacher and a suitable alternative worn instead.

5.2 Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring the Policy and Dress Code is adhered to at all times and a high standard of personal appearance is maintained in respect of the staff they manage.

Line Managers must also ensure that all new members of staff are aware of the required standards of this Policy during the induction process.

Line Managers must decide on the suitability of dress and appearance taking into account these instructions, as well as the role being undertaken. In addition, consideration must also be given to likely extremes of temperature, health and safety, hygiene, ethnic, cultural, religious or medical factors and equality.

Where line managers are concerned about an individual's appearance, they should discuss their concerns with that person in the first instance. They must take care not to ignore matters of concern expressed by the member of staff, while ensuring that a reasonable and culturally sensitive dress code is observed. Managers should remember that they have an option of seeking further advice on the matter from The

Headteacher, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the HR (People) Department.

Failure to adhere to the Trusts standards of dress and appearance may constitute misconduct and could ultimately result in formal disciplinary proceedings.

6. DRESS CODE

6.1 Acceptable Clothing

Examples of acceptable clothing fall under the category of smart business attire and includes a combination of: -

- Appropriate length skirts Blouses (long or short sleeve).
- Smart plain T-shirts.
- Jumpers, jackets, dresses, culottes, business suits, jackets, trousers, polo shirts; shirts (with collars – long or short sleeve).
- Thick leggings with a **long** tunic or top.
- Smart long tailored shorts.
- Tie (not essential).

6.2 Non-acceptable Clothing

- Very short miniskirts.
- Lycra cycling shorts, sport leggings or footless tights.
- Leisure shorts unless used for P.E/Games or other associated social activities.
- Combat/camouflage clothing.
- Transparent or 'see-through' blouses, dresses or shirts.
- Tracksuits/Sports Wear except for PE and associated social activity.
- Clothing with tears, holes and rips.
- Low-cut T-shirts or blouses.
- Vest-type tops (Spaghetti/shoestring or other strapped tops).
- Crop-tops.
- Jeans of any kind.
- Badges or emblems which may cause offence.
- Items of clothing bearing logos, slogans or graphics, which could cause; offence or are deemed inappropriate to the setting.
- Indoor wearing of baseball caps/hats.
- Beach flip flops (or similar).
- Ugg boots or similar.
- Trainers (unless for PE).
- All clothing must be appropriate for the task and not breach Health and Safety regulations.
- Clothes which restrict movement, and which can easily snag on equipment during manual handling manoeuvres e.g. loose pockets, sequins, large buttons etc.
- Neck ties, necklaces, scarves or metal chains if a dangerous situation occurs or is likely.
- Underwear should not be on display.

7.0 EXPECTATIONS

It is recognised that there may be specific occasions where the usual dress code would not be appropriate e.g. outdoor/adventure visits. In these instances, guidance will be provided so that both pupil and adult dress codes are in line.

In accordance with current practice, the dress code may be relaxed on training days when pupils are not present, or for staff on 52 week contracts working in school during the holidays. This is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

8.0 PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

It is recognised that some activities require the wearing of sportswear, tracksuits or shorts. However, it is expected that staff will revert to normal clothing once the activity is completed. It is acknowledged that there are some areas of work where, due to the continuous nature of the activity, appropriate tracksuit attire is acceptable, e.g. PE staff.

For P.E. health and safety issues are paramount and override any other consideration. All staff must be able to move freely without being hampered by unsuitable clothing or footwear. Staff also should be role models for the children in what is appropriate to wear. All staff must change into suitable clothing and footwear for P.E.

Acceptable PE wear:

- Track suit or jogging bottoms – suitable for the time of year.
- T-shirt or polo shirt.
- Warm fleece or sweatshirt in cold weather.
- Shorts of a suitable length and style may be worn as appropriate.
- Suitable footwear must be worn (i.e. trainers or plimsolls).
- Hijab's, if worn, must be tied tightly to the head.
- If a shawl is worn, this must be secured tightly at the back and must not be loose at the front as this may impede assistance to pupils.

