

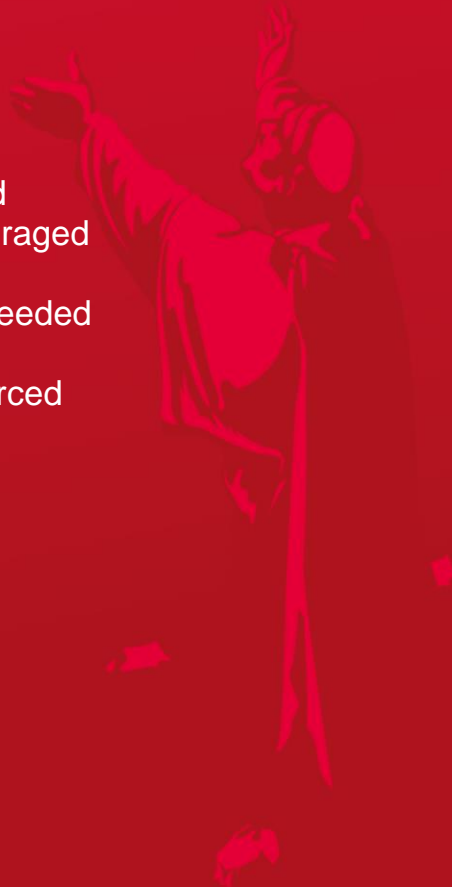


# School Uniform Policy

Date: December 2024

Where the: 'Word of God, and the service and strength of St. Stephen, guides our steps and leads us in learning.'

We are a community where:  
beauty and trust are treasured,  
justice and tolerance are promoted  
compassion and charity are encouraged  
goodwill and loyalty are cherished  
resilience and determination are needed  
forgiveness and love are required  
friendliness and respect are reinforced  
faith and Spirit are shared.



Date reviewed: December 2024

Date of next review: December 2025



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## Statement of intent

St Stephen's Catholic Primary School believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital for:

- Promoting the ethos of a school.
- Providing a sense of belonging and identity.
- Setting an appropriate tone for education.

For the purposes of this policy, **“uniform”** includes the following elements of pupils' appearance:

- Clothing, including the school uniform itself, variations of the school uniform such as PE kits, and other clothing worn at school, e.g. non-uniform.
- Hairstyles and headwear.
- Jewellery and other accessories.
- Cosmetics such as makeup and nail polish.

This policy lays out the measures the school has taken to ensure a consistent, fair and inclusive uniform policy, and to implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all pupils, is affordable, and provides the best value for money for both the school and pupils' families.

We believe that pupils learn most effectively and achieve their best outcomes when they are comfortable, able to be themselves, and dressed in a way that sets an appropriate tone for education.

In writing and updating this policy, we have sought to:

- Engage with parents and pupils.
- Consider how this policy might affect groups represented in the school, especially those who share protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Consider how comfortable the uniform will be for pupils.
- Take a sensible approach to allow for exceptions to be made, e.g. during adverse weather.
- Ensure that the uniform is suitable and safe for pupils who walk or cycle to school.
- Choose a PE kit which is practical, comfortable, appropriate to the activity involved and affordable.
- Ensure the policy is easy to access and understand.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021
- DfE (2021) 'Cost of school uniforms'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2024) 'School uniforms: guidance for schools'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) 'Preventing hair discrimination in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the headteacher and school community, a practical and smart school uniform that accurately reflects the school's vision and values.
- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible and inclusive, and does not disadvantage any pupil by virtue of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of parents, pupils and the wider school community regarding changes to the school's uniform.
- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible and affordable.
- Demonstrating how best value for money has been achieved in the uniform policy.
- Ensuring compliance with the DfE's '[Cost of school uniforms](#)' guidance.
- Processing and approving all eligible School Uniform Assistance Application Forms.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Enforcing the school's uniform on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring that teachers understand this policy and what to do if a pupil is in breach of the policy.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of the school community in regard to the school's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.
- Providing pupils with an exemption letter as appropriate, e.g. for a pupil who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting top.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Ensuring that pupils dress in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Disciplining pupils who are in breach of this policy.
- Ensuring that pupils understand why having a consistent and practical school uniform is important, e.g. school identity.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct school uniform as detailed in this policy.
- Informing the headteacher if their child requires a more relaxed uniform policy for a period of time, including why.
- Ensuring that their child's uniform is clean, presentable and the correct size.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Wearing the correct uniform at all times, unless the headteacher has granted an exemption.
- Looking after their uniform as appropriate.
- Understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to the school, e.g. school identity and community.

