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CIRCULAR

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Dear Parents,

Recently, we have observed a decline in students adhering to the school's uniform and appearance guidelines as detailed in the school diary. This includes unruly overgrown hair, untidy uniforms and shoes, nose piercings, multiple ear piercings, coloured hair, the wearing of bindis, and nail polish, among many other things. Some may perceive the enforcement of these regulations as trivial, but their significance goes much deeper. There are several reasons why our school, like most others, has a specific uniform and general appearance policy.

The most obvious importance of the school uniform is that it helps reduce social and economic differences among students, fostering a sense of **equality** by minimizing visible differences in attire. Adhering to these rules instils a **sense of responsibility and discipline**, as students learn to follow set guidelines and standards. It creates a sense of belonging and community, **promoting school identity, unity, and pride** in the institution. Moreover, it **minimizes distractions** related to fashion trends or peer pressure, allowing students to focus on their studies. Uniforms make it easier to identify students on campus and during school events, **enhancing security** by making outsiders more recognizable. A uniform and general appearance policy often **promotes modesty and a professional appearance**, reflecting the values of the school while **preparing students for future professional environments**. It contributes to creating a **structured and orderly school environment**, which can **positively affect student behaviour and academic performance**.

A question was recently raised by a student, a very valid one I think. She asked, "If the school is strict about certain aspects, such as prohibiting students from wearing bindis, religious jewellery such as rings, chains or bracelets, second or third ear piercings, nose piercings or any items not permitted by the school, why is an exception being made for students who choose to wear the hijab? She was satisfied when it was explained to her that just as students are expected to adhere to school rules and regulations, the school is also obligated to respect and comply with the laws of the Kingdom of Bahrain, a nation that holds us expatriates in high regard and supports our freedom to practice our cultural and religious beliefs. However, while expressing one's culture or individuality through clothing or accessories is certainly important, in a large school like ours, we have established rules and regulations to ensure smooth operation with minimal disruptions. To maintain fairness, we cannot permit some students to express their individuality or culture in one way while restricting others from doing so in another. As a result, we have adopted a blanket policy that applies to everyone. There are specific days when students are encouraged to showcase their individuality or cultural heritage, but allowing this on a daily basis would be logistically challenging and lead to unnecessary complications. Please understand that the restrictions on items like bindis and jewellery, religious or otherwise, are not intended to undermine students' individuality nor their religious and cultural backgrounds. Instead, they are aimed at creating a safe, inclusive, and focused educational environment where every student can thrive.

We believe that a student's worth and individuality are best expressed through their actions, attitudes, and achievements rather than through physical adornments. Our focus is on developing character traits such as kindness, respect, and integrity, which are far more important than any accessory. When students wear uniforms without additional accessories, it creates an atmosphere where they are more likely to engage with one another based on their personalities, interests, and abilities rather than their attire. This promotes collaboration and mutual respect among students.

We will continue to enforce the rules and regulations of the school; however, they can only be upheld with the support of parents. Admission to the school is granted with the understanding that both parents and students agree to follow the school's rules and regulations. We encourage parents to collaborate with the school on these matters to ensure the best outcomes for our students. Your partnership is essential in creating a positive and cohesive school environment.

Principal