8.1 Additional Notes for all Staff & Volunteers

During P.E. all jewellery should be removed other than simple wedding rings. However, for safety reasons, if they have sharp or protruding edges they should be taped.

The Trust wish to be sympathetic to cultural and religious dress. However, it is crucial that staff meet our expectations of suitable clothing and footwear. Careful consideration has been given to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and to race equality.

Members of staff, whilst being respectably dressed should not wear clothing that could have implications for the health and safety of themselves, or others in their care. An important consideration is Health and Safety when teaching or in particular when assisting in PE lessons. The clothing must not present a trip hazard or could catch on equipment or apparatus -for example a jilbab would not be considered suitable; a thobe (a shorter garment than a jilbab) would be more appropriate to wear for PE lessons.

9.0 FOOTWEAR

It is the responsibility of all employees to wear footwear suitable for the duties undertaken. Footwear must be safe, sensible, in good order, smart and clean and have regard to health and safety considerations. Footwear should be of a "sensible" nature and worn appropriately, particularly in areas involving direct delivery of services to students, staff, parents and other members of the school community. "Sensible" includes no flip-flops or other strapless sandals which will impede safe lifting and handling, and occasions when the use of restraint is required. Footwear that might cause injury to others during normal working duties should also be avoided.

Employees need to be aware that in an emergency situation, they may be required to move swiftly. Therefore, by wearing open-toed or open-backed types of footwear, they may put themselves at risk of injury. In such event, the school will take no responsibility for any injuries thus incurred.

Certain jobs may require staff to wear protective footwear. These staff must wear the correct footwear for undertaking their work and if staff are uncertain, they must check with their Line Manager.

10.0 UNIFORM

Some staff may be required to wear a uniform to ensure compliance with Health and Safety Regulations and to ease identification (i.e. Midday Supervisors, Catering staff etc). The uniform should be worn throughout working hours and maintained in a clean and tidy condition.

Employees designated to wear uniform will be issued with the appropriate garments free of charge and subject to service requirements, these will be replaced at regular intervals.

11.0 SUMMER CLOTHING

During periods of warm weather staff clothing must remain appropriate and suitable. Employees should be aware that certain items of clothing could be seen as provocative, e.g. short, revealing or tight garments, and therefore these are not acceptable for work.

Staff must set an example to pupils by wearing appropriate head wear when working outside on hot days.

12.0 NON UNIFORM & DRESS UP DAYS

Non uniform days are specifically for the children therefore adults should continue to follow the guidance for dress as above.

On 'themed' dress days such as 'Wear it Pink', the dress code is to be applied with the exception of the coloured or themed item/s. Denim, trainers, hoodies, t-shirts and fashion boots are **not acceptable** unless they reflect the colour/theme.

13.0 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

PPE is provided strictly for occasions where the risk cannot be controlled adequately or more effectively by other means. Where safety clothing and personal protective

equipment is issued, it must be worn where the risk assessment dictates or as directed in accordance with Health and Safety requirements. It will be provided free of charge.

Certain jobs will require employees to wear protective footwear. These staff must wear the correct footwear for undertaking these tasks and if they are uncertain, they must check with their line manager.

Failure to comply with any Health and Safety dress requirement may result in disciplinary action being taken.

14.0 TATTOOS

Tattoos on the face or visible above the collar are not permitted. To retain a professional image, where feasible, all other tattoos must be covered. Anyone who has a visible tattoo which could be construed as being offensive to any religion or belief, or is in any way discriminatory, violent or intimidating, will compromise their employment at the Trust. Likewise, an existing member of staff who becomes tattooed in this way may, after investigation, become subject to disciplinary proceedings.

15.0 JEWELLERY AND PIERCING

Jewellery/piercings must be discreet and appropriate and must not be a health and safety hazard. Jewellery/piercings must be removed where they are a risk to health and safety or where their appearance may be inappropriate in school.