### **3. Cost principles**

The school will develop its uniform policy in relation to the following starting principles:

- The school will seek to ensure that the uniform is affordable. In so doing, the school will consider the total cost of school uniforms, taking into account all items of uniform or clothing parents will need to provide while their child is at the school.
- The school will seek to keep the use of branded items to a minimum.
- The school will seek to ensure that uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money, including the quality and durability of the garment.
- The school will seek to ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms will be published on the school's website.

#### **Principles in practice**

In accordance with the 'School Admissions Code', the headteacher will ensure that the school's uniform requirements do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

The school will assess the overall cost implications of its uniform policy regularly, including prior to making any changes to the school uniform. When evaluating whether costs are reasonable and proportionate, the school will take into account the opinions and situations of:

- Economically disadvantaged parents.
- Parents with multiple children who are, or will be in the future, pupils at the school.
- Parents of younger children, as they are likely to grow quickly and require new sets of uniform more frequently.

- Parents of pupils with protected characteristics that may impact their ability to access the uniform.
- LAC and PLAC.

The school will evaluate the cost of its uniform based on the overall collection of uniform items that parents would need to purchase for a pupil, rather than on the cost effectiveness of individual items; this will include consideration of the fact that parents will need to purchase multiples of certain items, e.g. shirts and socks, to ensure their child can come to school in clean uniform every day.

The school will keep variations in school uniform for different groups of pupils, e.g. year group-specific items or house colours, to a minimum to ensure that pupils can get the most wear out of their uniform and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings.

The school will keep branded uniform items to a minimal level that is reasonable for all members of the school community. The school defines a branded uniform item as any item of clothing that cannot be purchased at a range of retailers, e.g. supermarkets, due to the item's logo, colour, design, fabric or other unique element. Where the school requires an item of branded clothing, it will assess how prices can be kept as low as possible and put measures in place to facilitate this. This may include:

- Offering sew- or iron-on logo patches for blazers and jumpers that can be bought at non-specialist retailers, instead of requiring specific branded jumpers.
- Ensuring branded items are longer-lasting and unlikely to be grown out of quickly, e.g. ties.
- Making donated second-hand uniform available for purchase at a lower price.

The school will meet the DfE's requirements and recommendations on costs and value for money. Care will be taken to ensure that school uniform is affordable for all current and prospective pupils, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.

The school will work with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated will be passed to parents where possible. The school will not enter into exclusive single-supplier contracts or cash-back arrangements. More information on supplier processes can be found in the ['School uniform supplier'](#) section of this policy.

The school will not make frequent changes to uniform requirements and will take the views of parents and pupils into account when considering any changes.

## **4. Equality principles**

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any pupil very seriously.

In line with the above, the school will aim to ensure that its uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all pupils can access a school uniform which is comfortable, suitable for their needs, and reflects who they are, while avoiding any direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics or socio-economic status.

The school will ensure that parents and pupils are consulted over any changes to school uniform, and that, where appropriate and with pupils' consent, views and advice are sought specifically from pupils, and parents of pupils, who:

- Are transgender or non-binary.
- Are of a religious or cultural background that has specific dress requirements.
- Have SEND and/or sensory needs.

Parents' concerns and requests regarding school uniform and amendments to it are handled on a case-by-case basis by the headteacher and governing board, and always in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Information on how the school ensures its uniform policy does not discriminate against pupils with specific protected characteristics is outlined below.

### **Gender**

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain gender, the school will ensure that the cost of uniform is as equal in price as possible across items for all genders.

This includes:

- Adhering to the procedures laid out in the '[Cost principles](#)' section of this policy.
- Not directly requiring pupils of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by requiring female pupils to buy both trousers and skirts.
- Not indirectly requiring pupils of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by offering football in PE to only male pupils and requiring they buy football boots to participate.
- Not holding pupils of different genders to different uniform standards, e.g. by banning certain hairstyles for only one gender.

The school will implement a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that pupils will not be required to wear specific items based on their gender, and may wear any of the uniform items listed in the '[School uniform](#)' section of this policy regardless of the legal sex recorded on the school's records.

### **Religion and belief**

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain religion, belief or culture, the school will ensure that there is flexibility to allow pupils to present themselves in a way that adheres to their dress requirements as far as possible, within the school's uniform policy.

The school will endeavour to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, the needs and rights of individual pupils will be weighed against any health and safety concerns appropriate to the circumstances, e.g. if safety headgear needs to be worn.

