

# Wyvern College Uniform Policy FAQ

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At Wyvern College, we believe our uniform policy plays a vital role in creating a positive, inclusive, and focused learning environment. We understand that some parents may have questions or concerns about the policy. This FAQ aims to explain the rationale behind our approach, address common challenges, and clarify expectations based on the Wyvern Uniform Policy.

## General Questions About the Purpose of School Uniform

### **1. Why does Wyvern College require a school uniform?**

Our uniform policy promotes equality by minimising visible differences between students from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. By avoiding fashion or designer items, we reduce peer pressure, which can lead to bullying, school refusal, or financial strain on families. Teenagers are at an age where they *feel* fitting in is crucial, and uniforms help ease this pressure. Additionally, uniforms foster a sense of school pride, create a professional learning environment, simplify morning routines, and enhance safety by making students easily identifiable.

### **2. How does the uniform prevent bullying?**

When students wear the same uniform, it eliminates competition over expensive or trendy clothing, which can otherwise lead to exclusion or teasing. This levels the playing field, reducing the risk of students feeling inadequate—a pressure already amplified by social media—and helps create a more inclusive community.

### **3. Why not allow students to express themselves through their clothing?**

While clothing can be a form of self-expression, our uniform policy encourages students to express their individuality through their ideas, talents, and participation in school activities. This approach ensures school remains a place of learning and growth, not a space where social status or wealth defines a student's worth.

### **4. Doesn't a uniform stifle creativity?**

On the contrary, a uniform shifts the focus from outward appearance to inner qualities like creativity, academic effort, and teamwork. Students can showcase their uniqueness in art, drama, sports, and other pursuits without the distraction of clothing competition.

### **5. How does the uniform prepare students for the future?**

Uniforms mirror professional dress codes in many workplaces, teaching students discipline, responsibility, and the importance of presenting themselves appropriately. This prepares them for environments where rules and standards are part of daily life.

## **6. Can't we trust students to choose appropriate clothing without a uniform?**

While we trust our students, allowing personal clothing introduces variability that can lead to peer pressure and inequality. A uniform ensures consistency, reduces distractions, and maintains a focus on education rather than fashion.

## **7. How does the uniform support mental health?**

By removing the pressure to keep up with fashion trends or afford costly items, uniforms help reduce anxiety and self-consciousness—issues often worsened by social media's "not good enough" messaging. School becomes a safe space where students are valued for who they are, not what they wear.

# Questions Addressing Cost and Accessibility

## **8. Isn't the uniform expensive for parents?**

We strive to keep costs reasonable by limiting branded items, offering two suppliers (Skoolkit and KoolSkools) starting September 2025, and providing second-hand uniform options free of charge (subject to availability). We also use Pupil Premium funding to support families in need with vouchers or direct purchases. Our policy avoids frequent changes to minimise financial impact.

## **9. What if we can't afford the uniform?**

If financial hardship is an issue, please contact Reception at [enquiries@wyvern.hants.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@wyvern.hants.sch.uk). We offer second-hand uniforms, and staff will work sensitively with families to ensure students have what they need, potentially through funding support.

## **10. Why do some items have to be branded?**

Branded items like the blazer or jumper are kept to a minimum to foster school identity while balancing cost. The use of branded items does create a sense of belonging and identity for students as being part of our school community. Most items (e.g., shirts, trousers, shoes) can be bought from any retailer, giving parents flexibility to shop around.

## **11. How can I access second-hand uniforms?**

Second-hand uniforms are available free of charge (subject to stock) through Reception. Contact [enquiries@wyvern.hants.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@wyvern.hants.sch.uk) for details. Donations are welcome but not compulsory, and any contribution supports the Friends of Wyvern fundraising efforts.

# Questions About Specific Policy Details

## **12. Why can't my child wear trainers or branded shoes like Nike or Vans?**

Trainers and branded shoes are not permitted because they can become a status symbol, undermining our goal of equality. Plain black sensible shoes ensure uniformity and practicality while keeping costs down, as they're widely available.

### **13. Why are hoodies banned, even under a blazer?**

Hoodies, even under a blazer, detract from the uniform's professional appearance and can signal casual wear linked to fashion trends. We allow sensible coats for warmth, ensuring students stay comfortable without compromising the policy.

### **14. What counts as an "extreme hairstyle"?**

Extreme hairstyles include two-tone colours, bright unnatural dyes, or unconventional cuts like shaved patterns. These are restricted to maintain a modest, distraction-free environment, but we celebrate Afro-textured hair in styles like afros, braids, or locs as part of cultural identity, in line with our HALO code commitment.

### **15. Why can't my child wear make-up in Years 7-9?**

For younger students (Years 7-9), we prohibit make-up to keep the focus on learning and reduce peer pressure to conform to beauty standards. In Years 10-11, discreet make-up is allowed, but false eyelashes are not, to maintain simplicity and fairness.

### **16. Why is jewellery so restricted?**

We limit jewellery to one watch (no smart watches), one plain ring, and one stud per lower ear lobe to avoid distractions and ensure safety, especially in PE. Excessive items are confiscated until the end of the half-term to enforce consistency.

