

POLICY: School Uniform

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out Brisbane Catholic Education's (BCE) principles for the development and approval of student dress codes by BCE schools.

This policy must be read in conjunction with: Student Behaviour Support policy; Student Diversity and Inclusion policy; Student, Parent, and Guardian Complaints Management policy and procedure; Student Wellbeing policy; and Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane Code of Conduct.

2. RATIONALE

In accordance with section 360 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld), a Principal may develop a student dress code that will apply when students are attending, or representing, the school.

School uniforms perform several important functions within the overall operation of schools, including:

- fostering a sense of school community and shared mission
- increasing a sense of belonging and engagement
- promoting health and safety and
- encouraging respect in self and school.

Students in uniform also represent their school and therefore play a central role in the presentation of BCE schools to the broader community.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Each school must develop and implement a student dress code informed by the principles in this policy. Schools must communicate their student dress codes to the school community.

A student dress code must set out clear expectations for observance of uniform requirements and strategies for managing non-compliance, consistent with agreed variations to support student wellbeing or learning outcomes.

As a student dress code can raise issues of equity and fairness, inclusion, cost and affordability, practicality and responsiveness to individual needs, a suitable transition arrangement for the introduction of new uniform items must be implemented by the school.

4. PRINCIPLES

To assist BCE schools to manage relevant issues, schools must apply the following principles when developing, revising and approving student dress codes:

- **subsidiarity:** decisions on school uniforms must be informed by consultation at the local school level. Input from the school community must be sought as part of a process of discussion and discernment
- **accountability:** school uniforms must be consistent with health and safety considerations, e.g., sun safe, protective clothing, clothing appropriate to curriculum

activities. Student dress codes must comply with anti-discrimination and human rights legislation to ensure they do not give rise to unlawful discrimination against students

- practicality: school uniforms must contribute to the wellbeing of students by providing adequate protection from the elements and a degree of comfort that allows for full participation in all school activities, including play, sport and other physical and recreational activities
- affordability: attention must be given to cost and potential slavery in supply chains when school uniform options are determined. This includes durability of uniform materials to reduce replacement costs and possible staged introduction of new uniforms. Other strategies could include bulk purchasing, purchasing from social enterprises, clothing pools, and secondhand purchase arrangements
- equity, diversity and choice: schools must provide uniform options or modifications, including shorts and pants, in all uniform categories for all students, reflecting the diverse needs of students and supporting student mental health and wellbeing
- responsiveness: consider modifications or exemptions, for example, the wearing of clothing that is appropriate and conforms to the observance of faith
- complaints: complaints about school uniforms and/or school student dress codes must be managed under the Student, Parent, and Guardian Complaints Management policy and procedure.

5. REFERENCES

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) Chapter 2, Part 1-3, Part 4 Division 3-4, Part 4 Division 10, Part 5
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth) Part 1, Part 2 Division 2, Part 2 Division 5
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) Chapter 12, Part 9 ss.360-363
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth) Part II s.9
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth) Part I, Part II Division 2, Part II Division 4
- Student Behaviour Support policy
- Student Diversity and Inclusion policy
- Student, Parent, and Guardian Complaints Management policy and procedure
- Student Wellbeing policy
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld).