

## LOWER SCHOOL UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE INFORMATION 2023-2024

MacLaren students wear a simple, attractive uniform for several reasons, including the following:

- Uniforms help to create a school identity and cohesive school culture;
- Uniforms lend an air of dignity and professionalism to the work of school;
- Uniforms cut down on distraction and social pressure around clothing;
- Uniforms promote school safety by making visitors easier to identify; and
- Uniforms make life easier for students and families.

In addition, MacLaren students follow specific guidelines for being in dress code as it pertains to hair, jewelry, makeup, and the like. Lower School students are expected to be in dress code and in uniform at all times during the school day. Uniforms should be of an appropriate size and fit, and must be worn as intended by the policy.

We do not intend to engage in disputes with students or their parents over the dress code. Ultimately, we ask parents to recognize that by sending their children to Thomas MacLaren School they are agreeing to partner with the school in keeping their child in dress code. Particularly for the youngest students, who have very little say over what they wear to school, we ask parents and families to support the school by purchasing clothing and accessories that help their child to follow the spirit of the dress code. Since we cannot plan for all vagaries and nuances of children's attire, whether or not a particular garment or piece of jewelry is "in dress code" is ultimately at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

### **A. Dress Code**

#### **Hair**

All students' hair must be groomed and kempt. Shaved heads are not permitted; this includes undercuts or severe fades. The difference in lengths of hair may be no more than 2 inches. Students' hair must be a single natural color (natural-colored highlights are acceptable), and their hairstyle cannot be strikingly conspicuous or extreme. If bangs are worn, they must be above the eyes. The Dean or the Head of School (or his or her designee) will make final decisions regarding hair.

Boys – Boys' hair cannot extend over the shirt collar or over the ears on the sides. Shaggy hair is prohibited.

Girls – No hair extensions such as feathers or streaks of color are allowed. Barrettes, bows, headbands, and other hair ornaments should be simple and plain; they cannot be too large or distracting. (Animal-ear headbands, for example, are not allowed.) No bandanas may be worn, even as headbands.

(MacLaren does not discriminate on the basis of race, and as such will allow students to wear hairstyles that commonly or historically associated with their particular race or ethnicity.)

### **Jewelry/Piercings/Tattoos**

All jewelry must be simple and in good taste. No object that has a purpose other than jewelry (i.e., animal chains or collars, safety pins, etc.) may be worn as jewelry.

Girls – Girls may wear one pair of post/stud earrings. Girls may wear one wrist bracelet and one small necklace. Bracelet may not be a rubber wristband. Pendants should not be large or elaborate; they should be not much larger than an inch or so in length, width, or diameter. No chokers, shells, or large or elaborate chain-link may be worn. No anklets may be worn.

Boys – Bracelets, earrings, neck chains and other jewelry are not allowed for boys.

Students may appeal to the Dean of Students for permission to wear items of religious significance, but if physically possible, such items should be worn underneath the clothing.

No other visible piercing is allowed for girls, and no visible piercing is allowed for boys. Visible tattoos, temporary or permanent, are prohibited for all students. This prohibition includes drawings on the skin.

### **Makeup/Fingernails/Nail polish**

No makeup is permitted at the Lower School level.

Boys – Nail polish is not allowed for boys.

Girls – Nail polish should be painted in a manner that is appropriate for school. Polish should not be neon-bright, overtly sparkly, black, or patterned or decorated (e.g., polka-dotted, flowers, stripes, etc.). Moreover, fingernails all need to have the same color. The judgment of the appropriateness of nail polish color will be determined by the Dean or his or her designee. As all students participate in P.E. every day, nails should be kept short.

### **Sunglasses and Hats**

Sunglasses are not to be worn within the school building during school hours, with the exception of prescription glasses that change in the light. Hats (caps, visors, beanies, bandanas, etc.) may not be worn except on designated days.

When in doubt, a student should seek the counsel of the appropriate classroom teacher or Dean of Students for guidance regarding the dress code. A teacher or Dean may seek the Head of School's decision regarding a judgment in dress; the Head of School's decision is considered final.

### **Backpacks and Accessories**

Backpacks, lunch boxes, pencil boxes, etc., should follow the spirit of the dress code. We ask that parents not purchase accessories that feature characters from popular culture, particularly those that promote violence.

