Barrowby Church of England Primary School

Staff Dress Code

1. Policy Statement

1.1 At Barrowby Church of England Primary School, we recognise that all staff play a vital role in presenting a positive image of the school and acting as role models for our pupils.

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide reasonable guidance on dress and appearance whilst respecting individual identity, religious beliefs, protected characteristics, comfort and professional judgement.

1.2 The school seeks to maintain high standards of professionalism without imposing unnecessary restrictions on staff. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, agency workers, contractors and visitors working within the school.

2. Principles

2.1 This policy is founded on the principles of professionalism, practicality, equality, health and safety, and staff wellbeing.

2.2 We recognise that staff undertake a wide range of responsibilities, including classroom teaching, Physical Education, outdoor learning, educational visits and the active supervision of children. As such, the school seeks to strike an appropriate balance between maintaining professional standards and ensuring staff are able to undertake their duties comfortably and effectively.

2.3 The school acknowledges that professionalism is demonstrated through conduct, relationships and standards of work rather than solely through clothing choices.

2.4 The school also recognises the importance of staff wellbeing and seeks to ensure that dress code expectations are proportionate, practical and supportive of staff carrying out their roles effectively. Expectations within this policy are intended to promote professionalism whilst allowing staff to undertake their duties comfortably and safely.

3. Expectations

3.1 Staff are expected to present themselves in a manner that is smart, clean, professional and appropriate for their role. Clothing should be suitable for working with children, support the effective performance of duties and be consistent with the ethos and values of the school.

3.2 The school recognises that different roles may require different forms of dress. For example:

- expectations for classroom teachers may differ from those for staff who teach
  a) Physical Education;
  b) facilitate outdoor learning opportunities;
  c) work within the Early Years Foundation Stage;
  d) undertake site management duties;
  e) attend Residential visits; or
  f) support pupils with additional needs.

4. Appropriate Dress

4.1 Staff should wear clothing that reflects the professional nature of their role and the expectations of a primary school environment:

- Suitable attire may include smart trousers, chinos, tailored shorts, skirts, dresses, shirts, blouses, polo shirts, jumpers, cardigans and other professional clothing.
- Footwear should be practical, safe and suitable for the school environment.

4.2 The school recognises that staff may need to adapt their clothing during periods of warmer weather. During the summer months, staff may wear:

- lighter-weight fabrics, short-sleeved shirts, blouses, polo shirts, dresses, skirts and tailored shorts, provided they remain professional, appropriate for working with children and suitable for the duties being undertaken.

4.3 Clothing should remain modest in appearance and should not be excessively casual, revealing or resemble beachwear, gym or sportswear. The school encourages staff to exercise professional judgement whilst maintaining the standards expected within a primary school environment.

4.4 Staff participating in educational visits, residential visits, sporting events, Forest School activities, outdoor learning or other curriculum enrichment activities may dress in a manner appropriate to the activity, prevailing weather conditions and any associated risk assessments, whilst continuing to present a professional image and maintaining appropriate standards of dress.

4.5 Where appropriate, staff may choose to wear school-branded clothing e.g. Site Team. However, there is no expectation that staff wear branded items unless these have been provided for a specific purpose.

5. Inappropriate Dress

5.1 Clothing should not undermine the professional standards of the school or present a health and safety concern.

5.2 Garments that are excessively revealing, display offensive or inappropriate slogans or imagery, are designed primarily as beachwear, sportswear or gym wear (except where required for Physical Education, sporting activities or other authorised duties), or are in a poor state of repair would not normally be considered appropriate in a school setting.

5.3 Leggings worn as standalone trousers would not normally be regarded as professional attire for class-based activities unless required for PE, sporting activities or other specific duties.

5.4 Should concerns arise regarding a member of staff's attire, these will be addressed sensitively, respectfully and in confidence.

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

6.1 The school is committed to fostering an inclusive working environment and ensuring that this policy is applied fairly. No member of staff will be disadvantaged on the basis of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

6.1 Reasonable adjustments will be made where required in relation to disability, medical needs, pregnancy, religious observance, gender identity or sensory needs.

