

School Uniform Policy

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Statement of intent

St Alban's C of E Academy ("we") 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 our school uniform itself, variations of our 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.

Our policy lays out the measures we have 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/carers ("**you**") and pupils (e.g. via induction meetings, newsletters, parent/pupil questionnaires).
- Consider how this policy might affect groups represented in our school, especially those who share protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Consider how comfortable our uniform will be for pupils.
- Take a sensible approach to allow for exceptions to be made, e.g. during adverse weather.
- Ensure that our 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 our policy is easy to access and understand.

Legal framework

Our 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'

Our policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Procurement and Tendering Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The Directors of Manor MAT are responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the chief executive leaders, Headteacher and our school community, a practical and smart school uniform that accurately reflects our vision and values.
- Ensuring that our school's uniform is accessible, inclusive, and does not disadvantage any pupil because 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 our school's uniform.
- Ensuring that our school's uniform is accessible and affordable.
- Demonstrating in our 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.

Our school Headteacher is responsible for:

- Enforcing our school's uniform rules on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring that teachers understand our policy and what to do if a pupil is in breach of the policy.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of our school community in regard to our school's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to our chief executives.

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

Staff are responsible for:

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

Parents/carers (“**you**”) are responsible for:

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

Pupils are responsible for:

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

Cost principles

Our school will develop our uniform policy in relation to the following starting principles:

- We will seek to ensure that our uniform is affordable. In so doing, we will consider the total cost of school uniforms, taking into account all items of uniform or clothing you will need to provide while your child is at our school.
- We will seek to keep the use of branded items to a minimum.
- We 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.
- We will seek to ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for you to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms will be published on our website.

Principles in practice

In accordance with the ‘[School Admissions Code](#)’, our Headteacher will ensure that our school’s uniform requirements do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

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

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

- Parents/carers of pupils with protected characteristics that may impact their ability to access the uniform.
- Looked After Children (LAC) and previously-LAC (PLAC).

We will evaluate the cost of our uniform based on the overall collection of uniform items that you would need to purchase for your child(ren), rather than on the cost effectiveness of individual items; this will include consideration of the fact that you will need to purchase multiples of certain items, e.g. shirts and socks, to ensure your child can come to school in clean uniform every day.

We 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 you can pass some items down to younger siblings.

We will keep branded uniform items to a minimal level that is reasonable for all members of the school community. We define 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 we require an item of branded clothing, we 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.

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

We will work with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated will be passed to parents where possible. We 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.

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

Equality principles

We take our legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any pupil very seriously.

In line with the above, we will aim to ensure that our 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.

We 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 gender-questioning.
- 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 our Headteacher in consultation with our chief executives, and always in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

Information on how we ensure our uniform policy does not discriminate against pupils with specific protected characteristics is outlined below.

Gender

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain gender, we 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. Transgender pupils 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 pupils of a certain religion, belief or culture, we 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 our school's uniform policy.

We 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, we will ensure that our 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.

We 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, we will ensure our uniform policy takes into account the needs of these pupils. This includes:

- Ensuring our 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 our standard uniform policy, individual adaptations to the uniform will be considered and permitted wherever possible.

We will ensure that we work with a supplier that acts in accordance with our school’s values and principles on equality and inclusion.

Complaints and challenges

We will endeavour to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with our school’s Complaints Policy.

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

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

In the event of complaints about the supply and quality of uniforms, we will discuss with parents on a case-by-case basis.

The school aims to deal with pupil non-compliance in a proportionate and fair way.

School uniform supplier

Our school’s current school uniform supplier is:

Name Lads and Lassess

Address 4 Bilbrook Road Codsall Wolverhampton WV8 1EZ

Phone number 01902 846262

Our school uniform supplier will accept school uniform assistance vouchers.

Our Headteacher will ensure that a written contract is in place with the supplier for branded items. We will re-tender the uniform contract every five years, whether changes to our uniform are made or not, in line with the Procurement and Tendering Policy.

Our Headteacher will be able to demonstrate how our uniform is procured at the best value for money. Our 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.

Our school will not sign contracts with suppliers before requesting visualisations and samples of proposed uniform.

We will order new uniform each December. Where we are proposing to change suppliers, we will reach out to suppliers by October in the determination year.

Uniform assistance

We will support disadvantaged families in meeting the costs of uniforms. School uniform assistance will be provided via a voucher worth £30 that can be spent on school clothing. The budget for the school uniform assistance scheme will be derived from Pupil Premium funds.

