



26 March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you now as I realise many families aim to start buying uniform well ahead of the summer and I want to make our expectations really clear to avoid future problems. This is a decision that we are making across a number of Trust schools in the region and leaders in our schools are behind the decision.

All our schools have a uniform policy and the majority of students adhere to it however in recent months there is an increasing trend of girls wearing their skirts inappropriately. We have carried out a series of student panel meetings, surveys and 1:1 conversations, and many students are reporting two things: Firstly that they feel a peer obligation to fit-in with their friends and as a result dress similarly and secondly that they feel it is impacting on their mental well-being wearing their skirts as fashion items, often well above knee length. It is our responsibility to do what we can to take that pressure off your children and this is something we wish to have alignment for across a family of Trust schools.

This decision is primarily about how we can best support the silent majority of girls who feel uncomfortable about the appropriateness of how they feel expected to dress and the observations of adults who see this problem daily. Some of you and your children might be upset or disagree with these changes and I realise some individuals could feel it is a freedom being removed because of toxic behaviours in others, however our primary concern is very much about removing the pressure on girls to adhere to societal norms they disagree with. There is also a concern that some students wear their uniform in ways that are inappropriate that we hope will be corrected through these changes.

Taking all this into consideration, as of September:

- Trousers are permitted and encouraged by all genders
- Skirts can be worn, unrolled, with tights only.

Some families may be concerned about additional cost, given we are encouraging the use of trousers that some girls may not own. In these cases, families will be offered

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support and schools will give more details on that but I hope this advance notice gives plenty of notice to make arrangements.

I am happy to receive feedback (through your schools) on anything you feel may be overlooked and needs considering. We will evaluate the situation after a term of implementation to see if we need to make any further changes.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I Burchett', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Ian Burchett
Regional Director - Greater Manchester