

Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

Headteacher: Mr G Prebble BEd Joint Honours NPQH



Wrotham Road Meopham Kent DA13 0AH

Tel: 01474 814646

Website: www.meophamschool.org.uk

Dear parents/carers,

I hope this letter finds you well.

Apologies for disturbing you during the summer holidays but I thought it prudent to address some queries that the school has received regarding PE uniform and to provide a reminder about school uniform and presentation more generally.

At Meopham School, we are committed to promoting a culture of high standards and expectations which our young people will take with them into adult life. As I am sure you will agree, the smartness with which one dresses and presents themselves makes a clear statement about their character and attitude. It is important we instil this value in our young people.

A smart and consistent uniform, including consistent guidelines on presentation, is very important to any school. It provides parity amongst all students; it inheres a strong sense of school identity and it ensures there is a culture of formality and pride in presentation. This is something, as a school, I feel it is important that we establish.

PE/Dance Uniform

We are aware that some of you who have ordered PE/Dance kit through our suppliers, Kitlocker, are yet to receive your orders. I want to reassure you that any pupils who, for legitimate reasons, do not have the required PE kit for the start of term will not be sanctioned.

Please see the following excerpts from a letter Mr Savory, our Curriculum Leader for PE & Health and Social Care, sent prior to the end of last term which clarifies this transition period to our new PE kit:

*'We understand that the timing of this change and potential delivery times may present some challenges for students to have the new PE kit for the start of Term One. To accommodate this, **all students are not expected to be wearing the new PE kit until the start of Term 2 (4th November). During this period, we will allow students to wear their current PE kit (plain black) if they have not purchased their new PE kit by then.** This grace period is intended to ensure that every student has ample time to acquire the new kit without added stress or inconvenience.'*

Hopefully this allays some concerns about receiving new PE/Dance kit in time; pupils will not be sanctioned for this during Term 1. However, to clarify, whilst pupils are waiting for new kit to arrive, they should wear their old PE kit. If they have outgrown this, they are permitted to wear acceptable dark sportswear (preferably black and minimal branding) for their PE/Dance lesson, but if staff deem any sportswear inappropriate because it is too short, too tight or for any other reason, students will be expected to change in to the spare kit provided by the school, and will be sanctioned if they refuse to do so.

Please note that Mr Savory also clarified that:

'Furthermore, students who already own the old Meopham School PE kit (with logo and house colours) are not expected to buy the new kit until they are ready to do so. Your child can continue to wear their current Meopham School PE top / sweatshirt until it needs replacing, at which point you can purchase the new version.'

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*For students who are going into **year 11** we understand that your children are moving into their final year. Students are welcome to wear the new PE kit, however, they will **not be required to purchase the new PE kit** if they do not want to. They may continue to wear their current PE kit during their final year.'*

We appreciate there has been a significant change to the PE/Dance kit for this academic year. A number of suppliers were contacted and staff spent considerable time researching a kit that offered value for money, whilst enhancing our school identity. We would like students to feel proud to wear a Meopham sports kit and having a small number of specified items ensures all children are dressed equally. Our branded kit requirements are in line with other secondary schools in the area and we have endeavoured to keep this to an absolute minimum.

Nonetheless, as I begin in post next week, I will be contacting Kitlocker personally to ascertain why there have been some delays, to relay any other concerns and outline expectations for the future service provided to our parents and carers. I am confident they will meet demands moving forward but of course I want to reiterate that we want the best possible service for our school community.

School Uniform Policy

Further to this, I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the school's uniform policy.

As the start of term nears, please ensure students are in the correct uniform which includes a blazer that must be worn every day and black school shoes. Trainers of any description are not permitted, including all-black Nikes. No jewellery must be worn. Lash and nail extensions must be removed before term begins.

Parents/carers will be asked to collect their children from school to rectify any uniform or presentational issues. If this is not possible, the school has freshly laundered spare uniform on site that students will be welcome to borrow, providing they hand something in to ensure it is returned at the end of the school day. Students who refuse to borrow uniform or rectify any other presentational issues will not be in mainstream circulation until all issues are rectified.

I'm aware that a small number of parents/carers are unable to purchase certain sized blazers from our suppliers Monkhouse currently. Please be assured that we are able to loan pupils blazers in school until their own arrive if needed. Furthermore, an alternative option is to purchase a plain black school blazer from elsewhere, and then purchase a school badge directly from the school via your Parent Pay account.

Our detailed uniform policy can be found here:

[Meopham School - Uniform Policy](#)

I've also provided below some excerpts from a letter sent by Mr McQuillan, Deputy Headteacher, at the end of last term which clarifies some other concerns:

My child still has the 'old-style' Meopham tie and blazer badge. Is this OK? *Students should now be wearing the Meopham school black and gold striped tie and gold windmill blazer badge. We understand that a small number of students in Years 9-11 may still have the old style tie and blazer badge and these can still be worn until they need to be replaced - we would anticipate that **there will be no more students wearing these after this academic year.***

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My child still has the 'old-style' uncollared girls blouse - can they still wear these? *We would expect almost all students to be wearing the standard collared shirt with a Meopham school tie from September. The old-style blouses will be allowed if new shirts have not yet been purchased, although we would ask that this is done soon. **We would anticipate that there will be no more students wearing these after this academic year.***

Which styles of shoe are acceptable? *All students should wear black leather/patent leather or leather alternative school shoes. Shoes should not have any logos. Trainers, canvas shoes or slipper-style shoes should not be worn.*

Can my child wear the black Nike 'school shoes'? *Nike and other sports brands are considered sportswear and not school shoes. All shoes with logos on will be considered to be trainers and are not allowed to be worn.*

What kind of skirt should I buy? *Our school skirts are black, pleated, a-line skirts. Please ensure that your child's skirt is knee length. Skirts should not be rolled, or tied at the waist to make them shorter.*

What about trousers? *Students should wear plain black straight school trousers (no jeans or fashion-trousers) Students can wear belts but – for safety reasons – no fashion belts may be worn.*

What socks should students wear? *All socks should be black. With skirts, students may wear plain black ankle socks or black opaque tights. Knee high socks, frills and bows are not permitted.*

Are jumpers compulsory? *Blazers must be worn at all times. Jumpers are optional and should not be worn instead of a blazer. Jumpers should be a plain black woollen v-neck (no sweatshirts or logos). Students may still wear the 'old style' jumpers with the coloured stripe on the collar should they still have these. Students cannot wear hoodies or tracksuit tops instead of blazers.*

What are the rules relating to false nails / piercings / makeup? *Students cannot wear false nails or nail-varnish into school. Jewellery cannot be worn and students will be required to remove any piercings when in school. We understand that students sometimes are self-conscious about blemishes or spots. For this reason we do allow a small amount of inconspicuous foundation or concealer to be worn. Eyelash extensions, lipstick, blusher, eyeshadow and fake tan are not acceptable and should not be worn into school.*

If any families genuinely require financial assistance with the purchase of uniform, the school will of course support with this. Please contact Mr Rigglesworth at andrew.rigglesworth@swale.at if this is the case.

Apologies for the longer letter than I would usually send but I wanted to ensure all were clear on the detail of our uniform policy prior to term beginning. We appreciate all of your efforts in getting our youngsters ready for the new term and your support in ensuring we hold all of our students to the highest of standards. Thank you.

I look forward to seeing everyone next week.

Kind regards,

Ethan Roberts

Headteacher