

STAFF DRESS CODE POLICY

Version: 1.1
Approved: 10 July 2018
Reviewed: 30 June 2021 (*without amendment*)
Next review: June 2024
Co-ordinator: Tracey Savage

Rationale

It is important that the image projected by Sandwich Technology School via the standard of dress of the professionals within it reflects the high expectations of the school. The school understands and values the public's perception of our roles as mentors and models for students.

Staff members need to be mindful that, although there is a difference in circumstances, students will always compare what staff are wearing with what they are prohibited from wearing. Staff are regarded as role models and consistent standards of professional attire help to establish a purposeful and business-like manner.

In order to ensure that staff present a consistently professional and positive image it is necessary to make expectations clear via this policy. The policy is also designed to help protect staff, so that if their dress is seen as inappropriate it can be approached in a neutral way via this policy rather than a comment that could be seen as personal and judgement-based. Staff have been fully consulted on this policy and it represents a consensus of views.

Purpose

The purpose of this dress code is to:

- present a professional and positive image of the school;
 - avoid unintentional injury to staff or students;
 - avoid giving offence to people of different cultures or beliefs;
 - present positive role models for students;
 - ensure that staff dress is such that it inspires the confidence of parents and the wider community;
 - contribute to high standards of health and safety.
-

Implementation (Roles and Responsibilities)

All Staff

All staff are expected to dress in a smart and business-like manner, using their professional judgement. Staff should look clean, tidy and well-groomed and should have a good standard of personal hygiene. Clothes should be in a good state of repair and free from obvious dirt and stains. Generally, staff appearance should reflect the professional environment in which we work and maintain high standards of modesty, style and taste. Men are expected to wear a shirt with a collar and a neatly knotted tie, although in exceptionally hot weather it will be acceptable for the tie to be omitted.

Jewellery should be conservative and should be such that it does not present a risk to the wearer, e.g. large necklaces or drop earrings that could be caught in a busy and bustling school environment or grabbed and pulled by students. Sharp items, such as large rings and brooches, should be avoided as they may present a risk.

Staff should wear their identity badges at all times.

Clothing should not restrict movement nor should it prevent a task from being undertaken with dignity.

Site and Catering Staff

Site staff should wear clothing that is commensurate with their jobs. Protective/appropriate clothing and footwear is provided by the school (PPE).

Science Technicians and Teaching Staff

The dress code for these staff should be the same as for all other staff; however, they should wear protective laboratory coats and goggles (provided by the school) whenever necessary. Extra care should be taken in ensuring that long hair and ties are kept safely out of the way during practical work. Additionally, these staff should wear shoes that are protective enough to safeguard their feet from any hazard.

Design Technology (DT) Technician and Teaching Staff

The dress code for these staff should be the same as for all other staff; however, they should also wear the STS DT polo shirts protective aprons, gloves and goggles (provided by the school) whenever necessary. Extra care should be taken in ensuring that long hair and ties are kept safely out of the way during practical work. Additionally, these staff should wear shoes that are protective enough to safeguard their feet from any hazard. DT teachers should wear clothes in keeping with the main body of staff for parents' evenings, open evenings, prize giving ceremonies or on days when they do not teach practical DT lessons.

ICT Technicians and the Network Manager

The dress code for these staff should be the same as for all other staff; however, they should wear protective laboratory coats (provided by the school) whenever necessary. Extra care should be taken in ensuring that long hair and ties are kept safely out of the way when engaged in manual work. Additionally, these staff should wear shoes that are protective enough to safeguard their feet from any hazard.

PE Teachers

PE Teachers should wear sportswear that is commensurate with their jobs. The school provides each member of the PE department with two STS sport shirts and one outer garment which should be worn. Other necessary sportswear is chosen and purchased by the individual teachers. Sportswear that is excessively branded or that includes slogans should not be worn. PE teachers should wear clothes in keeping with the main body of staff for parents' evenings, open evenings, prize giving ceremonies or on days when they do not teach practical PE lessons.

Teaching Assistants who provide physical care for SEN students

It is acknowledged that these staff may need to wear clothes that are made of a more robust material due to the requirements of their job. However, it is important that the smart and professional look is not compromised.

Restrictions

While staff are encouraged to exercise their own professional judgement on their appearance, there are some items which are deemed as unacceptable, these are as follows:

- leisure or sportswear (except for PE or sports events);
- denim jeans/skirts/jackets or jean-styled trousers of any colour;
- trainers
- flip flops or open-backed shoes (for health and safety reasons) – sandals that have a strap around the back of the heel are acceptable;
- shoes with excessively high heels that could cause injury in busy corridors;
- leggings or shorts;
- visible body piercings (other than earrings and a discreet nose stud) and tattoos must be covered wherever possible;
- casual t-shirts;
- clothing made of see through fabric, exposing underwear;
- hats;
- clothing that exposes cleavage, midriff, the lower back or underwear;
- clothing that is tight enough to expose the outline of underwear;
- skirts/dresses that are shorter than just above the knee;

- tops/dresses with spaghetti straps or straps that are less than two inches, unless covered by a jacket, cardigan or a top which is not removed;
- clothes bearing slogans or 'feature' designs;
- hijabs worn for religious purposes must not cover the face;
- extreme hair styles.

INSET days, non-uniform days and school trips

On INSET days, non-uniform days or when staff are on school trips where normal professional dress would be inappropriate, staff should remember that they are still "on display" and acting as role models and ambassadors for the school. On such occasions the dress code above relaxes, but there are some restrictions that should continue to apply:

- visible body piercings (other than earrings and a discreet nose stud) and tattoos must be covered wherever possible;
- clothing that exposes cleavage, midriff, the lower back or underwear;
- clothing that is tight enough to expose the outline of underwear;
- skirts/dresses that are shorter than just above the knee;
- tops/dresses with spaghetti straps or straps that are less than two inches, unless covered by a jacket, cardigan or a top which is not removed;
- clothes that bear inappropriate/offensive slogans or 'feature' designs;
- hijabs worn for religious purposes must not cover the face.

Notes

If in doubt, please apply the following rule of thumb: "Would this outfit be viewed as acceptable if worn to an interview?" – if the answer is "no", it is probably not appropriate.

The policy is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of dress and appearance and staff must use common sense in adhering to the principles underpinning the policy.

Equality and diversity

STS values and recognises the diversity of cultures, religions and disabilities of its employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress requirements. Hijabs worn for religious purposes must not cover the face. Turbans, kippots and headscarves are supported on religious grounds, but must not compromise health and safety.

The school also recognises the rights of staff with a disability and/or who consider themselves as non-binary and will consider reasonable adjustments to this dress code for individuals where necessary.

STS is aware that the statement 'men are expected to wear a shirt with a collar and a neatly knotted tie', may be seen as discriminatory, but the general legal consensus is that:

"It's OK to have different dress requirements for women and men reflecting common standards of smartness but, overall, they mustn't affect one sex more than the other. It's fine to say 'women must wear business attire' and 'men must wear a tie', but it would be against the law to make women managers wear a uniform while allowing men to wear suits."¹

Disputes

Staff considered to be in breach of the dress code will be advised by their line manager and given the opportunity to conform. Disagreements about the appropriateness of specific items of clothing or footwear will be referred to the Senior Leadership Team and/or the Headteacher (as appropriate), who will be the final arbiter on such matters. In the event of a persistent failure to comply with this code, the Disciplinary Procedure could be invoked.

¹ Source: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/know-your-rights/sexist-dress-codes-work-what-you-can-do>

Links to other policies/documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Educational Visits Guidelines
 - Equality Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct
 - Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Policies
-