

Uniform and appearance policy

Cornelius Vermuyden School



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1. Aims

Our uniform reflects who we are as a community. It sets the tone for high standards, respect, and equality, helping every student to feel part of something bigger than themselves. Wearing the Cornelius Vermuyden uniform symbolises pride in belonging and commitment to our shared values.

Our school aims to:

- Strengthen our sense of identity and belonging by ensuring all students share the same high expectations for appearance.
- Promote fairness and equality by reducing visible differences linked to fashion, wealth, or status.
- Encourage students to express individuality through character, kindness, and how they treat others rather than through what they wear.
- Focus on inner qualities, not outward appearance.
- Develop self-discipline and personal responsibility through the care and pride students take in their appearance.
- Support a calm, purposeful learning environment free from distraction or social comparison.
- Ensure students represent the school with pride in the community through a consistent and smart appearance.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

2.1 Key principles

- The uniform policy exists to promote inclusion, mutual respect, and a shared sense of belonging.
- It helps students focus on learning rather than appearance, supporting equality and self-worth.
- Expectations for dress reflect our high standards for conduct and presentation.
- Clarity and consistency ensure that all students, parents, and staff understand what is expected.
- The school will make reasonable adjustments where necessary for reasons linked to faith, race, or disability.
- Uniform will remain affordable and accessible for all families.

2.2 Equality Act 2010

Cornelius Vermuyden School upholds its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010.

All students are expected to follow this policy unless an agreed adjustment is made for reasons of faith, race, or disability. Requests for adjustment will be considered individually and sensitively in consultation with the Headteacher.

3. Definitions

3.1 Uniform

The required clothing and accessories worn by all students during the school day and at designated events.

3.2 Branded item

Any item featuring the Cornelius Vermuyden logo or unique design that must be purchased from the approved supplier.

3.3 Reasonable adjustment

A modification made to prevent disadvantage for a student with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Board of Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for:

- Reviewing the uniform policy annually to ensure it remains fair, affordable, and appropriate for all families.
- Overseeing supplier arrangements to ensure quality, durability, and value for money.
- Ensuring the policy complies with statutory guidance and reflects the school's commitment to equality and inclusion.

4.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing and upholding the uniform policy across the school.
- Ensuring the policy reflects the school's values, promotes equality, and supports high standards of appearance and conduct.
- Approving reasonable adjustments for students with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- Communicating expectations clearly to students, parents, and staff.
- Reporting to The Board of Trustees on compliance, affordability, and parental feedback.

4.3 Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Monitoring the consistent application of the uniform policy across the school.
- Supporting staff to address non-compliance calmly, fairly, and in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- Ensuring new staff understand and apply the policy correctly.

- Reviewing the effectiveness of the policy through learning walks, pastoral checks, and student voice.
- Liaising with the school's uniform supplier to ensure ongoing affordability and accessibility.

4.4 Teaching and Support Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Modelling professionalism and high standards of appearance.
- Promoting the values of pride, respect, and equality through positive reinforcement.
- Checking uniform compliance daily and addressing any breaches promptly and consistently.
- Reporting repeated concerns to the relevant Head of Year or member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Supporting students sensitively where non-compliance may relate to affordability or individual needs.

4.5 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school each day wearing the full and correct uniform, which is clean, labelled, and in good condition.
- Support the school in maintaining high standards of appearance and presentation.
- Contact the Head of Year if adjustments are required for reasons linked to faith, race, disability, or affordability.
- Access the school's second-hand uniform provision where needed.
- Reinforce the importance of pride, responsibility, and respect in how their child presents themselves.

4.6 Students

Students will be taught and reminded of:

- The importance of wearing the uniform correctly and with pride as part of belonging to the Cornelius community.
- How smart appearance reflects self-respect, discipline, and readiness to learn.
- The link between presentation, equality, and respect for others.
- Their responsibility to maintain high standards of dress both in and outside of school.
- The expectation that they represent the school positively within the local community.

5. Affordability and accessibility

We are committed to ensuring that our uniform remains affordable and accessible for every family.

We ensure that:

- Branded or logoed items are kept to a minimum.
- Uniform expectations are consistent across all year groups and houses.
- No additional or separate clothing is required for extra-curricular activities.
- Good-quality second-hand uniform is available through the school.
- Any change to uniform will be made only when necessary. Where a change may increase cost, parents and carers will be consulted. Minor updates that do not increase cost, such as improved material or fit, may be introduced without formal consultation.

