



Sandringham College
Submission to Government Inquiry
into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools

In response to the questions put to the College

1. What requirements (if any) do you specify for student clothing or appearance for your VCE campus?

Student clothing must be neat, decent and not contain any offensive or inappropriate logos, pictures, wording etc.

Students are required to dress appropriately for school and to be sun smart aware. Bare feet are not acceptable (students will be sent home immediately) and thongs and some sandals are actively discouraged for safety reasons.

Students in subjects with specific Occupational Health & Safety requirements eg Food Technology, Technology, Science are required to wear appropriate footwear, have their hair tied back etc.

2. What is the school's underlying philosophy on dress codes and school uniforms etc

The College believes that student learning is supported when students feel in what they are wearing. We are also aware that our clothing is an expression of our individuality and believe that schools need to acknowledge this.

Linked to this is our work in providing a culture which focuses on learning and in which students are supported to increasingly take responsibility for their learning and behaviour and actions. Learning to dress appropriately for different contexts is a part of this.

The environment the College provides and continues to develop also stresses the building and maintaining of positive, more adult learning relationships between teachers and students. Taking away the discipline aspects of uniform enforcement assists with this.

3. Any difficulties in implementing two varied uniform policies

College students see not having a uniform as a valuable part of their Year 11 and 12 Campus experience and actively look forward to it.

There is some difficulty toward the end of Year 10 around enforcing uniform, particularly when uniform wear's out or if students have grown out of garments. The College works with students to deal with these issues as they arise.

4. Perceived advantages / disadvantages of having different uniform policies for the junior and senior campuses

Advantages: the “no uniform” policy helps foster a specifically 'senior' ethos and is an aspect that of the students identify strongly and value as an important feature of the Campus and College.

Disadvantages: see above re uniform in the final stage of Year 10 trying to keep

5. Any challenges faced by the school in allowing senior students to wear casual clothes

It can make identifying strangers on Campus more difficult, but this is not a major or common problem. All students have an ID card to support easy identification. Initially, some students may take a while to settle into 'non-extravagant' everyday dress. However, this is usually resolved in the first month of school.

6. Health or safety considerations

- The OH&S considerations as outlined earlier
- Encouraging students to be 'sun smart' in their clothing and approach eg sun block, hats etc in summer

7. Extent of bullying or peer pressure to conform to expensive fashion fads

Our student survey data identifies free dress as an overwhelming positive for the great majority of students. Some Students may begin by 'dressing to impress' but they seem to very quickly realise that it's not an issue. The absolute diversity and range of student styles, the number of sub-cultures that co-exist peacefully seems to allow virtually all students to find a niche

8. Other issues

Students and staff report unanimously that removing the conflict between students and teachers over the enforcement of uniform is a major positive of the Campus and its learning environment

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