

Dear Parent/Carer

11 September 2026

Uniform Expectations

It has been wonderful to welcome all students back to Downlands Community School. The term is now well under way, and I am pleased to say that the standard of uniform at the start of this academic year has been very good. We thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain these high standards.

To ensure everyone is clear on our expectations, Mr Ashdown, the Headteacher, has held assemblies with all students this week, and the uniform rules were explicitly outlined on day one by tutors.

We have a uniform policy in place because it promotes a sense of community and fosters a positive learning environment. It also encourages equality among students, helps reduce distractions, and prevents peer pressure related to clothing. Furthermore, a consistent uniform simplifies dressing choices for students and parents, prepares students for future professional settings, and ultimately helps with behaviour.

As a reminder, please review the following key expectations across all aspects of our uniform, ensuring we maintain a consistent and equitable standard for all students:

- **Clothing and presentation:** School shirts must be tucked in at all times, and school ties must be worn properly with the top button secured. Skirts must be worn just above the knee and must not be rolled at the waist. Trousers must be dark grey or black.
- **Footwear:** Shoes must be completely black, polishable, and made of leather or faux leather. Boots, trainers, canvas shoes, sandals, and high heels are not allowed.
- **Hair and beauty:** There should be no extremes of hairstyle or hair colour. Acrylic nails and coloured nail varnish are not permitted, though clear nail varnish is allowed. False eyelashes and eyelash extensions are not permitted at any time. Henna tattoos or drawings on arms are not permitted unless for cultural reasons.
- **Piercings and jewellery:** Students may wear no more than two plain studs or small sleepers per ear. Nose studs, whether clear or not, and any other facial or body piercings are not permitted. Flesh tunnels and bracelets are also prohibited. Students may wear only one plain, unobtrusive ring and one plain chain.
- **Outerwear:** Coats must have a full-length central zip, and hoodies are not permitted to be worn inside the school building.

Consistency is our highest form of care, and allowing continued defiance of our school behaviour system does not support the student in the long term. Please be reminded of our ongoing procedures for addressing uniform issues:

- **Quick fixes (e.g. untucked shirts, unfastened top buttons, hoodies, coloured nail varnish, excess jewellery):** Staff have always issued immediate sanctions for these infractions, and the uniform is expected to be corrected immediately. If it is not, we may look at confiscating items or implementing morning routines to ensure the student does not arrive into school in incorrect uniform.
- **Bigger challenges and longer-term fixes (e.g., acrylic nails, nose studs, hair colour, non-polishable shoes):** These issues will be followed up by our Heads of Year. They will initially speak with you directly and then may request that you come into school for a meeting to resolve the matter collaboratively.

We absolutely recognise that occasionally genuine short-term issues arise at home. If a piece of uniform is not correct, please send a written note in with your child so that they are not unduly given a sanction; please note that a mobile message does not count. We also understand that a very small number of students require a modified uniform due to specific Special Educational Needs (SEND) or medical conditions. These specific allowances are supported when agreed upon by the Headteacher, myself, Mrs Cornish, or Mr Shinebourne. If you believe your child has an



exceptional SEND or medical requirement that necessitates a reasonable clothing adjustment, please contact your respective Head of Year in the first instance.

Thank you once again for working with us to ensure a safe, inclusive, and thriving community where everyone feels successful.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Mr J. Chandler".

Mr J. Chandler
Assistant Headteacher - Behaviour