Affordability is a key part of equality. Our aim is for every student to look smart and feel included without unnecessary financial pressure.

6. Expectations for school uniform

6.1 School uniform

- Black blazer with Cornelius Vermuyden badge
- Plain black V-neck jumper/cardigan (optional)
- Plain white collared shirt (must be able to button at the neck)
- School tie (Cornelius crest visible below the knot; clip-on ties introduced for new Year 7 students from 2026 onwards)
- Plain black trousers or plain black pleated skirt (school-approved style), hem no more than 2 inches above the knee and not below mid-calf
- Plain black socks or plain black or natural tights
- Smart, plain polishable black shoes (no trainers or fashion shoes)
- Plain coat or anorak, preferably in a dark colour

The Headteacher's decision on what constitutes compliance with these expectations is final.

6.2 Sports kit

- Cornelius PE top with school logo (new top introduced for Year 7 students from 2026 onwards)
- Plain black sports shorts (tight-fitting or branded shorts such as Nike Pro or cycling shorts are not permitted)
- White sports socks
- Trainers suitable for indoor and outdoor use (no Converse, Vans or fashion trainers)
- Plain black jogging bottoms or plain black sports leggings (optional)
- Cornelius black quarter-zip mid-layer (optional)
- Hairband for students with long hair

The Headteacher's decision on what constitutes compliance with these expectations is final.

6.3 Prohibited clothing

- Jeans, chinos, leggings, or tight-fitting/flared trousers
- Trousers with decorative zips or visible logos
- Trainers, boots above the ankle, or brightly coloured footwear
- Hoodies or sweatshirts
- Denim or leather jackets
- Caps, scarves, or hats with logos

6.4 Purchasing

- School uniform and sports kit are available from Penn Sports Ltd T/A PENN UK, 15-17 Kents Hill Road, South Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5PN
- Second hand uniform is available from the school free of charge.

7. Expectations for haircuts/styles

- Hairstyles must be neat, practical, and suitable for a learning environment.
- Hair should be of a natural tone; artificial colours, highlights, or dip-dye are not permitted.
- Hair extensions must blend naturally.
- Headwear is permitted only for religious, cultural, or medical reasons, following discussion with the Head of Year.
- A tidy appearance reflects self-respect and attention to detail, qualities we want every student to carry into later life.

The Headteacher's decision on what constitutes an acceptable hairstyle is final.

8. Expectations for make-up and jewellery

Our expectations promote equality and protect our students from social pressure linked to fashion or social media, allowing students to focus on learning and personal growth.

- One small stud per earlobe may be worn; earrings must be removed for PE and not taped
- No other piercings, including but not limited to, nose, lip, tongue or eyebrow piercings, are allowed.
- An inexpensive watch may be worn; Smartwatches and Fitbits are not permitted.
- Make-up, if worn, must be minimal and natural-looking, including but not limited to contouring, HD brows or highlighting
- False eyelashes/lash extensions, false nails, nail varnish, gel, acrylic or shellac nails, and fake tan are not permitted.
- Visible tattoos or body art are not permitted, except where they form part of a recognised religious or cultural celebration.

The Headteacher's decision on what constitutes compliance with these expectations is final.

9. Confiscation and sanctions

Non-compliant or prohibited items may be confiscated in line with the Behaviour Policy.

Students may be asked to remove or replace items or to change into school-provided uniform where available.

Persistent or deliberate non-compliance will result in sanctions consistent with the Behaviour Policy.

Support will be offered where non-compliance relates to affordability or other genuine difficulty.

Decisions regarding confiscation and sanctions for non-compliance will be made in line with the Behaviour Policy, and the Headteacher's decision is final.

10. Responding to requests for adjustment

We recognise and respect diversity.

Requests for reasonable adjustment will be considered sensitively on a case-by-case basis for reasons of faith, race, disability, or other protected characteristics.

Adjustments will be agreed through discussion with the Headteacher or delegated representative to ensure inclusion without compromising safety or equality.

While reasonable adjustments will be considered for protected characteristics, the Headteacher's decision on uniform compliance is final to maintain consistency and uphold the school's standards.

11. Monitoring and evaluation

The Senior Leadership Team monitors adherence to this policy through daily practice, tutor checks, and learning walks. Feedback from students, parents, and staff is reviewed termly.

The policy is reviewed annually and approved by The Board of Trustees to ensure it continues to promote equality, pride, and inclusion.

12. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to the following school policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy