



NORTHSIDE Primary School

Uniform Policy

Last review: January 2023

Ratified: January 2023

Review: January 2025

Rationale

At Northside Primary School we believe 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.

Key Principles

For the purposes of this policy, "uniform" includes the following elements of pupils' appearance:

- Clothing, including the school uniform itself, variations of the school uniform such as P.E. 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, 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.

This 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'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Policy

Northside Values

RESPECT

to value our needs, beliefs and each other.

PRIDE

to have confidence in our appearance and wear our uniform with pride.

- INCLUSION** to work together with families and our diverse community to ensure that all children feel included and part of the Northside Primary School. We will ensure all families are able to access the school uniform regardless of socio-economic background.
- CHALLENGE** to have high expectations of our appearance and ourselves so we achieve our best.
- CREATIVITY** to wear our uniform but still be able to creatively express our feelings.
- RESILIENCE** to prepare ourselves for the next phase of education and our working life.

In Practice

The governing body 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, 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 the school's uniform.
- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible and affordable.
- Demonstrating in this policy how best value for money has been achieved.
- Ensuring compliance with the DfE's 'Cost of school uniforms' guidance.
- Monitoring the use of the hardship fund to support families who are experiencing financial difficulty.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Enforcing the school's uniform expectations 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 governing body.

Staff are responsible for:

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

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 ensure that its school uniform is affordable and accessible to all pupils, and does not place an unreasonable financial burden on parents.

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.
- 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 to ensure their child can come to school in clean uniform every day.

The school 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 parents can pass some items down to younger siblings. This will include ensuring that all siblings are allocated to the same house.

The school will keep 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, e.g. supermarkets, due to the item's logo, colour, design, fabric or other unique element.

Where the school requires an item of branded clothing, it will;

- Ensure that these items are provided at cost
- Ensure branded items are longer-lasting and unlikely to be worn out quickly
- Ensure that uniform swap events happen termly
- Ensure that unnamed lost property is available for anyone at no cost

The school will meet the DfE's requirements and recommendations on costs and value for money.

Care will be taken to ensure that school uniform is affordable for all current and prospective pupils, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers. The school will work with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated will be passed to parents where possible. The school 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.

The school 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

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any protected characteristic very seriously. In line with this, the school will aim to ensure that its 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.

The school 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 non-binary.
- 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 the headteacher and governing body, and always in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

Information on how the school ensures its uniform policy does not discriminate against pupils with specific protected characteristics is outlined below.

Gender

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain gender, the school 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.
- Not indirectly requiring pupils of a certain gender to buy additional uniform
- 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.

Religion and Belief

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain religion, belief or culture, the school 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 the school's uniform policy.

The school 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, the school will ensure that its uniform policy does not constitute unlawful indirect discrimination through blanket rules.

This includes:

- Allowing hairstyles related to a pupil's ethnic origin, e.g. natural Afro hairstyles.
- Allowing hairstyles worn because of cultural, family and social customs, e.g. cornrows.
- Allowing head coverings related to a pupil's culture or ethnic origin, e.g. African heritage head wraps.

The school 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, the school will ensure its uniform policy takes into account the needs of these pupils. This includes:

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

Complaints and Challenges

The school will endeavour to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy. The school 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, the school will work with the complainant to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

School Uniform Supplier

The governing body 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 will not sign contracts with suppliers before requesting visualisations and samples of proposed uniform. The school will compare with other suppliers every two years to ensure they are still getting value for money on uniform items.

Uniform Assistance

The school will support disadvantaged families in meeting the costs of uniforms through the hardship fund which is derived from the pupil premium grant. The school will also organise termly uniform events which allows for uniform swaps and making unnamed lost property available for all families.

School Uniform

School uniform can be purchased using the School Money App. Items purchased will be sent home via the children. Northside Primary School's uniform requirements can be found on our website. <https://www.northsideschool.co.uk/uniform-information/>

