St Mary's Catholic Academy

Uniform and Appearance Policy

Approved by:	Mr. Simon Eccles	**Date:**	13/03/26
Last reviewed on:	March 2026		
Next review due by:	March 2027		

St. Mary's pupils demonstrate a very high standard of uniform.

Uniform gives a sense of belonging and identity to our pupils. It is an outward sign of the high standards they expect of themselves. We believe that the individuality of our young people is reflected in the richness and depth of their character and personality, not in their clothes or hairstyles. For this reason, the Academy expects all pupils to wear uniform correctly.

We all know that first impressions count – by maintaining high standards of uniform we hope to help prepare our pupils for the world of work and the expectations of future employers.

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

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 pupils the opportunity to wear the uniform they feel most comfortable in
- Make sure that our uniform costs the same for all pupils
- Allow all pupils to have long hair, although we reserve the right to ask that long hair be tied back
- Allow all pupils to style their hair in a way that is appropriate for school, and makes them feel most comfortable
- Allow pupils to wear headscarves and/or other religious garments
- Allow pupils 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 pupils or their parents/carers to get in touch with Miss Jones, Deputy Headteacher, who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis

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:
    - Secondary: 4 or fewer, if 1 item is a tie
- 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
- Considering cheaper alternatives to compulsory branded items, such as logos that can be ironed on, as long as this doesn't compromise quality and durability
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for extra-curricular activities
- Avoiding the need for different branded items for particular times of the year
- Making sure that opportunities to acquire second-hand items in a timely manner are accessible to parents and carers of both current and prospective pupils
- Avoiding frequent changes to uniform specifications, and minimising the financial impact on parents/carers of any changes
- Consulting with parents/carers and pupils on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy, and carefully considering any complaints about uniform in line with the school's complaints policy
- Avoiding single-supplier contracts, to make sure generic items can be purchased from a range of retailers
- Continuing to review this policy, to ensure the cost of our uniform is reasonable and provides the best value for money

Expectations for school uniform

Uniform item	Branded compulsory/ Optional	Details
School blazer/ Year 11 badged black jumper	Branded compulsory *Blazer (Years 7-10)* *Badged jumper (Year 11)*	Pupils may remove their blazer with staff permission. Year 11 - No other type of black jumper is allowed.
Grey, badged sweater with Academy trim	Optional (Y7-10)	No other type of grey jumper is allowed.
White shirt		Shirts must be tucked in, plain white and have no motifs.
Tie	Branded compulsory	Years 7-10 must wear the St Mary's official clip-on tie available from our uniform suppliers. Year 11 must wear the black St Mary's official tie available from the Academy office.
Skirt	Branded compulsory	Grey kilt (only available from our uniform suppliers) of a reasonable length (up to a maximum of 10cm above the top of the knee). Skirt waistbands must not be rolled or turned over.
Trousers		Tailored black trousers. No jeans, chinos, tracksuit bottoms, cords, leggings or tight-fitting trousers.
Socks		With the skirt:

		Black tights. Plain white or black knee length socks or plain white or black ankle socks. Socks must not be worn over the knee. With black trousers: Black or grey socks.
Coat		No jackets, coats, 'hoodies' (outdoor clothing) or non-academy sweatshirts may be worn inside the Academy building.
Bags		All pupils should bring a bag to the Academy. Bags need to be strong and large enough to hold A4 folders and a PE kit. Many pupils may also choose to carry their Chromebook in their bag and specific compartments in some bag styles provide additional protection for this.

PE kit

Uniform item	Branded compulsory/ Optional	Details
Compulsory PE kit items		
St Mary's PE Polo Shirt	Branded compulsory	This blue/red polo shirt is available from our uniform suppliers.
PE shorts (unisex)		Branded option Branded PE shorts are available from uniform suppliers. Unbranded alternative Unbranded, plain navy, loose fitting, knee length shorts No other types of short are permitted.
PE socks		Branded option Branded PE socks are available from uniform suppliers. Unbranded alternative Unbranded, plain navy, knee length socks. No other types of socks are permitted.
PE trainers		Trainers are permitted to be worn for PE only. PE pumps are not permitted.
Optional PE kit items		
St Mary's skort	Optional	No other types of skort/leggings/tracksuit bottoms/fleece are allowed to be worn.
St Mary's PE leggings	Optional	
St Mary's tracksuit bottoms	Optional	
St Mary's fleece	Optional	

School shoes

Traditional-style, black leather shoes. Suede/Nubuck shoes are not permitted. Boots above the ankle are not permitted. Shoes must not display brand, logos or motifs. Heels must not be high (less than 3 cm) on safety grounds (no platforms/ kitten heels). No trainers or black pumps.

