

School uniform under media spotlight

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Current DfE non-statutory guidance on school uniform from 2013 advises schools to give “*high priority to cost considerations*” and to avoid exclusive single supplier contracts “*unless regular tendering competitions are run*”. The guidance also directs school to consider their obligations under the Equality Act not to directly or indirectly discriminate against pupils on grounds of sex when introducing or applying uniform policies. This is a particularly challenging area for schools as they seek to reconcile a traditional gendered approach to schools uniform with the needs of transgender pupils.

Schools may want to take the opportunity to reflect on their current uniform policy in light of recent commentary. Assuming the present attention continues, it is likely that the DfE will introduce new guidance and may seek to put this on a statutory footing to give it greater weight.

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