



ST BENET BISCOP
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

School Uniform Policy

Document Control
Owner: Kevin Shepherd
Date of last review: September 2023
Date of Governor Approval: 11 October 2023
Review date: September 2024

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Statement of intent

St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital to promote the ethos of the school, provide a sense of belonging and identity for all pupils, regardless of their protected characteristics or socio-economic circumstances, and set an appropriate tone for education.

For the purpose of this policy uniform includes the following elements of pupil'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 pupils, and is affordable and the best value for money for 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 such 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.

Legal framework

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

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education Act 2011
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) 'Preventing hair discrimination in schools'

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

- DfE (2021) 'Cost of school uniforms'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2021) 'School uniforms'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality policy
- Tendering and Procurement Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The local governing committee 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 local governing committee.
- Providing pupils with an exemption as appropriate, e.g. temporary medical needs where 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 an adjustment to the 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.

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.

In accordance with the 'School Admissions Code', the headteacher will ensure that the school's uniform policy does 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 due to costs.
- LAC and Post LAC.

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 keeps variations in school uniform, 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 as possible and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings.

The school keeps 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, including by virtue of logos, colours, design and fabrics. Where the school decides to require an item of branded clothing, it will conduct an assessment to ensure prices are kept as low as possible.

The school is committed to meeting the DfE's recommendations on costs and value for money. Every care is taken to ensure that our uniforms are affordable for all current and prospective pupils, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.

The school has completed a procurement exercise to ensure the best value for money and service possible. The school does not enter into contracts with cash-back arrangements. More information on supplier processes can be found in the 'School uniform supplier' section of this policy.

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

Equality principles

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid discriminating against any protected characteristic unlawfully very seriously, and aims to ensure that the uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all pupils are supported to 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 work to ensure that school uniform cost does not disproportionately affect any pupils by ensuring that uniforms for all genders are as equal in price as possible and by adhering to the cost principles laid out in section 3.

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

- Are transgender, including non-binary pupils.

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

The school implements a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that pupils are not 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.

The school ensures that pupils who are required to follow certain dress requirements, e.g. by virtue of their membership of a particular religious or cultural group, are afforded flexibility to allow them to wear a uniform that adheres to their requirements as far as possible. The school endeavours to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, will ensure that the needs and rights of individual pupils are weighed against any health and safety concerns for the entire school community.

The school ensures that the needs of pupils with SEND and/or sensory difficulties are considered in the uniform policy.

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.

Complaints and challenges

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

To make a complaint, parents should refer to the Complaints Policy and follow the stipulations outlined.

When a complaint is received, the school works with parents to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

Governors are willing to consider reasonable requests for flexibility to allow a pupil to accommodate particular social and cultural circumstances.

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.

School uniform supplier

Our current school uniform supplier is:

Michael Sehgal & Sons Ltd

28-40 Scotswood Road
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE4 7JB

Our school uniform supplier accepts school uniform assistance vouchers which can be applied for by contacting the school on finance@stbb.org.uk

The local governing committee will ensure that a written contract is in place with the supplier for branded items.

The school will retender the uniform contract every six years, whether changes to the uniform are made or not, in line with the Tendering and Procurement Policy. The local governing committee 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.

Where the school is proposing to change suppliers, it will reach out to suppliers by October in the determination year.

Uniform assistance

The school supports vulnerable families in meeting the costs of uniforms. School uniform assistance is provided via a voucher for our uniform supplier worth £40 that can be spent on school clothing. The budget for the school uniform assistance scheme comes from pupil premium funds.

To claim school uniform assistance, parents should be in receipt of FSM or allowances as shown on the Application Form in Appendix A. Eligibility is determined by checking original documents from the relevant authority, detailing receipt of the benefit and the address of the pupil.

Families who meet the criteria should contact finance@stbb.org.uk to make an application.

The school provides parents with a list of second-hand school uniform suppliers who we work the local area and parents are invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it.

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.

Parents will be notified in all cases.

