

DRESS CODE POLICY

One of our core education principles at Heritage is that each child is unique and different and we want our children to live their uniqueness. Our whole curriculum and approach to learning are focused on uncovering the child's uniqueness as well as empowering our students from an early age to make responsible choices. For us, this belief is reflected in our dress code policy. ***Letting the child wear regular clothes is a symbolic gesture of accepting and appreciating one's uniqueness***, which is why we **do not require uniforms**. We make it clear that, while we are not prepared to debate this policy, we are prepared to help students, parents and teachers understand, articulate and uphold this policy.

While we fully recognize that outward appearance is only one aspect of a child's personality, we maintain that when children choose the clothes they wear, they are ***exercising creativity that reflects an evolving sense of Self through preference for color and style***, projection of mood and even expression of pure whimsy and imagination. Children are also developing an **appreciation for the creative expression of others as well as an understanding of what is practical and appropriate** for a range of activities and events. Last but not least, through our guidance they will become aware that ***it is a privilege to have a choice of nice clothing that not all children enjoy***.

Our policy also reflects ***an awareness of the sensibilities and expectations of the broader community and culture that provide the context for our school***. While we genuinely believe that children, as adults, should be free to choose clothing that expresses their individuality and uniqueness, we also want older students in particular to be conscious that ***they are representing their school everywhere they go, particularly when they participate in school-sponsored activities or interact with students from other schools***. On those occasions, such as a sports tournament or MUN conference or debate, students should comply with the clothing requirements specified by their coaches or advisors. (See dress code below.)

The Dress Code:

- Shirt of practical, appropriately modest design
- Knee-length shorts or long pants of practical, appropriately modest design
- Limited use of accessories or cosmetics (i.e. that do not draw attention to themselves—for example, deodorant, small ear studs, hair clips)
- Good grooming, hygiene, neatness and cleanliness at all times, including skin, hair, nails, clothing and footwear
- Appropriate dress as required for special occasions (i.e. sports uniform, blazer or suit and tie for formal occasions)
- Business Casual for in-school presentations or visits to other campuses, Smart for functions such as MUN, Formal for ceremonies
 - Business Casual: neat trousers, shirt with a collar OR school uniform
 - Smart: Black or dark-colored dress pants (not jeans or track pants) or skirt of modest length OR suit; white or light-colored shirt; dark dress shoes
 - Formal: saris / achkan, kurta pajama / salwar kameez, dresses / blazers or suits; dress shoes or sandals

Consequences for violation of the Dress Code:

- Reinforcement of the guidelines for dress follow the Discipline Policy in a fair and consistent manner:
 - **First or minor violations:** the Class Teacher will speak to the student
 - **Second or more serious violation:** the student will be asked to contact parents, in the presence of the Class Teacher, and ask that a suitable alternative be sent to school immediately

- **Subsequent violation or deliberate serious violation:** student will be sent home immediately, as an unexcused absence, and will only be readmitted when accompanied by parents
- Violations include the following:
 - **Clothing that is distracting or immodest** (i.e. length of skirt or shorts, tight jeans or shirts, prominent display of brand names and logos, inappropriate words or decorations on garments, flashy make-up, body piercing or tattoos)
 - **Clothing that is impractical** (i.e. stiff fabric or tight fit that restrict movement, slippery or dangerous footwear)

Junior and Middle Programs

What we expect from students:

- Freedom of expression through choice of color and style
- Empowerment and accountability reflected in consideration of what is practical and appropriate for a variety of activities, including:
 - Outdoor play requiring unrestricted movement and flexibility
 - “Messy” activities using materials such as paints, sand or food
- Awareness of the privilege of having nice clothes to wear
- Evolving understanding of the limited role of clothing as a superficial reflection of personality rather than a lasting indication of character

What we expect from parents:

- Support for our policies, particularly in communicating them to children
- Model through your own attitude that clothes should be fun and practical but should not become a source of vanity or obsession
 - As much as possible, brand and label-free
 - Inexpensive, to free children from guilt if they stain or tear their clothes
 - Appropriately modest and low-key to avoid self-consciousness
- Ensure that children choose clothing that they can manage by themselves:
 - Soft fabrics in styles which allow unrestricted movement and activity
 - Easy to take on and off without help:
 - Velcro closures on shoes for children who have not learned to tie
 - Bottoms that are quick and easy to pull up and down in the toilets

What you can expect from us:

- Acceptance and celebration of the unique character of each of our students and of their creative expression of their individuality in myriad ways
- Assurance that their true characters are NOT reflected in their clothes
- Discretion and individual follow-up with parents regarding clothing that we deem inappropriate, including the following:
 - slippery shoes or open sandals
 - stiff fabrics, tight pants, skimpy shirts, short skirts or shorts
 - clothes with inappropriate images, brands or slogans
- Advance notice regarding special events (i.e. festivals, field trips or performances) that require particular clothing