

# St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School



## School Uniform Policy

Date reviewed: September 2024

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## **[Updated]** Statement of intent

**[Updated]** St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital for:

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

For the purposes of this policy, “uniform” includes the following elements of children’s 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 children, is affordable, and provides the best value for money for both the school and children’s families.

We believe that children 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.

**[New]** In writing and updating this policy, we have sought to:

- Engage with families and children.
- 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 children.
- 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 children 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 (2021) 'School uniforms'
- 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
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The local 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, inclusive, and does not disadvantage any child because of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of families, children and the wider school community regarding changes to the school's uniform.
- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible and affordable.
- Demonstrating in this policy how best value for money has been achieved.
- 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 rules on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring that teachers understand this policy and what to do if a child 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 local governing board.

- Providing children with an exemption letter as appropriate, e.g. for a child who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting shirt.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that children dress in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Where appropriate to their role, disciplining children who are in breach of this policy.
- Ensuring that children understand why having a consistent and practical school uniform is important, e.g. school identity.

Families are responsible for:

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

Children 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. **[Updated]** Cost principles

**[New]** 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. You can find further information about our school uniform stock that is available, free of cost, to all families and is stored in the school hall.

#### **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 families.
- Families with multiple children who are, or will be in the future, children at the school.
- Families of younger children, as they are likely to grow quickly and require new sets of uniform more frequently.
- Families of children 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 families would need to purchase for a child, rather than on the cost-effectiveness of individual items; this will include consideration of the fact that families 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 children, e.g. year group-specific items or house colours, to a minimum to ensure that children can get the most wear out of their uniform and that families can pass some items down to younger siblings.

Wearing branded uniform items is optional 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:

- 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 families 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 families and children into account when considering any changes.

#### 4. **[Updated]** Equality principles

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any child 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 children 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 families and children are consulted over any changes to school uniform, and that, where appropriate and with children's consent, views and advice are sought specifically from children, and families of children, who:

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

Families 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 children 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 children of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by requiring female children to buy both trousers and skirts.
- Not indirectly requiring children 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 children 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 children 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. Transgender children are supported to access the uniform that best reflects their gender expression in line with the LGBTQ+ Policy.

### **Religion and belief**

To avoid disproportionately impacting children of a certain religion, belief or culture, the school will ensure that there is flexibility to allow children 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 children 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 children 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 children'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 child'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 children. This includes:

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

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

**[New]** 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. **[Updated]** 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.

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

**[New]** In considering a complaint, families should be aware that teachers can sanction children 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 child non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.



## 6. School uniform supplier

The school's current school uniform supplier is: [Emblematic Ltd, Unit 26, North Tyne Ind. Est., Longbenton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 9SZ](#)

The local governing board will ensure that a written contract is in place with the supplier for branded items. The school will retender the uniform contract every five years, whether changes to the uniform are made or not, in line with the Tendering and Procurement Policy.

The local 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 will not sign contracts with suppliers before requesting visualisations and samples of proposed uniform.

## 7. Non-compliance

Staff will be permitted to discipline pupils for breaching this policy, where relevant to their role, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

A family will be contacted to provide an explanation as to why a child is not wearing the appropriate uniform for the day ahead. School may request that the appropriate uniform is brought to school so that the child can change into it for the rest of the school day.

Families will be notified of child's breach of school uniform in all cases.

## 8. School uniform

### Clothing

The school uniform is as follows:

- Green V-neck jumper either with a logo or without.
- White shirt.
- Green tie from Reception Class to year 4, green and yellow tie for year 5 and year 6.
- Grey trousers or skirt.
- Green and white dress, either from our suppliers or elsewhere if you source your own.
- Black shoes.

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

- Plain green T-shirt with no branding or logos from professional sports teams
- Plain black or navy shorts or tracksuit bottoms with no branding or logos from professional sports teams
- Suitable trainers
- Other suitable sports footwear, e.g. football boots, if required

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

### **Jewellery**

The school rules on jewellery are as follows:

- One pair of stud earrings may be worn – no other piercings are permitted.
- A smart and sensible wrist watch may be worn.

Children will be advised that jewellery is their personal responsibility and not that of the school. Lost or damaged items will not be refunded. All jewellery must be removed during practical lessons, including PE lessons and outdoor learning.

### **Bags**

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

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

The school will discourage children from bringing valuable bags to school. The school will not be liable for lost or damaged school bags.

### **Hairstyles and headwear**

The school reserves the right to make a judgement on whether a child's hairstyle, hair colour or headwear is inappropriate for the school environment; however, the school will ensure that any such judgements do not discriminate against any child by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual child'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.

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

### **Makeup and cosmetics**

Children should not come to school wearing makeup.

## **9. Adverse weather**

All children will be advised to wear weather-appropriate clothing.

For hot temperatures, this includes wearing:

- Tops that cover the shoulder area.
- Sunglasses with UV protection when outside.

Children will be advised not to wear any jumpers or coats during heatwaves. If outside during break times, children not wearing sun-safe clothing will be 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 outside.
- Warm jumpers.
- Trousers, or skirts and thick tights.

## 10. Labelling and lost property

Families will be advised to ensure that all children's clothing and footwear is clearly labelled with their name and year group.

We do not keep a lost property box or area in school.

## 11. **[Updated]** Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the chair of our local governing committee and the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2024.

**[New]** The school will engage with families and children when reviewing this policy.

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