Student Dress Code

Version Number
4.0

Implementation Date
9/07/2012

Scope
All state schools

Purpose
This procedure outlines issues that principals need to consider in developing, documenting and implementing student dress codes in Queensland state schools.

Overview
A student dress code consists of an agreed standard and items of clothing, which may or may not include a school uniform that state school students wear when:

- attending or representing their school
- traveling to and from school
- engaging in school activities out of school hours.

Student dress codes provide clothing that aims to contribute to a safe and supportive teaching and learning environment through:

- ready identification of students and non-students at school
- fostering a sense of belonging
- developing mutual respect among students by minimising visible evidence of economic or social differences.

Student dress codes reflect school community standards and are consistent with occupational health and safety, anti-discrimination legislation and the Sun Safety Strategy.

Student dress codes offer gender neutral uniform options for all students.

Student dress codes clearly explain and document standards of acceptable or reasonable dress in relation to:

- clothing worn by students, including headwear and footwear
- other aspects of personal presentation of students.

Acceptable or reasonable dress refers to clothing or apparel that would be socially acceptable, although it might not conform to the school’s student dress code. Inappropriate dress refers to clothing or apparel worn by students that is deemed to be:

- offensive
- likely to disrupt, or negatively influence normal school operations;
- unsafe for student or others
likely to result in a risk to health and safety of student or others.

Student dress codes incorporate strategies to accommodate special needs and circumstances of students and strategies for managing non-complying students. A student's non-compliance with school’s student dress code requirements is not grounds for suspension, exclusion, or cancellation of enrolment from school. For behaviour other than non-compliance with student dress code, principals follow actions outlined in the Safe, Supportive and Disciplined School Environment procedure.

Schools with dress codes impose sanctions on a once only basis per episode of non-compliance. Sanctions are reflective of the severity and recentness of the non-compliance and are limited to one of the following:

- imposing a detention for a student during lunch or after school (if after school, inform parents before detention occurs)
- preventing student from attending, or participating in, any activity for which student is representing school, or
- preventing student from attending or participating in any school activity that is not an essential school educational program.

Schools provide their Student Dress Code policy to parents at the time of enrolment as part of the Enrolment Agreement.

Responsibilities

Principals:

1. In developing a student dress code:
   - consult with parents or carers of children enrolled at their school, school staff, students and the Parents and Citizens’ Association
   - consider consistency with relevant legislation, both state and Commonwealth; including have a gender neutral uniform option for students etc
   - incorporate issues of availability, affordability and functionality of items of clothing
   - consider maturity of students, gender, disability, religious and cultural beliefs, socio-economic circumstances and students' sense of individuality and self-esteem in personal appearance
   - develop a process for managing special circumstances of particular students
   - develop and document strategies and sanctions for managing students not complying with dress code requirements; and
   - enforce aspects of student dress codes related to safety such as:
     - safe footwear and eye protection, as required by curriculum activity risk management
     - hats and swim shirts, as required by the Sun Safety Strategy.

2. In resolving matters of student dress codes, consider:
   - mobile families requiring sufficient time to purchase items of dress
   - economic hardship requiring special arrangements, or an extended period of time, to purchase new items of dress
   - students with physical impairments requiring greater flexibility in interpretation of dress codes
   - conscientious objections, for example objections raised on any reasonable religious or cultural grounds.

3. Develop sanctions for non-complying students ensuring that students are not:
   - excluded, suspended, or at risk of having their enrolment cancelled for not complying with student dress codes
given any sanction that damages their academic or external career prospects such as
negative mentions in references or school reports
prevented from continued participation in essential curriculum activities, except where
necessary for reasons of safety (in which case, alternative educational activities are
provided)
disadvantaged where required dress code items are not available because of circumstances
beyond the control of the student and/or the student’s parent/carer.

4. Follow appropriate processes for:

- Developing a system
- Resolving conflict
- Monitor and evaluate the code
- Arrangements with clothing suppliers.

**Process**

**Developing a system that provides:**

- exemption processes (e.g. an exemption card)
- alternative arrangements for a set period of time upon receipt of written request from parent
- opportunities to wear relevant items of dress code from a bank of items held at school.

**Resolve conflict**

Where there are individual cases of conflict with student dress codes, or persistent failure of a
student to uphold the code, or a student is inappropriately dressed:

- offer appropriate item/s from a bank of clothing/uniforms held at school
- take action that prevents risk to student or others, or action that maintains normal school
  operations
- inform student's parents or carers of incident and discuss further with parents or carers,
  representatives of school and student to prevent a recurrence
- implement a process of conflict resolution or mediation if student persistently wears
  inappropriate dress after discussions have been held with parents or carers.

Where a student is reasonably dressed, but does not conform to student dress code, principals:

- offer appropriate item/s from bank of clothing/uniforms held at school
- inform parents or carers of incident and, if necessary, discuss further
- use, together with representatives of school community, appropriate conflict-resolution or
  mediation if student persistently fails to observe student dress code.

**Monitor and evaluate the code by:**

- making available a copy of student dress code (written and/or electronically) for inspection,
  free of charge, by interested persons at administration office and school's webpage
- reviewing and evaluating student dress code periodically for any issues, appropriateness or
  enhancements in consultation with students, parents, staff, parent and citizens association
- advising students, staff, parents/carers and parents and citizens association of any changes
  or amendments to student dress code in writing before changes are implemented.

**In arrangements with clothing suppliers:**

- ensure compliance with departmental procedures relating to fair trade
- use appropriate Deed of Licence as outlined in the Information Sheet - Copyright School
  Uniform Logo when licensing a manufacturer to reproduce the school logo for the purpose of
  manufacturing uniforms or to restrict the retailers to whom the licensed manufacturers can
  supply the uniforms
- ensure notification and communication of any proposed change to school uniforms early in a
school year preceding such a change, to all parents and if practicable, all retailers concerned so that school uniform shops and others with significant stocks of uniforms can replace or prepare for the changes.

- where selected suppliers receive preference in placement of orders or publicity, ensure that a public tender process is followed in accordance with Purchasing Textile Clothing and Footwear procedure.

Online Resources

- Information Sheet – Copyright School Uniform Logo
- Logo Licence Option 1
- Logo Licence Option 2
- Logo Licence Option 3
- Considerations in Developing Student Dress Codes
- Enrolment Agreement

Review Date
27/01/2015

Definitions
Not applicable

Authority

- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) sections 360-363, section 283

Related Policy Instruments

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) Part 2, Division 7. (1); Division 3, 39; Chapter 3, Part 1, 117(1) (2); Part 2, 118
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)
- Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 (Cth) Part 2 Division 2, 22 and Division 3, 37 -38
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) Part II, 9 (1), (1A)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) Division 2, Section 21
- Safe, Supportive and Disciplined School Environment
- Purchasing Textile Clothing and Footwear
- Developing a Sun Safety Strategy
- Managing Risks in School Curriculum Activities
- Inclusive Education

Attachments

- Considerations in Developing Student Dress Codes
- Enrolment Agreement
- Information Sheet – Copyright School Uniform Logo
- Logo Licence - Option 2
- Logo Licence - Option 3
- Logo License - Option 1
- Student Dress Code Contact List

Contact
For further information on student dress code, please contact:

- Principal Adviser, Education Services or Principal Advisor, Regional Services in the relevant region.

DETE employees only:

- Principal Advisor
  Student Support Programs
  Student Services Branch
  *Phone*: (07) 3235 4452
  *Fax*: (07) 3237 0432

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