

APPLICABLE TO	All schools in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese
DOCUMENT OWNER	Director of Schools
APPROVAL DATE	7 June 2019
APPROVED BY	CSO Leadership Team
SCHOOL ACTIONS	System policy. Each school is required to develop local school uniform requirements.
LAST REVIEW DATE/S	2011
NEXT REVIEW DATE	2022
RELATED DOCUMENTS	School Uniform Implementation Procedures/Guidelines School Community Code of Conduct

Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Provide direction and procedures for developing, changing or modifying school uniforms.
- Set out the responsibilities of various groups involved in making changes to school uniforms.

Policy Statement

Schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle have a long tradition of school uniforms as an important dimension of school life. School uniforms provide a strong sense of identity and contribute to inclusiveness and equity in schools.

Diocesan schools are committed to ensuring school uniform requirements will:

- be developed in consultation with the school community
- be consistent with health and safety considerations
- comply with anti-discrimination legislation
- consider affordability, functionality and durability of uniform items
- provide uniform options, including shorts and pants, in all uniform categories for all students, regardless of gender.

It is an expectation that all students will wear the correct uniform, and are supported by their parents/carers to do so.

Scope

This policy applies to all Catholic schools in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese.

Definitions

Changing school uniforms means the entire uniform being replaced. Where the uniform is to be completely changed then the consent of the appropriate Assistant Director of Schools is required.

Modifying school uniforms means an addition to or alteration of one part of the uniform.

School uniform requirements mean a written statement of school's expectations regarding student appearance that applies:

- during school hours
- while travelling to and from school
- when students are engaged in school activities out of school hours.

It clearly explains:

- defined standards for the general presentation of students, including headwear, footwear and other aspects of general presentation
- defined specifications for garment design and colour
- strategies for managing non-complying students.

Supply arrangements mean the commercial arrangements for the supply of school uniform items. In considering supply arrangements, the principal and uniform committee should consider the following:

- costs
- quality of items
- quality control of the supplier
- reliability, continuity and lead time of supply
- ability of manufacturers/suppliers to meet required delivery deadlines
- selecting Australian made items or using local businesses
- selecting manufacturers/suppliers that can provide evidence that they meet ethical manufacturing standards
- sustainable production of items
- how and where parents or carers can purchase items
- cleaning requirements and costs
- returns policy for faulty stock
- re-use or recycling of items.

Guiding Principles

1. The Catholic Schools Office of Maitland-Newcastle Diocese (CSO) requires that schools set local school uniform requirements.
2. The CSO supports the wearing of school uniform which promotes a sense of belonging for students and creates a positive identity for the school community. School uniforms also contribute to the personal safety of students by allowing easier recognition of students inside the school and in the community.
3. Schools expect students to wear the uniform during school hours, while travelling to and from school, and when engaged in school activities out of school hours, unless otherwise advised.
4. All students should have the opportunity to access the full range of school activities, including physical activities, while wearing a school uniform.
5. School uniform requirements should take into account the diverse nature of a school's student population.
6. Each school's uniform must be the result of formal consultation with students, teachers and other staff, parents or carers, and the school community, including parent representatives.
7. A school's response to a student not wearing uniform should be appropriate, fair and consistent.

8. Principals may consider making exemptions for not wearing a uniform, if considered appropriate after discussions with parents or carers.
9. Decisions about school uniform requirements must comply with work health and safety and anti-discrimination legislation. A school uniform should promote the health and safety of students by identifying items necessary for particular activities to protect students from injury (for example, items for sun protection or safe footwear).
10. Students should be encouraged to wear sun-safe hats for outside activities whenever possible, even though hats may not be a part of the school's uniform requirements.
11. A school uniform should include items that are affordable, comfortable, made from easy-care fabrics, appropriate for activity and suitable for all body shapes.
12. Schools must have written agreements in place to set out the terms and conditions of a 'uniform shop', if appropriate, and/or 'supply arrangements'. Schools must comply with procurement requirements to have an on-site uniform shop operated by any party.
13. Schools must advise parents on how they can access financial support if they are unable to purchase uniform items. To assist families, schools should organise facilities such as clothing pools.
14. Each school's uniform requirements should be reviewed when the need arises. Parents and carers must be given sufficient time to purchase items and schools may need to give parents up to three years to change more costly items. All suppliers and retailers must also be notified and given sufficient time to change the school uniform. Each school's uniform requirements, along with a brief statement about who was consulted, should be kept on file by the principal of each school.

Responsibilities

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

- Lead the development and review of school uniform requirements
- Lead consultation during a review of school uniform requirements
- Approve the school uniform and modifications or changes to the school uniform
- Oversee contract negotiations with school uniform suppliers, in consultation with the Assistant Director, including complying with written agreements with clothing suppliers. The contract, in part or in its entirety, may be provided to the Uniform Committee for information.
- Ensure the school possesses the intellectual property rights to deal with the school logo and licence the school logo to manufacturers of school uniforms. A record of all licences should be maintained.
- Inform parents and carers of local school uniform requirements
- Enforce compliance with uniform requirements fairly and equitably and carefully consider parent/carer concerns and requests for exemptions
- Provide assistance to families in need
- Maintain documentation of the school's uniform requirements and consultation undertaken.

PARENTS AND CARERS

- Commit to supporting the school's uniform requirements as part of the enrolment agreement and school community Code of Conduct.
- Support the student to adhere to the uniform requirements.
- Request modifications or exemptions to the dress code in writing, providing reasons for request.
- Work with the school to resolve issues regarding student compliance with the school's uniform requirements.
- Engage in consultation processes about the school uniform requirements.

PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

- Support and engage in consultation led by the principal, giving advice and recommendations regarding the school's uniform requirements.
- Direct parents to the principal to discuss any individual issues regarding the school uniform requirements.
- Support the school to resolve issues regarding the school's uniform requirements.

STUDENTS

- wear a school uniform that meets the schools' uniform requirements.

UNIFORM COMMITTEE

- acts under the direction of the Principal and with the support of the P & F Association if one exists within the school, to consider the formation of a clothing pool to assist with the bulk purchase of uniform items and the provision of quality second hand clothing to alleviate the costs on families.
- may assist the school in operating the clothing pool, if one exists, and organising stock.

Review

The Family Engagement Officer is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and routinely reviewing it to maintain currency and effectiveness.

Budget

Community decision making should take into account the cost of uniform items. This includes the serviceability and durability of the materials.

Provision should be made to provide uniforms items at a discounted price for parents with limited income.

Legislative/Professional Guidelines

Work, Health and Safety Act (2011)

Disability Discrimination Act (1992) Cth