### **Race**

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain race, the school will ensure that its uniform policy does not constitute unlawful indirect discrimination through blanket rules. This includes:

- Not banning hairstyles related to a pupil's ethnic origin, e.g. natural Afro hairstyles.
- Not banning hairstyles worn because of cultural, family and social customs, e.g. cornrows.
- Not banning head coverings related to a pupil's culture or ethnic origin, e.g. African heritage head wraps.

The school will follow the good practice guidance provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission on ['Preventing hair discrimination in schools'](#).

### **SEND and medical conditions**

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils with SEND or medical conditions, the school will ensure its uniform policy takes into account the needs of these pupils. This includes:

- Ensuring the school uniform uses soft, stretchy fabrics and avoids intricate buttons or hard seams.
- Allowing variations to the standard uniform for pupils whose medical conditions may impact how they dress, e.g. pupils with casts who require loose-fitting clothing or pupils with hair loss-related conditions who wish to wear head coverings.

Where the needs of these pupils cannot be met in the standard uniform policy, individual adaptations to the uniform will be considered and permitted wherever possible.

The school will ensure that it works with a supplier that acts in accordance with the school's values and principles on equality and inclusion.

## **5. Complaints and challenges**

The school will endeavour to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The school will refer individuals who wish to complain to the Complaints Procedures Policy and request that they follow the procedures outlined therein.

When a complaint is received, the school will work with the complainant to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

The school has an agreed procedure in place with its uniform supplier to deal with complaints about the supply and quality of uniforms.

In considering a complaint, parents should be aware that teachers can sanction pupils for breaching the school's rules on appearance or uniform. The school expects this to be carried out in accordance with the school's published behaviour policy. The school aims to deal with pupil non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

## **6. School uniform supplier**

Our current school uniform supplier is:

Tots to Teams Limited



Unit 10B, Airport Industrial Estate  
Kingston Park  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
NE3 2EF  
01912715454

The school will retender the uniform contract every five years, whether changes to the uniform are made or not. The governing board will be able to demonstrate how uniform is procured at the best value for money. The headteacher will work to ensure that the items are procured as cheaply as possible without compromising on the quality, e.g. by requesting standard-style items from the supplier rather than more intricate and unique designs.

The school does not sign contracts with suppliers before requesting visualisations of proposed uniform, as well as fabric samples.

## **7. Finding and consulting suppliers**

If the school is considering changing its suppliers and seeks a list of available suppliers, it will consider the following options:

- Consulting an industry body
- Researching local suppliers
- Consulting with other schools and networks
- Having informal discussions with potential suppliers to help determine the school's own needs

If the school prepares to request bids from potential suppliers, it will consider the following elements:

- What products parents will need
- Existing contractual commitments
- Length of tender process
- The school's evaluation process

## **8. Template documents**

Schools will use the DfE's '[Procuring uniform supplies](#)' template documents to ensure that they undergo the procurement process correctly. The templates consist of an invitation to tender, a request for quotation, and a pricing schedule.

Schools will use the invitation to tender template to ask questions of suppliers. Schools will then use the pricing schedule to ask suppliers to submit their prices. Full instructions on how to use the templates are included in each of the documents.

## 9. Uniform assistance

The school holds second-hand school uniforms in the school office for parents to access; access to these uniforms is available upon request or via the school's platform for ordering donated items (Uniformd). Parents are invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it.

## 10. Non-compliance

Staff members are permitted to discipline pupils for breaching this policy, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher, or a person authorised by the headteacher, is permitted to ask a pupil to briefly go home to remedy breaches to the school's uniform.

When deciding whether to allow a pupil to return home, the school considers the pupil's age and vulnerability, the length of time it will take, and the availability of the pupil's parents. Where a pupil has been sent home to rectify uniform breaches, the absence is recorded as 'authorised'.

If a pupil repeatedly breaches uniform rules, or takes longer than necessary to rectify the absence, the absence is counted as 'unauthorised'.

Parents will be notified in all cases.

## 11. School uniform

### School colours

Our school colours are as follows:

Red jumper/cardigan, blue polo shirt, grey skirt or trousers and practical black school shoes.

