



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MEDIA RELEASE

July 6, 2023

Dear Editor / Head of Department,

Introduction of the National School Hair Code

The Ministry of Education (MOE) continues to collaborate and engage with stakeholders in the education system on updates and upgrades in school operations and policies to improve the effectiveness of the educational sector. The MOE is cognizant of the fact that educational environment is a dynamic one, which requires, from time to time, adjustments to policies to keep pace with accepted changes in societal norms, values and beliefs. One such policy currently under discussion relates to student hair codes.

The MOE has taken note of the national discourse surrounding this issue, and has assessed our current policy arrangements, as well as recent global and regional responses to calls for reform in this area.

On Thursday, 6th July, 2023, the MOE held discussions with the Tobago House of Assembly (THA), Denominational Boards, National Principals' Associations, the National Parent Teachers Association (NPTA), Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association (TTUTA) and other education stakeholders on a draft National Hair Code for Trinidad and Tobago.

On the basis of the research done and discussions held, The National School Code of Conduct will be amended to include a National School Hair Code, which will provide broad guidelines for Principals in the development of individual School Hair Rules.

Effective Academic Year 2023/24, the following National School Hair Code will be implemented:

National School Hair Code

1. Students shall maintain neat and clean hair at all times.
2. Hair that crosses shoulder length should be tied back at all times for safety reasons.
3. Locs, twists, plaits, afros, cornrows, shall be allowed for all students, in compliance with individual School Hair Rules.
4. Female students shall be allowed to wear hair extensions, including weaves and braids, in compliance with individual School Hair Rules.



5. Wigs and dyed or coloured hair for students are not allowed. In exceptional cases, as determined by the School Principal, approval may be granted to students.
6. Hairstyles that obstruct the normal view of others are not allowed, except for religious reasons.
7. Eyebrow markings and eyelash extensions are not allowed.
8. Haircut parting designs should be simple. Intricate designs are not allowed.
9. Hair ornaments should be in compliance with individual School Hair Rules.

School Hair Rules

Individual schools are mandated to form a committee to determine their School Hair Rules, which must align with the National School Hair Code. This committee will comprise representatives of students, staff and parents.

Schools should formulate their School Hair Rules by October 2023, a copy of which must be submitted to the line School Supervisor before they are effected.

All parents and students should be sensitized by the school's administration about the implementation of the School Hair Rules before they are effected.

During the intervening period between the coming into force of the National School Hair Code and the School Hair Rules of an individual school, no student should be penalized on the basis of a hairstyle, once they are in conformity with the National School Hair Code.

The relevant Circular Memoranda will be sent to Principals regarding these matters.

END

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