6.2 Staff requiring adjustments should discuss their circumstances with the Headteacher or their line manager, and every effort will be made to agree a suitable and supportive arrangement.

7. Jewellery, Piercings, Tattoos and Personal Appearance

7.1 The school recognises that personal appearance forms part of an individual's identity and self-expression. Jewellery, tattoos, hairstyles and cultural or religious dress are generally acceptable provided they are appropriate for a professional educational environment and do not create safeguarding, health or safety concerns.

7.2 Tattoos should be professional and suitable for a primary school setting. Where a tattoo could reasonably be considered offensive, intimidating, discriminatory, political in nature, contain inappropriate language or imagery, or otherwise be unsuitable for working with children, staff may be required to ensure that it is covered whilst at work.

7.3 The Headteacher reserves the right to request that tattoos be covered where they are considered inconsistent with the professional image of the school or unsuitable for working with children.

7.4 Any restrictions on personal appearance will be based upon legitimate professional, safeguarding or health and safety considerations rather than personal preference.

8. Health and Safety

8.1 Staff are responsible for ensuring that their clothing and footwear are suitable for the duties they are undertaking.

8.2 Where particular tasks require protective clothing, specialist footwear or personal protective equipment (PPE), these requirements will take precedence over general dress expectations. Where such equipment or clothing is required as part of an employee's role, the school will provide appropriate items and ensure that staff receive suitable guidance regarding their use.

8.2 Staff are expected to wear practical, safe and professional footwear suitable for a primary school environment:

- As part of the school's commitment to health and safety, open-toed footwear, including sandals, and open-backed footwear, including mules, sliders and similar styles, should not be worn;
- Staff frequently move around the school site, supervise playtimes, participate in educational visits, support pupils with physical needs and may be required to respond quickly in a range of situations;
- Closed-toe, secure-fitting footwear helps to minimise the risk of slips, trips, falls and foot injuries and provides appropriate support throughout the school day.

8.5 Footwear should therefore be secure, practical and suitable for the demands of the role.

8.6 Health and safety considerations will always be a key factor in determining whether an item of clothing or accessory is appropriate.

9. Physical Education and Sports Activities

9.1 The school recognises that staff who teach Physical Education, lead sports activities, deliver outdoor learning or actively participate in physical activities require clothing that is practical, comfortable and safe.

9.2 Staff teaching PE are expected to change into suitable PE clothing and footwear. This supports health and safety, enables staff to model good practice and allows them to participate fully in activities alongside pupils. PE attire should remain professional and appropriate for a primary school setting.

9.3 Where practicable, staff should change back into their usual professional attire following PE lessons. However, the school recognises that this may not always be possible, particularly where multiple PE sessions, outdoor learning opportunities or active duties take place throughout the day or occur in the afternoon. In such circumstances, staff are expected to wear clothing that remains professional, appropriate and consistent with their responsibilities.

9.4 Jewellery should be removed, covered or otherwise made safe during PE lessons and sporting activities in accordance with health and safety requirements.

10. School Events and Formal Occasions

10.1 There may be occasions when staff are required to adopt a more formal standard of dress, such as church services, official school events, Parent meetings and consultations, Governor visits, inspections or celebrations. Where possible, reasonable notice will be provided.

11. Concerns Regarding Dress and Appearance

11.1 Any concerns regarding dress or appearance will normally be addressed informally in the first instance. The school is committed to dealing with such matters professionally, sensitively and confidentially.

11.2 It is expected that staff will respond positively to reasonable requests regarding dress and appearance. Formal procedures would only be considered in circumstances where concerns persist despite appropriate support and discussion.

12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

12.2 The Governing Board will review the policy periodically to ensure that it remains reasonable, inclusive, reflective of current legislation and consistent with the school's commitment to staff wellbeing and professional standards.

12.3 The school will consult with staff and recognised trade union representatives when reviewing this policy to ensure that it remains practical, fair and reflective of the needs of both the school and its employees, to staff wellbeing and professional standards.

13. Staff Code of Conduct Policy Review

This policy is reviewed by the Head teacher, staff and Governors in accordance with Barrowby School’s Policy and Review Cycle for approval by the Full Governing Body, every 3 years.

Last reviewed: September 2026

Next review: September 2029