St Catherine's

Specialists in Speech, Language and Communication Needs

School - College - Post 19

SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

JUNE 2026

Document Information

Title: SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

Status: New

Revisions: This is a new policy in line with the statutory guidance, which comes into force from September 2026

Review Frequency: Bi-annual

Next Review: June 2028

Throughout this policy St Catherine's School and College are referred to as 'St Catherine's School'

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Set out our approach to requiring a uniform that is of reasonable cost and offers the best value for money for all parents and carers
- Explain how we will avoid discrimination in line with our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010
- Clarify our expectations for school uniform

2. Our school's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include: age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

To avoid discrimination, our school will:

- Avoid listing uniform items based on sex, to give all students the opportunity to wear the uniform they feel most comfortable in
- Make sure that our uniform is a fair price
- Allow all students to have long hair, although we reserve the right to ask that long hair be tied back
- Allow all students to style their hair in a way that is appropriate for school, and makes them feel most comfortable
- Allow students to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons, or if they are experiencing discomfort
- Allow students to wear headscarves and/or other religious garments
- Allow students with sensory or physical needs to make reasonable adaptations to their uniform, depending on their specific needs
- Allow for reasonable adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality by asking students or their parents/carers to get in touch with the Principal, who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis

3. Limiting the cost of school uniform

Our school has a duty to make sure that the uniform we require is affordable, in line with statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on the cost of school uniforms.

We understand that items with distinctive characteristics (such as branded items, or items that need to have a school logo attached or be in a unique fabric or style) cannot be purchased from a wide range of retailers, and that requiring many such items limits parents/carers' ability to shop around for the best price.

We will therefore make sure our uniform:

- Is available at a reasonable cost
- Provides the best value for money for parents and carers

We will do this by:

Following the statutory limits for compulsory branded items of uniform and PE kit to a maximum of:

- 3 or fewer
- Carefully considering whether any items with distinctive characteristics are necessary, and limiting these items where possible
- Limiting compulsory branded items to low-cost and/or long-lasting items
- Avoiding specific requirements for items such as coats, bags and shoes/trainers that students could also wear on non-school days. See more information in section 4.1
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for different year/class/house groups
- Avoiding requiring different branded items for particular times of the year, such as a branded dress in summer and a branded skirt in winter
- Making sure that opportunities to acquire second-hand items in a timely manner are accessible to parents and carers of both current and prospective students, and publishing this information on our website
- Avoiding frequent changes to uniform specifications, and minimising the financial impact on parents/carers of any changes
- Consulting with parents/carers and students on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy, and carefully considering any complaints about uniform in line with the school's complaints policy
- Continuing to review this policy, to ensure the cost of our uniform is reasonable and provides the best value for money

4. Expectations for school uniform

4.1 Our school's uniform

Students in our school provision are required to wear a uniform, which comprises of the following items:

Non branded items

- Dark grey or black skirts
- Dark grey or black shorts
- Dark grey or black trousers
- Standard, black school shoes
- Summer dresses, blue and white or red and white check – optional
- White school polo with or without school logo
- Black tights
- Fleeces and waterproof jacket with school logo - optional

Branded items which are required

- School jumper
- PE shirt

Branded items which are optional

- Polo shirts
- Fleeces and waterproof jacket with school log

Our PE kit comprises of:

- Red T-shirt with logo
- Black shorts, non-branded
- Trainers (no boots and no marking soles or plimsolls)
- Non-branded black tracksuit bottoms (for lessons outside in the winter)
- Bag for PE kit
- Students should not wear any jewellery with the exception of a pair of discreet stud earrings and a watch (not a smart watch)

Please note in the case of extreme weather, we will work with families to provide a suitable solution to ensure students are as comfortable as possible, for example, students may be able to wear their PE kit during hot weather.

4.2 Where to purchase or acquire it

- Logo items of uniform can be bought directly from the school.
- Non-logo items can be bought from a high-street retailer.

- St Catherine's does have second-hand uniform for sale. New parents/carers are made aware that these items can be purchased via our New Student Information Booklet.

4.3 Sixth Form Clothing

Sixth Form students are to wear smart casual clothing and appropriate footwear. Please do not wear clothing with inappropriate slogans and no opened-toed shoes/sandals/flip flops. Shirts/tops must cover the midriff, waist, back and cleavage and must not be excessively tight fitting or see-through.

5. Expectations for our school community

5.1 Students

Students are expected to wear the correct uniform at all times (other than specified non-school uniform days) while:

- On the school premises
- Travelling to and from school
- At out-of-school events or on trips that are organised by the school, or where they are representing the school (if required)

Students are also expected to contact the Principal if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to their protected characteristics.

5.2 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to make sure their child has the correct uniform and PE kit, and that every item is:

- Clean
- Clearly labelled with the child's name
- In good condition

Parents/carers are also expected to contact the Principal if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to:

- Their child's protected characteristics
- The cost of the uniform

If parent/carers request adaptations to their child's uniform, St Catherine's will need to ensure any health and safety issues are considered.

Parents/carers are expected to lodge any complaints or objections relating to the school uniform in a timely and reasonable manner in accordance with the school's complaints policy.

The school will work closely with parents/carers to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

5.3 Staff

Staff will closely monitor students to make sure they are in correct uniform. They will give any students and families breaching the uniform policy the opportunity to comply, but will follow up with the Principal if the situation does not improve. Ongoing breaches of our uniform policy will be dealt with by the Principal.

In cases where it is suspected that financial hardship has resulted in a student not complying with this uniform policy, staff will take a mindful and considerate approach to resolving the situation and the student will not miss classroom teaching because of a sanction. This is in line with the statutory guidance.

5.4 Governors

The governing board will review this policy and make sure that it:

- Is appropriate for our school's context
- Is implemented fairly across the school
- Takes into account the views of parents/carers, and students
- Offers a uniform that is appropriate, practical and safe for all students

The board will also make sure that the school's uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money,

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis by the Principal. At every review, it will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives statement
- Anti-bullying policy
- Complaints policy