POLICY: APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

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VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Author	Notes
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INTRODUCTION

As the school shares values promoted by Rudolf Steiner, which support the development of individuality and self-expression, there is no school uniform. However, the other end of the spectrum, where complete freedom in choice of clothing may be allowed, could include in the extreme the wearing of swimwear or pyjamas, neither of which are conducive to a learning environment.

The difficulty is always finding the appropriate line to draw between the extremes of uniform and swimwear/pyjamas, as many judgements about clothing are based on discriminatory stereotypes that we would wish to break or move away from.

As a school we have developed and refined a clothing code to outline the aspects of clothing that, in our experience, help to create the right mindset and environment for learning. We have also outlined where we believe the responsibilities for clothing lie and how, as a school, we deal with the 'grey' areas.

Fundamental Principles

The fundamental principles of the code are:

Practical, Participative, Protective

Clothing and footwear that is comfortable and appropriate to work and play in, and suitable for the weather and lessons. Pupils should not be caught out by timetable changes and should always dress so that they can safely take part in all lessons.

For example, loose, breathable clothing might be better for hot weather, and closer-fitting clothing for physical or practical activities.

Teachers have found that some clothing and footwear inhibits participation of the individuals concerned. An example of this might include pupils who wear expensive trainers or shoes and won't then join in with any physical activity in case they 'crease' or get them dirty.

Clothing trends have been noted to create social pressures in a class, in terms of envy, power imbalances, body dysmorphia and mental health, as well as a general over-focus on appearance, rather than the qualities of the individual.

Impractical clothing/footwear may result in a pupil being excluded from a lesson if their clothing impacts on safety. For example, if a pupil wears crocs or sandals, they will not be able to fully participate in games lessons, nor will their feet be sufficiently protected for craft lessons.

Clothing bearing offensive images or text, including sexual, violent, drugs, other criminal activity or any profanity, is strictly not allowed due to its impact on the learning environment. Pupils wearing such clothing will be asked to turn the clothing inside out and requested not to wear it again.

In addition, clothes with computer or gaming advertising can lead to distracting conversations which are exclusive to others and do not align to the school's values.

Hygiene

All parts of the body that would reasonably be expected to be covered by underwear, should be covered by clothing.

To avoid sweat/body fluids contaminating chairs, clothing should be sufficient to cover all parts of the body that would come into contact with chair seats or backs.

Implementation and Enforcement

The focus of the teachers is to deliver the best quality education to the children that they can. The expectation of the school is that parents will ensure their children are clothed in a way that allows them to have full access to the curriculum, without impacting on others negatively.

If lower school or kindergarten children wear clothing that contravenes the code, the teacher will not generally ask a child who is under 13 years of age about their clothing choices. This is because, until adolescence, the school recognises that how children are clothed, is the responsibility of the parent.

In such circumstances, the relevant kindergarten or class teacher will send an email to the parent concerned, reminding them of the relevant part of the code that is in breach and requesting it be rectified.

For adolescent or upper school pupils, where it is harder for parents to exert control over clothing and where it is appropriate for these emerging adults to start making such choices and decisions, teachers will use considered breaches to the code as an educational opportunity, and discuss with the pupil at a pastoral meeting. As appropriate, parents may be informed in a follow up communication.

Any ongoing concerns regarding clothing, if not rectified, may be reflected in the child's end of term report and monitored.

MONITORING, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE

This policy belongs to Norwich Steiner School, which is the operational name for the Charity the Norfolk Initiative Steiner School, registered charity number 1099377, company number 4815492

Compliance is monitored through internal audits, policy review as part of self-evaluation, and annual reporting to Trustees on concessions awarded, value, and any compliance issues.