What does subscription fee include?

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Religious beliefs are personal. Sometimes it is easy to spot a religious person, as they may wear something, carry something or style themselves in a way that expresses their religious belief; a cross, a hat, a hair style, jewellery, special clothing or symbols. Sometimes people don’t show their religion at all from the outside.

Individual Activity (2-3 mins)
Do these people have religious beliefs or not? How do you know?
Should you be allowed to refuse school uniform if it conflicts with your beliefs?
Learning objectives for today

1. To understand why having a belief might mean a student can’t wear the normal school uniform.

1. To evaluate situations in which students feel they have been discriminated against on religious grounds.

Keywords

• **Discrimination** – treating someone or a group of people in an unjust or unfair way because of their race, religion, gender or sex.

• **Belief** – an acceptance that something exists or is true, usually a religion.
Issues to consider

• Why are we talking about this?
• Special treatment or respect?
• Religious clothing or fashion statement?
• Design your own policy
• Aspire to know more . . .
• Vote!
Why are we talking about this?

1. Some Headteachers think that **having a uniform is a good thing**. Here’s why:
   - It keeps students focused on their learning, not their looks
   - It reduces peer pressure to dress or look a certain way
   - It makes students feel pride at being part of a community
   - It helps pupils and staff treat students equally by not judging them

   'No regrets': Headteacher stands by decision to send home pupils with wrong school uniform EVERY DAY this week

2. But some parents think the **rules on uniform go way too far**. This has been in the headlines a lot recently...

   Do we really have to be so strict about school uniform?

   Discriminate: If you discriminate against someone you are purposefully treating them differently because of their race, religion or gender.

   **Pair discussion (1-2 mins)**
   Do you agree with these reasons for uniform being a good thing?
Why are we talking about this?

Some religions and cultures require their followers to have a certain **dress code** or to carry/wear certain items.

Rules about school uniform **must not discriminate** against anyone because of their religious or cultural beliefs.

- Religious jewellery
- Heels
- Dreadlocks
- Coloured hair

S&C: What counts as a religious or cultural belief?

Pair activity (2-4 mins)

You are a Headteacher. Which of these would you allow and why? Write down the item followed by the reason.

- Turban
- Nail varnish
- Jewellery
- Hijabs
Issues to consider

• Why are we talking about this?

• **Special treatment or respect?**

• Religious statement or fashion statement?

• Design your own policy

• Aspire to know more . . .

• Vote!
1. In his religion, Rastafarian, people grow their hair in dreadlocks because they believe that’s how the lord had his hair.

2. Hair cannot grow beyond your collar.
**Special treatment or respect?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chikezea</th>
<th>Headteacher</th>
<th>Chikezea's mum</th>
<th>Pupils at the school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t want to cut off my dreadlocks as it’s part of my religion. My brothers and sisters have them.</td>
<td>I can’t give Chikezea special treatment. He needs to follow the rules like everyone else, otherwise other students will try similar things.</td>
<td>I think that asking Chikezea to get rid of his dreadlocks is religious discrimination. It is disrespectful.</td>
<td>We disagree on what should happen with Chikezea. Some of us think he should have to have the same hairstyle as us because it’s not fair!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group role play (5-10 mins)**

In groups of 4, take on one character each & read their opinion.  
1) Prepare a 30 sec speech to give to your group about your opinion.  
2) Give your speeches.  
3) Decide who was the most convincing.
Special treatment or respect?

Group debate (4-8 mins)
Pick the statement you most agree with and justify why to your group. Make sure you can answer the counter question in the grey box.

1. Students can wear whatever they want to wherever they want whether it is a religious item or not. It is their choice.

   What would happen at school if everyone could wear whatever they wanted?

2. Only students with religious beliefs can wear clothing that is not in the school rules, but they must prove they are religious first.

   How would someone feel if they had to prove their religion?

3. For religious and non religious students, clothing should be exactly the same. Students can express their religion at home.

   Might this make some religious people feel uncomfortable?

S&C: Can you write your own statement?
Issues to consider

• Why are we talking about this?
• Special treatment or respect?
• Religious clothing or fashion statement?
• Design your own policy
• Aspire to know more . . .
• Vote!
When you ban something as a Headteacher, you can end up in the headlines!

Imagine you are a Headteacher. A student comes in to school wearing a cloak and a light-saber because they follow the Jedi religion.

Pair Activity (4-8 mins)
If this happens, you may think about asking a student to prove their religion. Write a list of ways they could do this.

'Sno regrets': Headteacher stands by decision to send home pupils with wrong school uniform EVERY DAY this week

S&C: Do you think people would be happy to prove their religion?
Religious clothing or fashion statement?

It is hard to make rules about uniform that don’t cause upset.

Class Activity (3-6mins)
Where do you draw the line? Decide where your views sit on the line between the two extremes and put a Post-It there. Before you do it ask yourself the questions in the grey boxes.

“Everyone should be able to wear whatever they like to school, whether it is for religious purposes or not so that they can feel respected”

“Everyone, no matter their religion, must follow exactly the same uniform policy so that pupils are treated exactly the same”

Hair - coloured? Dreaded? Same length?

Headgear - religious only? School colours? patterned or banned?

Jewellery - religious only, none or any?
Issues to consider

• Why are we talking about this?
• Special treatment or respect?
• Religious statement or fashion statement?
• **Design your own policy**
• Aspire to know more
• Vote!
Design your own uniform policy

Individual Activity (4-8 mins) Imagine you are a Headteacher at a school with many different religious groups. Write bullet points to make your own school uniform policy.

Think about:

Will you have a uniform?

How will you make sure there is no discrimination?

Will you allow jewellery and makeup?

Are some hairstyles banned? How will you know if it’s a religious hairstyle?

Does religious clothing, headgear or jewellery need to be a certain colour or size?
Aspire to know more…

Learn more: Human Rights Lawyer

Summary:
If you are interested in defending people who have been treated badly and getting justice for people who may not be able to stand up for themselves in court, this exciting and challenging job is for you!

Responsibilities:
• Interview witnesses
• Advocate human rights in the media
• Collect evidence
• Draft legal documents to use in court
• Speak to the media and attend interviews
• Defend your client

Requirements:
• There are undergrad law degrees but anyone with a good degree can go on to complete a 2-year law conversion.
• You then need to spend two more years training in a firm to become fully qualified.

You could present your case in the European Court of Human Rights

It is not only squabbles over school uniform that bring up the issue of discrimination. Unfortunately, many people are treated unfairly because of their race, religion or their gender at some point in their life. Being a human rights’ lawyer means you can fight for people who have had their rights violated and defend them in international and national courts.

Learn more:
Human Rights Lawyer

Click the image to watch a video

http://viewpure.com/-S1oiUWsebw?start=0&end=120

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Should you be allowed to refuse school uniform if it conflicts with your beliefs?

No

**NO**

- School uniform exists for many positive reasons and no one should be exempt from having to wear it.
- A religious person doesn’t need to wear their religious items to school when they can wear them at home.
- If a school allows a student to wear religious clothing, this will encourage other students to try to wear different things to school and break the rules.
- Ensuring all students wear the same uniform regardless of their religion is not discrimination because uniform is designed so that everyone can be treated equally.
Everyone can only be treated equally if they feel free to express themselves including their religion, through what they wear.

Exceptions in school uniform should be allowed for students who want to show their religion by wearing something or styling themselves a certain way.

It is discrimination to ask a student to keep their religious clothing out of school and only in the home.

Other students in the school will not have a problem with religious students being allowed to wear religious clothing or carry religious items.
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