To claim school uniform assistance, your child(ren) should be eligible for free school meals. Eligibility will be 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 will be asked to complete a School Uniform Assistance Application Form and return it to the school office.

We will hold second-hand school uniforms in the school office for you to access; access to these uniforms will be made available upon request made to the Headteacher.

You will be invited to donate your child's uniform when you no longer need it.

Non-compliance

In the event of breaches to our school's uniform policy, we will either send a message home or have a discussion with you on a case-by-case basis (via SLT). School staff will initially have a conversation with you to identify why your child does not have the correct uniform and can provide financial support to you if required.

You will be notified of breaches of school uniform in relation to your child(ren) in all cases.

School uniform

Clothing

Our school uniform is as follows:

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire	Cost per item from school supplier
Regular school uniform				
Royal blue sweatshirt or royal blue cardigan	Required	School logo on right-hand side	Branded sweatshirt and cardigan available from school supplier or	Sweatshirts from £11.99 Cardigans from £13.99

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire	Cost per item from school supplier
			second-hand from school office. Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan can be bought from regular retailers.	
White polo shirt	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier, second-hand from school office, and from regular retailers	From £7.99
Blue school fleece	Optional	School logo on right-hand side	Available from school supplier and second-hand from school office	From £14.99
Grey or black trousers or knee-length grey skirt	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier, second-hand from school office, and from regular retailers	Trousers From <u>£9.99</u> Skirts from £5.99
Sensible, plain black shoes	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers	N/A
PE kit				
Royal blue school fleece	Optional	School logo on right-hand side	Branded fleece available from school supplier. Royal blue fleece or can be bought from regular retailers.	
Royal blue sweatshirt or royal blue cardigan	Required	School logo on right-hand side	Branded sweatshirt and cardigan available from school supplier or second-hand from school office. Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan can be bought from regular retailers.	
Plain white t-shirt	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier, second-hand from school office, and from regular retailers	From <u>£5.99</u>
Plain black shorts or black plain joggings bottoms	Required	No branding	Available from school supplier, second-hand from school office, and from regular retailers	From <u>£3.99</u>
Plain trainers	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers	N/A
Accessories				
School book bag	Optional	School logo	Available from school supplier	<u>£5.99</u>

Pupils who are wearing skirts will also be required to wear grey or black tights, grey or white knee length socks or black, grey or white ankle socks.
Black jeans will not be permitted.

Our school will not consider trainers or high heels suitable school shoes.

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

- Children should wear their school sweatshirt or cardigan on PE day. We do not permit hoodies of any colour to be worn. The optional fleece is the alternative to this.

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

Jewellery

Our school's rules on jewellery are as follows:

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

Pupils will be advised that jewellery is their personal responsibility and not that of our school. Lost or damaged items will not be refunded. All jewellery must be removed during practical lessons, including PE lessons and science experiments.

Children who wear jewellery for religious reasons are expected to cover the jewellery with a sports sweat band during practical and physical lessons to avoid injury.

Bags

Pupils 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.

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

Hairstyles and headwear

We reserve the right to make a judgement on whether a pupil's hairstyle, hair colour or headwear is inappropriate for our school environment; however, we 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 you will always have the freedom to complain via our Complaints Policy.

Pupils 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.

The following hairstyles, hair colours and headwear are not considered appropriate for school:

- Brightly-coloured dyed hair

- Headwear with bold patterns or colours
- Excessive hair accessories
- Headwear featuring inappropriate words or images

Makeup and cosmetics

Our rules on makeup and cosmetics are as follows:

- Makeup is **not** permitted
- False nails and nail extensions are not permitted
- Nail varnish is **not** permitted
- Temporary tattoos are **not** permitted

Adverse weather

All pupils 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.

Pupils will be advised not to wear any jumpers or cardigans during heatwaves. If outside during break times, pupils 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.

Labelling and lost property

You will be advised to ensure that your child(ren)'s clothing and footwear is clearly labelled with their name and year group.

Any lost clothing will be taken to the lost property box in the community room. All lost property will be retained for one month and will be put towards the uniform swap if it is not collected within this time.

Monitoring and review

Our policy will be reviewed annually by the chief executive leaders in conjunction with the Headteacher where required.

We will engage with parents and pupils when reviewing this policy via the methods detailed in the [Statement of Intent](#).

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