### **17. Can my child wear religious jewellery or head coverings?**

Yes, we support religious expression. Contact your child's Pastoral Office to discuss specific items (e.g., turbans, hijabs, or jewellery) in plain dark colours or white, ensuring they align with health, safety, and behaviour policies.

### **18. Why do PE lessons have such strict rules about jewellery and piercings?**

Jewellery and piercings must be removed for PE to prevent injury during physical activity. Taping is unsafe and not allowed. We recommend piercings be done in summer holidays to heal, as students unable to remove them cannot participate.

### **19. What if my child forgets their PE kit?**

Forgetting PE kit results in a detention, as it's the student's and parent's responsibility to ensure it's brought to every lesson. Kit in lockers isn't an excuse, reinforcing accountability.

### **20. Why do skirts have to be knee-length?**

Knee-length skirts (SSK308 Grey blue tartan) ensure modesty and practicality for all activities, maintaining a consistent standard across students regardless of gender. Additionally, skirts not being the correct length pose a safeguarding issue; for example, a correct length skirt will avoid a modesty issue for a student when walking in front of others up stairs.

### **21. Why must shirts be tucked in?**

Tucking in shirts maintains a neat, professional appearance, reinforcing discipline and uniformity across all students.

### **22. Why can't my child wear painted nails or fake nails?**

Coloured nail varnish and false nails of any kind are not permitted to maintain a modest and consistent appearance across all students. This helps avoid distractions, reduces peer pressure

related to beauty trends, and ensures practicality, especially in activities like PE or Design and Technology where long nails could pose a safety risk.

## Questions About Flexibility and Exceptions

### **23. How do I request a change to the uniform policy (or request a specific exemption to the uniform policy for a temporary/permanent period)?**

Write to your child's Pastoral Office with your request, explaining the reason (e.g., religious, cultural, or medical needs). We'll review it, balancing your needs with health, safety, and behaviour considerations, and may consult experts if needed.

### **24. What if my child has sensory issues with the uniform?**

We recognise some students, such as those with neurodiversity, may find certain items uncomfortable. Parents should discuss this with the Pastoral Office to request adaptations, which we'll consider alongside equality and safety policies.

### **25. Why can't my child wear a non-religious head covering?**

Non-religious head coverings (e.g., fashion hats) are not permitted to maintain uniformity and focus. Exceptions for medical reasons can be discussed with the Pastoral Office.

## Questions About Enforcement and Consequences

### **26. What happens if my child doesn't follow the uniform policy?**

Staff monitor compliance daily. Breaches are recorded via our POW system, followed up by tutors, and repeated or deliberate violations lead to sanctions. Confiscated items (e.g., excessive jewellery) are held until the end of the half-term.

### **27. Why confiscate items like jewellery or valuables?**

Confiscation discourages rule-breaking and ensures safety (e.g., no iPads or excessive jewellery in class). In our experience, if these items are not confiscated until the end of half-term, often students wear them again. Items are returned at half-term's end to reinforce accountability.

### **28. What if my child can't comply due to financial hardship?**

If finances are the issue, staff will handle it sensitively, offering support like second-hand uniforms or funding assistance rather than sanctions.

## Additional Practical Questions

### **29. When does my child need to wear the uniform?**

Uniform is required on college premises, travelling to/from college, and at college-organised events or trips where students represent Wyvern, unless specified otherwise (e.g., non-uniform days).

### **30. How often is the uniform policy reviewed?**

The Headteacher and Trustee Board review the policy every three years, approving it with parent and student input to ensure it remains fair and practical.

### **31. Who decides what's "discreet" make-up for Years 10-11?**

Staff determine this based on minimal visibility (e.g., light foundation, no bold colours or false lashes). If unsure, contact your child's Pastoral Office or Tutor for guidance.

## Questions About Parental Disagreement with the Uniform Policy

### **32. What if I don't agree with the uniform policy?**

We understand that parents might not agree with all of our school rules, including the uniform policy. However, we expect parents to support them as part of our school community. By choosing to send your child to Wyvern College, you have an obligation to uphold our rules, which are designed to benefit all students. If you have concerns, please raise them constructively with your child's Pastoral Office rather than expressing disagreement directly to your child, as this helps maintain a consistent message and supports their respect for school expectations.

### **33. Why shouldn't I tell my child I don't support the uniform rules?**

We kindly ask you not to tell your child you don't support the school rules, including on uniform, because this can confuse them by sending mixed messages. At school, they will face sanctions for non-compliance, and feeling enabled to break rules they don't agree with can lead to further issues, such as repeated breaches or conflicts with staff. Parents can choose where their child attends school, and by selecting Wyvern, we rely on your partnership to reinforce our policies for your child's wellbeing and the wider school community.

## Closing Note

We hope this FAQ addresses your questions about the Wyvern Uniform Policy. Our goal is to create a supportive, equitable environment where every student thrives. If you have further concerns, please contact your child's Pastoral Office, their Tutor or Reception at [enquiries@wyvern.hants.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@wyvern.hants.sch.uk). Together, we can ensure school is a place where students feel valued for who they are, not what they wear.