### Clothing

The school uniform is as follows:

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire	Cost per item from school supplier
Regular school uniform				
Red sweatshirt or red cardigan	Required	Branded item available but not required	Branded sweatshirt and cardigan available from school supplier and second hand from school office. Red sweatshirt or cardigan can be bought from regular retailers.	£9.60/£10.50

Blue polo shirt	Required	Branded item available but not required	Available from school supplier, second hand from school office and available from regular retailers.	£8.20
Grey or black trousers or grey skirt	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers.	Various dependent on retailer
Sensible, plain black shoes	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers.	Various dependent on retailer
<b>PE kit</b>				
Red t-shirt	Required	Branded item available but not required	Available from school supplier, second hand from school office and available from regular retailers.	£6.45
Plain black shorts	Optional	No branding	Available from school supplier, second hand from school office and available from regular retailers.	£4.20-£5.34
Black tracksuit bottoms	Optional	No branding	Available from school supplier, second hand from school office and available from regular retailers.	£12.95
Red fleece	Optional	Branded item available but not required	Available from school supplier, second hand from school office and available from regular retailers.	£16.00
<b>Accessories</b>				

School Reading Folder	Optional	School logo	Available from school supplier.	£7.02
School P.E bag	Optional	School logo	Available from school supplier.	£4.74
School backpack	Optional	School logo	Available from school supplier.	£10.50

Trainers are not considered suitable footwear. High heels are not permitted; however, block heels of no more than 3cm can be worn.

Skirts must be knee-length. Black jeans are not permitted.

Parents who do not wish to buy the optional branded PE kit must acquire a PE kit meeting the following criteria:

- Plain T-shirt with no branding or logos from professional sports teams
- Plain shorts or tracksuit bottoms with no branding or logos from professional sports teams
- Suitable trainers
- Suitable sports footwear, e.g. football boots

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child brings their PE kit to school when needed.

### **Jewellery**

Permitted jewellery that may be worn is:

- A smart and sensible wrist watch.

Jewellery is the responsibility of the pupil and not the school. Lost or damaged items will not be refunded. All jewellery must be removed during practical lessons, including PE lessons and science experiments.

**Jewellery (excluding watches) must not be worn to school - this includes earrings. We specifically request that children do not get their ears pierced during the school year. Any child who has had their ears pierced and is unable to remove them because of the 6-week healing process must use a plaster to cover their studs during P.E. lessons. Plasters should be provided by parents. Should a child require any form of assistance with earrings, school will contact parents, requesting that they come in and provide it. In the event of any accident, which involves the wearing of earrings, the school will not be held responsible in any way.**

### **School bag**

Pupils must use an appropriately sized waterproof bag to carry their books and equipment. It should hold A4-sized work books comfortably without causing any damage.

School bags featuring inappropriate images, slogans or phrases are not permitted.

The school encourages pupils to bring non-valuable bags to school. The school will not be liable for lost or damaged school bags.

### **Hairstyles**

The school reserves the right to make a judgement on where pupils' hairstyles or hair colours are inappropriate for the school environment; however, will ensure that any such judgements do not discriminate against any pupil by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual pupil's scenario will be taken into account where any judgements on appropriateness are to be made, and parents will always have the freedom to complain via the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Pupils with long hair must ensure that this does not impede their vision, cover their face or provide a health and safety risk. Long hair must be tied up during practical lessons, e.g. during PE.

The following hairstyles are not considered appropriate for school:

- Brightly-coloured, dyed hair.
- Headwear with bold patterns or colours.
- Excessive hair accessories.

### **Makeup**

The school rules on makeup are as follows:

- Only light, natural-looking makeup is permitted.
- False nails and nail extensions are not permitted.
- Only clear nail varnish may be worn.
- Temporary tattoos are not permitted.

Pupils wearing excessive makeup are required to remove it or, if appropriate, will be sent home to remove it.

## **12. Adverse weather**

All pupils are required to wear weather-appropriate clothing that covers as much of their skin as possible during adverse weather.

For hot temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Loose-fitting and lightweight shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered necklines.
- Over the knee skirts, shorts or trousers.
- Tops that cover the shoulder area.
- Sunglasses with UV protection when outside, where possible.

Pupils are advised not to wear any jumpers or blazers during heatwaves. If outside during break times, pupils not wearing sun-safe clothing are advised to stay in an area protected from the sun, or spare clothing is provided.

For cold temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Scarfs, gloves, coats and hats when they are outside.
- Warm jumpers that conform to the school's uniform policy.
- Trousers, or thick tights with skirts.

### **13. Labelling**

All pupils' clothing and footwear is clearly labelled with their name.

Any lost clothing is to be taken to the lost property box in the school office. All lost property is retained for one week and is disposed of if it is not collected within this time.

### **14. Monitoring and review**

This policy is reviewed annually by the chair of governors and the headteacher.

The scheduled review date for this policy is December 2025.

The school will engage with parents and pupils when reviewing this policy.

Any subsequent changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff, pupils, parents and other relevant stakeholders.

