

Spotswood
primary school

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Ms. Karen Ellingford
Executive Officer
Education and Training Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
East Melbourne 3002

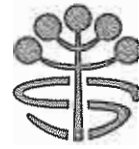
Dear Karen,

Please find attached comments from the Spotswood Primary School Council related to dress codes and school uniforms at Spotswood Primary School. The Council believes the comments reflect the views of the school community and are relevant to the inquiry being undertaken into dress codes and school uniforms in Victorian schools.

We hope the views expressed will assist the Victorian Parliament's Education and Training Committee.

Yours faithfully,

Peter McIver
Secretary
Spotswood Primary School



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Government Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools

Spotswood Primary School Council

The School Council would like to assist the Victorian Parliament's Education and Training Committee and thus makes the following comments:

Benefits and costs of mandatory school uniforms:

- The wearing of the school uniform is compulsory for all children at Spotswood Primary School. This decision was taken after consultation with the community and it has strong community support. The School Council supports the view that schools should have the option of school uniforms being mandatory.
- Children dressed in the school uniform gain a sense of belonging to the school and consequently their pride in the school increases.
- Children in the school uniform are identified more directly with their school and this is particularly so when the school is involved in activities outside the school grounds and involved on school excursions.
- Competition between children wearing label or designer clothing is negated and costs to parents reduced when a school uniform is in place.

School Uniforms and Dress Codes:

- When children wear school uniforms, competition in fashion dressing is negated and all students, regardless of socio economic circumstances, can feel equally part of the school.
- All parents and students are made aware that the school uniform is compulsory at the commencement of the year and they are provided with copies of the policy.
- The Council is guided by SunSmart policies and supports the wearing of appropriate clothing according to the policies during the year. The school has a formal SunSmart policy to promote responsible behaviour in the sun and reduce skin damage caused by harmful ultra-violet rays of the sun. Specific procedures are in place during Terms 1 and 4.
- The accepted dress code is enforced by all staff.

Cost and Procurement Arrangements:

- The Uniform Committee ensures that the prices of uniform items are affordable and of good quality.
- One supplier only is used for the supply of all stock based on price, quality and range of stock.
- The school operates a pre-loved uniform shop to assist families.

Matters to consider to ensure dress codes and uniform policies are consistent with anti-discrimination legislation and health promotion policies:

- Schools need to be aware of anti-discrimination legislation and aware of health promotion policies when formulating uniform policies.
- The school is very aware of Sunsmart policies in choosing school uniform clothing and includes hats based on national standards and long sleeved shirts as items available for purchase.

Appropriate enforcement and sanctions:

- Children not wearing the school uniform are required to gain a daily uniform pass from the administration office.
- Parents are contacted if the individual consistently fails to wear the uniform.

Appropriate exemption criteria and processes:

- Parents are encouraged at all times to have children wear the uniform and support is provided to families requiring financial assistance in the event of hardship.
- Schools should be provided with guidelines for appropriate exemption circumstances.

National and International Trends:

- It is the opinion of the Council that national and international trends in relation to standards and protection as agreed to by the State Government should be followed.