School uniform

Blazer	Black blazer with academy badge available from our appointed supplier.
Tie	Academy clip-on tie available from our appointed supplier.
Trousers	Black straight legged trousers. These must be traditional straight legged trousers NOT fashion trousers; they must not be skinny or tight fitting. NO tapered trousers, ankle grazers, canvas or jean material, stretch fabric or patch pocket.
Belt	Plain black leather belt, if required. No logo, branding or decoration visible.
Kilt	Knee length kilt available from our appointed supplier (optional). Kilts must be worn to the knee. You are advised to purchase a longer length to get adequate wear.
Shirt	Long or short sleeved white school shirt.
Sweater	Black v neck sweater (optional).
Shoes	Plain black formal flat leather/leather look boots may be worn (if worn with trousers, the boots must be worn under the trousers). Sports brands, canvas boots, UGG style, moccasin style or suede are not permissible. No visible branding. Boots with distinctive fashion features such as buckles and coloured stitching, tags or logos are not permitted, and neither are shoes with heavy sole cleats.
Socks/Tights	Plain black ankle socks or plain black or natural tights. No running or training socks, no pattern or decoration.
Coat	A weatherproof coat or jacket that can be worn over the blazer. No denim, hooded tops, non-school sweaters, cardigans, tracksuit or sports tops. Outdoor wear must not be worn under blazers. Clothing worn to the academy which is not permissible will be confiscated.
PE Kit	Plain black rugby shirt OR plain black polo top. Plain white or black sports socks. Plain black shorts, black gym skirt or plain black tracksuit bottoms or black 'sports' leggings.

Plain black sweatshirt, plain black hooded top, plain black rain jacket (optional)

Trainers

Football/rugby boots (optional)



Code of Dress

Uniform We will insist on perfect uniform 100% of the time. This is because we want children at our academy to be proud. Excellent uniform is a representation of our excellent culture. Students who breach any part of our uniform code will either be given some temporary uniform to wear, sent home to change, or will be isolated until their uniform is perfect. We will do this to ensure that our students are treated fairly. It is unfair if some students keep to our dress code and some don't. Defiance around uniform will not be tolerated and we expect full parental support with this.

Jewellery A wristwatch is permissible (no smart watches allowed). No other jewellery is to be worn. No facial or body piercings; this includes clear studs or 'spacers'.

Jewellery worn to the academy which is not permissible will be confiscated.

Make up Make up is not part of our uniform and therefore must not be worn. No acrylic or artificial nails, nail varnish, gel nails, make-up or false eyelashes, painted or dyed eyebrows or false tan. Finger nails should be kept at a sensible length so you can take part in all in and out of academy activities.

Hair Hairstyles must be appropriate for the academy (e.g. no less than a 1.5 guard in length) with no patterns shaved into hair. Hair should be natural in colour if artificially coloured. No hair extensions. No hair accessories other than a plain black, white or brown hairband may be worn.

Students who arrive at school with incorrect uniform will be removed from circulation immediately. We do not accept notes from parents or carers explaining issues relating to uniform. If your child arrives at school without the correct uniform or hairstyle, for whatever reason, and refuses to borrow spare uniform they will likely be removed to the Learning Hub until the uniform or hairstyle has been corrected. An exception would be considered in light of

a serious medical reason but only when a member of the leadership team has seen a letter from a doctor, physiotherapist or other medical specialist to confirm that reason.

Physical Education

- Students must arrive at lessons with appropriate kit.
- A full kit should be taken to all lessons, even if a note is brought to the academy as students will still play an active role in the lesson in some form e.g. as a referee.
- Should students fail to bring a kit to lessons they will be sanctioned as per the school behaviour policy. Should this be an ongoing concern then we will contact home.

Adverse weather

During adverse weather adjustments may be made to the uniform at the discretion of the Headteacher.

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

Monitoring and review

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

The scheduled review date for this policy is September 2024.

Appendix A

St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy Application for Support with Uniform Costs



ST BENET BISCOP
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Personal Details	
Name of Student:	Name of Parent /Guardian:
Date of Birth:	
Tutor Group:	
Address:	Telephone:
	Mobile:
Email:	
Support Applied For:	(Please tick below)
Uniform Voucher £40	
Evidence of Circumstances (Please Tick All That Apply and provide written evidence)	
Currently in receipt of Free School Meals	
Currently in receipt of Income Support	
Currently in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance	
Currently in receipt of Disability Living Allowance	
Pupil in Local Authority Care	

Declaration	
I/We declare that the information given in support of this application is correct and complete to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.	
I/We will inform St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy immediately of any change of circumstances, at any time, which may affect my entitlement to support (for example changes to income).	
I/We understand that this information will not be shared with 3 rd party organisations, except for audit purposes.	
I/We understand that awards made are subject to the school being in receipt of sufficient funding from the Education Funding Agency.	
Parent / Carer:	Date: