

# Dress Code Protocol

SWALE ACADEMIES TRUST

J WHITCOMBE

## Swale Academies Trust

### Dress Code Protocol

As an organisation, we should be very proud of the role we play in driving up standards in education and care, both for now and for the future, and for helping to improve outcomes for children and learners.

It is because of this important role that the Trust must uphold the highest standards and why we ask for such high standards of professionalism from all our people. We expect high standards from others, and challenge them to achieve, and for us to be credible, we have to set even higher standards for ourselves than we expect of others. This includes the way we present both our work and ourselves. People make judgements based on personal appearances. It is for this reason that we have a dress code – so you, our staff, understand what is expected of you, and to help you apply judgement in the way you present yourself professionally.

We value our people's differences and recognise that different cultures and backgrounds may have different attitudes to dress. We do not seek to determine or influence how you dress in your private life, but when we are at work we are representing the Trust and all that we stand for. We must all therefore follow consistent professional standards.

The dress code requires core minimum standards from all. For those who interact with pupils, parents and other agencies this includes formal business dress and minimal accessories and jewellery for both men and women. We set clear standards but we ask you to use appropriate discretion to assess how formal your appearance needs to be in the range of environments you may find yourself in in the course of your duties. We need to be assured that our staff are judged, by all those that they work with, to be meeting the very highest standards of work, professionalism, behaviour and appearance. This is core to our ability to deliver with credibility. It is important that we don't let anything undermine this.

Personal judgement is, by its very nature, subjective, so you are urged to exercise caution in judging what is appropriate in terms of your personal presentation. The way a staff member dresses will, rightly or wrongly, influence how they are judged by pupils, parents and other stakeholders and nothing should cause anyone to question the Trust or your standards of professionalism or judgement because of your appearance.

It may undermine your professionalism in the eyes of a pupil or parent if, for example you have visible tattoos or are a woman wearing oversized jewellery or a man wearing an earring or earrings.

You must always consider that you will deal with a range of people with differing perceptions of professional attire and image on a regular basis. Our advice is to consider how you dress for work to ensure you come across to all as upholding the appropriate professional standards and level of gravitas that is required in your role. We are proud of the role that the Trust plays in our communities, and equally proud of the professionalism of our people. We expect you all to uphold the spirit of our dress code to ensure that we maintain the high standards and strong reputation that we have.

Jon Whitcombe

CEO, Trust Principal

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