



**Letterkenny
Educate Together**
National School
ag fás le chéile - ag foghlaim le chéile

Dress Code Policy

Title

Letterkenny Educate Together National School Dress Code Policy.

Introductory Statement

The policy was formulated in December 2007 by the dress code subcommittee. Members of the dress code subcommittee were: Kathryn Daily, Natalia Colmenarejo, Taryn Gleeson, Margaret Kelly, Joe Brennan and Verity O'Reilly. The draft document was circulated to parents and staff for their consideration, and was also discussed in the classroom with the students. The policy was presented to the Board of Management meeting in May 2008 for ratification. The policy was reviewed in May 2012 and presented to the Board of Management in October 2012 for ratification.

Rationale

The policy was drafted to address the following identified needs:

- **Health and Safety** – Children sometimes wear items of clothing/ accessories that are not safe in a school environment. For example:
 - **Jewellery** – Certain types of earrings and necklaces – Loose jewellery
 - **Shoes** – Some shoes are not good for running about in the yard or for PE, for example heels
 - **Coats** – Children need coats in winter to be able to play outside
- **Independence issues** – Children sometimes wear clothes that they are not able to manage. It is important that the choice of clothes is such that they are able to go to the toilet on their own, able to tie their shoes, able to button up their jackets, etc...
- **Subject Related Issues** – Children sometimes wear clothes that are not safe/suitable for specific subjects, like physical education, art projects and field trips.
- **Distraction during class** – Children sometimes wear accessories that are a distraction for them, for their classmates or for the teacher. Examples are makeup, wearing hats or gloves during the class and other accessories.
- **Mechanism of discussion** - We feel that should be mechanisms in place were parents/children and staff could raise any concerns they may have about items that are worn by anybody in the school.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

The Ethos of the school is reflected in the dress code policy as follows:

- **Equality based** → Respect for all cultures, backgrounds, religions and family choices. We take into account that there will be differences in the way children dress and accessorize as part of their culture.
- **Child Centered** → Our policies are be for the benefit of the children.
- **Co-Educational** → Empower children to be themselves, without pre dispositions because of gender, social background or assumed roles in society. Every child is an individual, with individual needs to express themselves.
- **Democratically Run** → Parents, children and staff are involved in the decision making process. Anybody with any views on the subject has a mechanism to get involved in the

decision making process. Mechanisms are in place to give everyone the opportunity to voice their opinion.

Aims

With this policy the school aims to address the needs identified in the rationale.

Policy

- All children and staff attending Letterkenny Educate Together National School wear clothes appropriate for a learning environment that suit their own personality, tastes and preferences. **The school has no uniform.**
- In the interest of the children's safety and comfort, we ask parents to make sure their child wears suitable clothes and shoes. In relation to this, we discourage the wearing of belly-tops, high-heel shoes, dangling jewellery and make-up.
- Attire worn to school should be suitable for classroom activities (such as painting and gluing)
- Attire worn to school throughout the week should always allow pupils to play actively and safely in the yard. Physical exertion at break times is an integral part of the school day and a student's mode of dress should not inhibit them from fully participating in normal childhood games; thus items such as very wide/very long trousers and shoes/boots with elevated heels should not be worn. Flip-flops are particularly unsafe and should not be worn. Heeleys are never allowed in school. Shoe laces must be securely tied at all times.
- Parents ensure that children wear items of clothing/ accessories that are safe and comfortable for the school environment.
 - **Coats** – Children require warm coats in winter to be able to play outside.

Items the school does not consider to be safe include the following:

- **Jewellery** – Loose necklaces, chains and long earrings may all be pulled, accidentally or otherwise, whilst the wearing of large rings, brooches or badges could pose a risk (again accidentally or otherwise) to fellow pupils.
- **Shoes** – Examples of unsuitable shoes include elevated shoes, high heels, heeleys and flip-flops
- Any other item that staff may consider is not suitable for health and safety reasons not included in the policy.
- Parents ensure that children wear clothes that they are able to manage. It is important that the choice of clothes is such that they are able to go to the toilet on their own, able to tie their shoes, able to button up their jackets, etc...
- Parents ensure that for Physical Education (P.E.) and sports activities/events, children dress in appropriate sports clothes and non marking footwear for indoor activities, like tracksuit or comfortable trousers, and trainers.
- Parents ensure that for other classroom activities like painting and gluing children dress in appropriate clothes that can be stained.
- Children sometimes wear accessories/ clothing that are a distraction for them, for their classmates or for the teacher. As each individual behaves differently, suitability will be decided on individual basis at the teacher discretion whilst engaging the parents and children involved.

- A mechanism is in place where parents/children and staff can raise any concerns they may have about items that are worn by anybody in the school. Parent/child should contact the class teacher in the first instance. If the matter is unresolved, the principal will be informed and standard procedure will apply.
- The school does not take responsibility for any lost clothes. If a child has lost any items of clothing, parents/guardians can check the lost property box in the main hall of the school. At the end of each school term, the clothes left behind in the lost property box are donated to charity.

Success Criteria

- Children, staff and visitors wear items of clothing/ accessories that are safe in a school environment.
- Children wear clothes that they are able to manage.
- Children wear clothes that are safe for specific subjects, like physical education, classroom activities including painting and gluing as well as field trips.
- Children do not get distracted because of the choice of clothes and accessories of themselves, their classmates or staff.
- A mechanism for discussion is in place for parents/children and staff to raise any concerns they may have about items that are worn by anybody in the school.

Roles and Responsibility

The following have particular responsibilities for aspects of the policy as outlined in the document:

- Parents
- Children
- Staff

Implementation Date

The policy will be put in place following ratification by the Board of Management.

Timetable for Review

The policy will be reviewed every 2 years

Ratification & Communication

The Board of Management officially ratified the policy in October 2012.