Canvas pumps/shoes are not acceptable. Please be aware that although many trainer styles are sold in local shoe and sport shops, **ONLY TRADITIONAL-STYLE SHOES ARE TO BE WORN.**
Please note the Academy reserves the right to determine whether a style of shoe meets our policy. If you are unsure about whether a shoe complies with our policy, please contact us prior to purchase.

Not Permitted

Permitted

Other

Hair	Parental support is appreciated in ensuring that pupils do not arrive at the Academy with hair styles that do not conform to the “spirit” of our Academy policy. Pupils may only have one natural hair colour. No excessive styles, shaved heads, shave lines, steps, or obvious graduations. As a general guide a “Number 2” is the shortest permissible cut. No coloured hair braids/hair jewellery/hair extensions/bows/coloured headbands. A plain bobble or headband is permitted. Pupils are not allowed to come to the Academy with sections of their eyebrows shaven. For hygiene and/or safety reasons long hair must be tied back with a plain bobble/headband during Science, PE, Technology and Art. No other hair accessories may be worn.
Make up	No makeup. No fake tan. No false nails or false eyelashes. No nail varnish. No tattoos. No visible piercings including piercings in the tongue, nose or mouth. Pupils that plan to have piercings must do so during the summer holiday period to allow for a suitable recovery time before the return to the Academy. Pupils should not return to the Academy with visible piercings that cannot yet be removed due to healing.
Jewellery	One pair of plain gold or silver ear studs (one in each ear lobe at the same level). A watch (simple analogue or digital) may be worn. Please note smartwatches are not permitted. No other items of jewellery or piercings may be worn to the Academy**.** This includes rings, necklaces, bracelets, wristbands and badges not promoted through Academy activities or rewards.
Hats/caps	May not be worn inside the Academy buildings or on Academy grounds. No hoods (including coat hoods) should be pulled up at any time

The Academy reserves the right to confiscate items that do not conform to its Uniform Code. These will be stored safely and will be returned to pupils at the end of the school day. If a pupil has an item confiscated that is of significant value, the Academy will return it to a parent / carer on request. For security reasons, the parent / carer must collect it personally (proof of identity will be required).

Where to purchase or acquire it

Our school uniform suppliers are:

Ragamuffins

1a Westcliffe Dr, Blackpool FY3 7DZ

Bispham Clothing

7 All Hallows Rd, Blackpool FY2 0AS

We also have a stock of new and pre-loved school uniform items in school. We encourage families to get in touch via phone/email to enquire about school uniform support. We handle all requests sensitively to ensure all our pupils have the school uniform required.

Expectations for our school community

Pupils

Pupils 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)

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 Miss Jones, Deputy Headteacher, if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to:

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

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.

Disputes about the cost of the school uniform will be:

- Resolved locally
- Dealt with in accordance with our school's complaints policy

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

Staff

Staff will closely monitor pupils to make sure they are in correct uniform and each school day will begin with a uniform and equipment check. They will give any pupils and families breaching the uniform policy the opportunity to comply.

Ongoing breaches of our uniform policy will be dealt with by the pastoral team using the Behaviour Policy.

In cases where it is suspected that financial hardship has resulted in a pupil not complying with this uniform policy, staff will take a mindful and considerate approach to resolving the situation.

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 pupils
- Offers a uniform that is appropriate, practical and safe for all pupils

The board will also make sure that the school's uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money, for example by avoiding single-supplier contracts and by re-tendering contracts at least every 5 years.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Mr Eccles, Headteacher, each academic year.

Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

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