



## **INTRODUCTION**

Eltham High School aims to provide a cooperative, caring and stimulating learning environment where students are respected, and individuality is developed and respected. Within this context, the school supports the principle of the students choosing their own clothing for everyday wear to school. To guide students in their choice of clothing and wearing of uniform where appropriate, the school has a Dress Code, which is based on respect for individual difference, the development of social responsibility, and health and safety concerns. The Student Dress Code Policy recognises that students learn best under conditions where they feel accepted and respected, and experience a sense of personal worth. The school Dress Code expectations are very established, accepted by the community, and have a long tradition of principles of freedom, responsibility and diversity underpinning them. Staff and students have a clear understanding of the basis of the code, and compliance with it is high. The code includes a discretionary clause. There are at times, medical reasons for non-adherence to the dress code.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

School councils have the authority to create and implement dress codes for their students in accordance with Department of Education and Training policy. Student Dress code and uniform policies must be flexible enough to allow for diversity regarding cultural and religious differences. Within that context, Eltham High School, its School Council and community, is committed to there being no compulsory uniform. Instead, there is a non-uniform tradition, which has been established at the school for more than half a century. While the majority of state schools have compulsory uniform (and their right to make this choice is respected) Eltham High School's right to choose to be a non-uniform school, working on the basis of a Student Dress Code, should be respected.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

A non-uniform dress code is beneficial on the grounds of individual identity for students, cost effectiveness for parents, and celebration of diversity in our society. A non-uniform Student Dress Code is compatible with anti-discriminatory legislation and health promotion policies. Students are encouraged to make responsible and respectful decisions (taking into account the school dress code, parental guidance and their own preferences) on appropriate clothing to wear on a daily basis to school. There are, however, specific activities during which students are required to wear a uniform for reasons relating to health and safety concerns, or presenting as a unified group. Such activities include all the music groups, debating, sporting groups, and Junior School sport, and may involve representing the school at interschool and outside venues.

## **GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

The school will develop and maintain effective strategies and management processes to implement the Student Dress Code Policy. Adherence to these policies, as ratified by School Council, should be a condition of enrolment at the school.

- Provide relevant information about Student Dress Code practices for the school community.
- Include Dress Code education in the delivery of the Transition Program for incoming year seven students.
- Implement the necessary responses and consequences appropriate to breaches of the Student Dress Code policy.

- Operate this policy in conjunction with the Student Engagement Policy, the Bullying Prevention Policy and the Sun Smart Policy.

The school aims to develop and maintain an environment in which there is appropriate dress for a learning environment which involves a diverse range of learning activities. We provide guidelines for non-uniform dress, and for uniform dress, and strategies and consequences to support the dress code.

### **Non-uniform dress**

The following guidelines are designed to ensure that student dress is socially responsible, health and safety compliant, and appropriate for the school environment. Students have the responsibility to follow the school Student Dress Code. Students should respect their own dress, and the choice of dress of others. Clothing should reflect the work place nature of the school.

- Brief clothing, is not appropriate for the school environment, and offers insufficient protection from sun exposure. Examples of the items that are not appropriate at school include;
  - Singlet tops.
  - Brief skirts and shorts.
  - Tops (other than singlets) with a shoulder strap that is less than 6cm in width.
  - Underwear should not be visible.
- Clothing with offensive slogans or pictures are not appropriate (see Bullying Prevention Policy)
- Thongs are not permitted. Sandals and open shoes are discouraged, as these may involve health and safety issues.
- Health and safety standards require protective clothing and solid footwear in some subjects, and students are expected to comply with teacher instructions in these subjects regarding the wearing of items such as safety glasses. The wearing of jewellery should be consistent with Health and Safety requirements.
- Students are encouraged to wear hats when exposure to sun is an issue. In classrooms, hats may be required to be removed at the discretion of the teacher.

### **Uniform Dress**

#### **Junior School Sport**

- All students must be changed for Sport.
- Students should wear an Eltham High School T shirt, and dark shorts or track pants.
- All items should be named.

#### **Uniforms for Specific Groups**

- Uniforms should be worn to meet the guidelines set by the group
- Uniforms should be worn to promote the unity of the group, and to enhance the group's image and reputation, and that of the school.
- All uniform items should be named.

### **Intervention Strategies and Sanctions**

Where the Student Dress Code is breached, and depending on the severity of that breach, one or more of the following consequences will be applied. These guidelines are consistent with the Student Engagement Policy Implementation Guidelines.

- Caution by a staff member or Principal class officer, and agreement by the student to comply with the Student Dress Code
- Restorative conversation

- Sub-School Coordinator contact
- Counselling
- Contact with parents
- After-school detention/s
- Assistant Principal/Principal intervention as appropriate.

### **BASIS OF DISCRETION**

The School Council has responsibility for the establishment, evaluation and review of school policies. The School Principal has the responsibility to ensure that school policies are implemented effectively.

Minor changes to the policy (changes that will not affect the spirit of the policy) may be made at the discretion of the Principal.

The Policy Review and Evaluation process will recommend any major changes to the policy to School Council.

### **RELATED POLICIES**

Student Engagement Policy

Bullying Prevention Policy

Sun Smart Policy

School Policy and Advisory Guide – Developing & Reviewing Dress Codes

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/developing.aspx>

### **REVIEW**

This policy should be reviewed every 3 years.

Date Endorsed: 18/12/19

### **Executive Officer**

Eltham High School Council

CONSULTATION PROCESS AND WORKING PARTY INFORMATION:

This policy was written by: Fran Mullins, updated by Darren Squires

Consultation has taken place with the relevant group(s) in the following list:

Group	Consultation ✓
School Operations Committee	
Staff	✓
Students (randomly selected group)	✓
Parents (randomly selected group)	✓
Members of the Community	
Other (where relevant please specify)	
Planning and Policy Review Team of Council <b>(Mandatory)</b>	✓
School Council <b>(Mandatory)</b>	✓