### **Outerwear**

**Students must purchase either a MacLaren sweater or fleece; the sweater is available through French Toast; each year the school sends out information on the current fleece vendor.** These are also available at a substantial discount from the retail prices at used uniform sales. Students may not wear non-MacLaren outerwear at school except at designated times, and the building is sometimes too cold to go without layers.

### **B. Lower School Uniform**

**Uniform Vendor: French Toast**

**1-800-FRENCHTOAST     [www.frenchtoast.com](http://www.frenchtoast.com)**

The items that may only be purchased through French Toast are listed below with an asterisk. The other items listed may be purchased through French Toast if you choose, or you may purchase

them through another vendor/store of your choice, as long as they adhere to the guidelines set forth below. Many items may be purchased at Land's End, but please note that shirts, skirts, sweaters and fleeces may not be purchased there.

To access our school page at French Toast, go to [www.frenchtoast.com](http://www.frenchtoast.com). Click the "Shop by School" tab and where it says "Enter School Code," type in "QS5SFIW," and press Enter. This will take you to our school's page. Whenever you order from French Toast, please use this code and French Toast will donate a percentage of our sales back to the school.

**\*Shirt: Must be purchased through French Toast**

- **Grades K-5:** gray pique polo shirt with "Thomas MacLaren" stitching, short-sleeved or long-sleeved.

**Undershirt**

- Plain white t-shirts may be worn underneath the uniform shirts. (No turtlenecks or long-sleeved shirts under short-sleeved polos.)

**Pants**

- All pants must be navy straight-leg pants, flat-front or pleated. No logo.
- Pant length must be just below the ankle with a simple hem, no cuff.
- No cargo pants. No decorations, no jean-like material. No external/patch pockets.
- Pants must fit appropriately for school and may not be worn below the hips.

**Shorts**

- All shorts must be navy, pleated or flat front walking/Bermuda shorts, no logo.
- Inseam should not go past the top of the knee.
- No cargo shorts; no jean-like material.

**\*Girls: Skirt or jumper must be purchased through French Toast**

- Blue-gold pleated plaid skirt or round-neck pleated plaid jumper. (Jumper will not be in stock until summer 2019)
- Skirt and jumper length must be school- and play-appropriate, ranging from two inches above to two inches below the knee.
- To facilitate ease of play and daily P.E., shorts may be worn beneath a skirt or jumper.

**\*Sweater: Must be purchased through French Toast**

- Navy blue button-down sweater with "Thomas MacLaren" stitching
- Non-approved outerwear will not be permitted unless student is outside.
- *Boys:* Cardigan sweater is v-neck.
- *Girls:* Cardigan sweater is crew neck.

## **Belt**

- Plain brown, black, or navy belt with plain buckle.
- Belts must be worn with all shorts and pants.
- Belts may not have spikes or metal protrusions
- Belts are *required* with pants and shorts.
- Belts are *optional* for kindergarten students.

**Fleece: Navy blue fleeces are available during specified times of the year. Parents will be notified when they are available for purchase. Grey MacLaren hooded sweatshirts are spirit wear and are not part of the uniform.**

- Navy blue fleece with “Thomas MacLaren” logo.
- Non-approved outerwear is not permitted unless student is outside.

## **Shoes**

- Because Lower School students have P.E. every day, athletic/tennis shoes must be worn every day. Tennis shoes must be appropriate to the school environment.
- Plain, all-navy, all-white, or all-black tennis shoes.
- White or black soles.
- Top of shoe must be all one color.
- If shoes have a logo, the logo must be white, black, or navy; no other accent colors are permitted.
- High-tops, boots, dress shoes, light-up shoes, sequins, or shoes with characters, are not permitted.
- Students who walk to school in inclement weather may be given special permission to wear boots to school, but must bring a pair of tennis shoes to wear in the building.
- The Dean or the Head of School (or his or her designee) will make final decisions regarding footwear.

## **Socks/Tights/Leggings**

- Students must wear socks at all times. Socks must be in a single, solid color: white, gray, navy, or black.
- *Girls*: Full-length tights and ankle-length leggings may be worn. All tights and leggings must be in a single, solid color: white, gray, or navy. Leggings do not replace pants.
- Socks, tights, and leggings should not be patterned; socks may not have a logo.
- All socks must go above the ankle.