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Dear students, parents, carers, and staff,

Bradfield School Uniform Policy Review

At our meeting of the governors on the 7th December we were asked by Dr Gilbert to consider making changes to the current school uniform policy. We have agreed those changes and from September 2017 we will be implementing a new smart uniform policy that will involve:

- A black blazer with the school logo
- A formal shirt
- A tie
- Formal tailored black trousers and a formal tailored black skirt.

The smart uniform policy is a strategic decision taken by the governors but we have agreed with Dr Gilbert that how he implements the policy and the actual detail of it, such as shirt colour, tie design and so on is an operational decision for him to make. However, we have asked him to:

- Take into account the views of students' and staff with regards to colour and style of trousers and skirt
- Involve students in deciding the design that should be printed on the tie
- Ensure that the uniform can be easily sourced and affordable compared with current prices
- Take into account the views of parents on the roll out of the new uniform across years 7 – 11. He will be running a parents' focus group next term with the help of parent governors to talk to parents about how best to ensure a successful transition to the new uniform.

In order to explain why we feel that it is important to make the changes I think it would be helpful if I explained the history of the uniform changes over the last few years.

Those of you who were in the old school in 2012 will remember the old school uniform; bottle green sweatshirt, white and black polo shirts and black trousers and skirts. The uniform was universally loathed and as part of a major re-branding exercise when we became an academy and moved into the new school we decided to smarten things up! School Council were heavily involved and a survey of students found that the majority of students in the school were in favour of a blazer, shirt and tie. However, School Council, who had the final say, decided on white polo shirts with the logo, designed by students, navy jumper or cardigan with the logo, black tailored trousers and a black A-line skirt. This was implemented from September 2012 with the new Year 11's being exempt from having to wear the new uniform, although many chose to adopt the new one.

A year later governors received "the floaty skirt petition". This was a fantastically well-argued and very persuasive petition signed by well over 200 students (boys and girls alike) requesting that as well as the A-line formal skirt, girls be allowed to wear a "floaty" skirt or skater style. As the petition was so well written and argued and signed by so many students governors agreed to the relaxation of the strict skirt policy.

Then in 2014 the then Headteacher Mr Conway asked governors to approve a further change to the uniform. He thought that staff were spending too much time dealing with students who were in school but not wearing regulation jumpers or cardigans and trying to enforce the uniform policy and as the PE department hoody was very popular with students, he thought that allowing a hoody or "zoody" to be worn in school would reduce this problem. In fact, Mr Conway always said that he wasn't a huge fan of having a school uniform at all. Once again governors allowed these changes to be made.

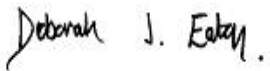
Last year we were asked to relax the smart trouser policy as “smart trousers don’t match hoodies”. Governors did not agree to that request.

The trouble is we are now left with a hybrid uniform – neither a smart uniform nor a completely relaxed one! The students look as if they are attending a sports day instead of an academic school with high aspirations for achievement for everyone. In fact, a number of visitors to the school have recently commented in surprise at what the students are wearing. Governors have agreed with Dr Gilbert that the changes are needed to reflect the new school ethos (please see our website) and Dr Gilbert’s ABC’s.

We hope that the decision will be popular with everyone. Dr Gilbert will be providing greater detail next term about the blazer and its amazing secrets and practicality and will be giving students an opportunity to get involved in expressing their creativity in tie design! Parents, through the focus group and parent drop-in sessions, will have an opportunity to advise us on the roll-out of the new uniform.

We hope that students will be proud to wear the smart new uniform and that it will create a unified, recognisable Bradfield look.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah J. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Deborah Eaton
Chair of Governors