

Our Ref: HTSA/parental-ltr/BRE/JOD

Date: 24th April 2013

Dear Parent/Carer*

I am writing to you to stress our expectations regarding uniform and, in particular, hairstyles. I apologise to the vast majority of parents who might wonder why I am sending yet another reminder.

Unfortunately, every term we return to find that a very, very small number of students have chosen to have inappropriate hair styles or colours over the school holiday period. Over the past year or so we have been very clear about what is accepted at Ruskin and what isn't. We have communicated this widely and we give regular, timely reminders over and over again. This is done via Headteacher letters to parents, through the school planner and through regular assemblies. I am absolutely sure that every student in this school knows what is and isn't allowed. Guidance is also posted on our school website. Therefore, this means that where a hairstyle is not acceptable then students are deliberately choosing to flout the rules of our school. Again, I must stress that this is a tiny percentage of our school population.

Our standards are clear. Hair must be one, natural colour. This means false reds and purples are not acceptable because they are not natural shades.

Hair length should be no shorter than a grade 3 at any point on the head. So if a student has a graded haircut, the shortest it can be anywhere is a grade 3. This is a recognised prompt for the hairdresser and students should make this clear when they have it cut. Hair styles should not have any kind of line or pattern drawn in.

A shaved or part shaved eyebrow is not acceptable.

We have tried to be as reasonable as we can with regards to what is and isn't acceptable, whilst still allowing students to have some individuality.

I understand that some parents might ask how a haircut can impact on learning. My response to this is clear: Having 'rules' makes life easier for everyone and it creates a safe environment. Avoiding extremes of hairstyle means that all students look smart and professional and this impacts positively on the reputation of the school and the students. If our school reputation is good, students are more likely to get college or work placements in future. Having rules means that boundaries are in place and it teaches students that life, and work, involves boundaries for all of us.

I would like to stress that all parents/carers and students are very aware of the expectations. Therefore, from this point if a student chooses to have an inappropriate hairstyle either **with or without the permission of the parent** then there will be no compromise. Students will remain off timetable until the hair grows back or is recoloured in line with our school policy. Persistent issues will result in exclusion because this is just deliberate defiance.

Over 95% of our school population will not be affected in any way by this. For the remainder, this is a final reminder. Having to deal with situations like this is a waste of our time and it is taking resources away from the rest of the school population.

Thank you for reading this letter and for your support.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely



E Brett (Mrs)
Headteacher

* **Please note:** the term *parent* will be used to denote *parent/carers* throughout the main body of this letter.