Facial piercings (excluding small discreet nose piercings) are considered unprofessional and are not permitted within the Trust.

It is good practice to avoid the wearing of jewellery, such as necklaces and large earrings that can be hazardous, especially where these can get caught or pulled. The wearing of small studs or sleepers is more appropriate when working in areas where students are or can be challenging in their behaviour.

Jewellery and false fingernails to be worn at your own discretion (but be aware of Health and Safety issues and the task being undertaken). **False fingernails are not permitted for catering staff under any circumstances.**

If, in the environment, any items of jewellery create the potential for an act of violence or the possibility for entanglement (e.g. large hoops in earlobes, large rings, necklaces, tongue piercing) must be removed whilst on duty. Rings which protrude from the finger, should not be worn when in situations involving restraint or when assisting with an activity as part of a pupil's daily living (e.g. assisting with personal hygiene), as they may cause harm to a pupil. In PE, jewellery should be removed, covered or taped up.

16.0 HAIR

Hair and beards should not compromise health and safety. Certain hairstyles and colouring can affect the way people perceive us. Whilst the Trust is tolerant of differences, consideration should always be given to the impact our appearance might have on others. Long hair should be tied back when handling food, during hazardous procedures 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. Headgear worn for religious purposes is permitted. The Hijab if worn, must be

adjusted in a way that the wearers face remains visible. The Hijab should be fixed in such a way that it allows quick release.

17.0 FACIAL COVERS

Staff who wear facial coverings for religious reasons are expected to remove them whilst on duty. This will ensure that the member of staff is identifiable.

18.0 NAILS

Staff should demonstrate consideration when applying nail varnish including clear nail varnish, nail decorations and false nails where the wearing of such would present a risk to health. In these instances, staff must ensure that they wear gloves to avoid any risk of cross contamination. **False fingernails are not permitted for catering staff under any circumstances.**

19.0 BADGES

Only work related badges should be worn. Academy identity badges must be visible at all times for security reasons.

20.0 PERSONAL HYGIENE

Employees are required to have a clean appearance. The Trust recognises that problems in personal hygiene can be related to illness and stress. If a member of staff is concerned about their own or a colleague's personal hygiene, they should speak to their line manager or Human Resources. All discussions will be dealt with confidentially and discreetly.

Should any employees have difficulties in maintaining these standards they should discuss the matter with their line manager, or the Human Resources (people) department if they prefer.

Consideration of circumstances will be taken into account in a confidential manner.

21.0 SUMMARY

All members of staff will take a sensible and safe approach to dress and appearance, cleanliness and personal hygiene.

Every member of staff will be responsible for promoting a professional and positive image of the Trust.

Clothing and appearance will not deliberately cause offence to people who come into contact with, or use, the Trust services. It should be non-offensive and contain no provocative logos or remarks which are inappropriate or likely to give offence to others.

Clothing should be worn appropriately for the work being undertaken.

Clothing for particular purposes should be worn in accordance with guidance.

Protective clothing should always be available and should, in addition to any other control measure, be worn when carrying out hazardous duties under Health & Safety Regulations.

The requirements of particular faiths to wear specific types of clothing or to dress modestly will be respected so long as the item of clothing does not pose a hazard to the health and safety of employees or contravene any reasonable and legitimate requirements of the Trust.

Employees who do not comply with these standards may be subject to the Trust's normal disciplinary procedure. In serious cases, where an employee's appearance is, in the Trust's view, unacceptable, he or she will be required to return home to change.

Employees have the right to lodge an appeal against a decision on the acceptability of their appearance using the Academy's normal grievance procedure.

FURTHER ADVICE

If any staff, contractors or visitors require any further information regarding this policy or support, they should either ask their Headteacher or contact the HR (People) Department at hr@diamondlearningtrust.com.