



# St Stephens Community Academy

## School Uniform Policy

We have updated this policy in line with the DfE's new statutory uniforms guidance. Schools are expected to be compliant with the majority of this guidance by September 2022; however, there are exceptions, including where the school is tied into a contract with a supplier and where a competitive tender must be run to set up a new uniform contract. All schools should be compliant by September 2023 where possible.

Last updated: Sept 2022

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## **Statement of intent**

**St Stephens** believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital to promote the ethos of the school and provide a sense of belonging and identity for all pupils, regardless of their protected characteristics or socio-economic circumstances.

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.

## 1. 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

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
- LGBTQ+ Policy
- Tendering and Procurement 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:

- Monitoring the school's uniform on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring that teachers understand this policy and what to do if a pupil is not following 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 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.
- Supporting pupils to meet uniform expectations.
- 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 named, 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 is committed to ensuring that its school uniform is affordable and accessible to all pupils, and does not place an unreasonable financial burden on parents.

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 consider 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 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 keeps variations in school uniform for different groups of pupils, e.g. year group-specific items such as leaver hoodies, to a minimum where possible to ensure that pupils can get the most wear out of their uniform 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, e.g. by offering sew- or iron-on logo badges for jumpers that can be bought at retailers instead of requiring special branded jumpers.

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 works with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated are passed to parents where possible and does 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 amend uniform requirements regularly and will take the views of parents and pupils into account when considering any changes to school uniforms.

#### **4. 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.

The school will work to ensure that school uniform's 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:

- 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.

Parents' concerns and requests regarding religious clothing are dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the headteacher and governing board, and always in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The school ensures that the needs of pupils with SEND and/or sensory difficulties are considered in the uniform policy, e.g. ensuring soft, stretchy fabrics and avoiding intricate buttons or hard seams; however, 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.

## **5. Complaints and challenges**

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

To make a complaint, parents should refer to the Complaints Procedures 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.

## **6. School uniform supplier**

Our current school uniform supplier is:

Price & Buckland

[St Stephens Community Academy \(pbuniform-online.co.uk\)](http://pbuniform-online.co.uk)

However, we accept any generic uniform alternatives (e.g. Supermarket brand sweatshirts)

The 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 Directors 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. Uniform assistance

The school supports vulnerable families in meeting the costs of uniforms. School uniform assistance is provided via pre-loved uniform and we do have a clothing allowance available to spend on school clothing. The budget for the school uniform assistance scheme comes from pupil premium funds.

To claim school uniform assistance, parents should be eligible for Free School Meals. 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 speak to the school office for assistance.

The school holds a selection of pre-loved school uniforms in the school office for parents to access; access to these uniforms is available upon request to the school secretary or via the PTFA. Parents are invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it.

## 8. Non-compliance

Staff members are permitted to remind pupils of the correct uniform if they attend in incorrect items, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Pupils will be lent correct items such as school jumpers or PE kit as needed.

## 9. School uniform

### School colours

Our school colours are as follows: dark blue, grey or black and white.

### Clothing

The school uniform is as follows:

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire	Cost per item from school supplier
<b>Regular school uniform</b>				
Dark blue sweatshirt or cardigan (All year)	Required	School logo on right-hand side or plain.	Branded sweatshirt and cardigan available from school supplier and second hand from school office/PTFA. Dark blue sweatshirt or cardigan can be bought from regular retailers.	See school website
White polo shirt (All year)	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier, second hand from school office/PTFA and available from regular retailers.	See school website

School fleece (All year)	Optional	School logo on right-hand side	Available from school supplier second hand from school office/PTFA	See school website
Grey or black trousers, shorts or dress or skirt (All year)	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier, second hand from school office/PTFA and available from regular retailers.	See school website
Blue and white checked dress (summer term)	Optional	No branding	Available from school supplier, second hand from school office/PTFA and available from regular retailers.	See school website
Sensible, plain black shoes (All year)	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers.	N/A
<b>PE kit</b>				
Plain white t-shirt (All year)	Required	School logo on right-hand side or plain – no branding	Available from school supplier or regular retailers	See school website
Plain black / dark blue shorts (All year)	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier or regular retailers	See school website
Plain black logging bottoms or leggings for cold weather	Optional	No branding	Available from school supplier or regular retailers	See school website
Plain black hoodie for cold weather	Optional	No branding	Available from school supplier or regular retailers	See school website
<b>Accessories</b>				
School book bag	Required	School logo	Available from school supplier.	See school website
Black, white or grey school socks/	Optional		Available from regular supplier.	N/A
Lunch bag	Required if having packed lunch.		Available from school supplier or regular supplier	See school website
Black, white or grey school tights	Optional		Available from school supplier or regular supplier	See school website
P.E kit bag	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier or regular retailers	See school website

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

## **Jewellery**

Permitted jewellery that may be worn is:

- One pair of stud earrings – no other piercings are permitted.
- 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.

## **10. Labelling**

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

Any lost clothing is kept in the cloakrooms for a week and then taken to the lost property box in the school office. All lost property is retained for one month and is then added to the pre-loved collection if it is not collected within this time.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

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

The scheduled review date for this policy is Sept 2023.

# School Uniform Assistance Application Form

Children who attend St Stephens Community Academy are eligible for school uniform assistance if they receive Free School Meals.

This scheme is open to children in Years R-6. The allowance is for buying suitable school wear and is paid once a year.

## Part 1: Details of parent

<b>Your full name:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>National insurance number:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Mobile no.:</b>	
<b>Landline no.:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>	

By supplying us with a phone number or email, you agree to being contacted to let you know if you are eligible.

## Part 2: Details of each dependent child you are applying for

<b>Surname</b>	<b>Other names</b>	<b>Date of birth</b>

### Please read this declaration before you sign it

- I declare I am the parent of the child(ren) that I am applying for.
- I declare that all the information I have given is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.
- I have enclosed original documentation to prove that I am in receipt of one of the benefits listed at the top of this form.
- I am aware that I have a duty to notify the school in writing immediately of any changes in my circumstances which might affect my entitlement to school clothing assistance.

- I understand that information taken from this form will be stored electronically on the school's computers. The school is permitted to do this under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. A copy of the school's registration is held for inspection.

**Please return this completed for to the school office.**

Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **What happens next?**

If you apply for school uniform assistance and qualify, an order request will be sent to you for each of your children during the week of . If you do not qualify for the payment, we will let you know by letter and phone and explain why.