

# **Uniform Policy**



**Reviewed: June 2024**

**Approved by Governors: 01/07/24**

**Date of Next Review: Term 3 -2027**

### **Introduction**

It is our policy that all children should wear school uniform when attending St. Mary's Primary School, Altinure or when participating in a school-organised event outside normal school hours. Our school uniform is important to us. It helps us identify ourselves as a school family. We believe it promotes a strong, cohesive identity which supports high standards and expectations in all areas of school life.

Our school uniform promotes harmony between different groups represented in the school and it enhances security, assisting the school to identify individual pupils in order to maintain good order and spot intruders more easily. We believe that by wearing a school uniform, we promote effective discipline which contributes to more effective learning and teaching.

This Policy adheres to the guidelines provided by the Department of Education Northern Ireland (Circular 2011/04) (Re-issued 5th June 2018).

### **Rationale**

Our policy is based on the notion that a school uniform:

- promotes a sense of pride in the school;
- engenders a feeling of community and belonging;
- is practical, comfortable and smart;
- identifies the children with the school;
- is not distracting in class;
- makes children feel equal to their peers in terms of appearance;
- is cost effective; and
- is designed with health and safety in mind.

### **The Role of Parents**

We ask all parents for their support regarding our school uniform policy. We believe that parents have a duty to send their children to school correctly dressed and ready for their daily school work. Parents are also asked to clearly label all items of clothing, including footwear, with their child's name. We remind parents that pupils must wear ties on non-PE days. We ask parents to help organise pupils to wear the correct uniform on the correct days.

### **School Uniform**

School uniform consists of:

#### **Girls**

- Navy skirt, pinafore or trousers
- Pale blue school shirt
- Navy V-neck school jumper with St. Mary's school crest or navy cardigan with St. Mary's school crest
- Navy and white striped school tie
- White socks or navy tights

#### **Boys**

- Navy trousers
- Pale blue school shirt
- Navy V-neck school jumper with St. Mary's school crest
- Navy and white striped school tie

Black school shoes or coloured trainers are acceptable footwear.

When the weather is warmer, girls may wear a blue and white gingham dress and pupils may wear navy shorts instead of trousers.

### **PE Uniform**

Under Department of Education guidance, pupils should wear a change of clothes for PE and these clothes should be suitable and safe to wear during physical activity.

Following consultation with parents and pupils (June 2024), Governors decided to offer a choice of PE uniform to parents in order to provide a cost effective approach and this new PE uniform will be phased in by Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Our PE uniform will be worn on PE days, or on days when pupils complete a physical activity after school such as football, yoga or gymnastics.

The PE uniform for all pupils consists of either:

- the MFC branded t-shirt and/or the MFC half zip with the St. Mary's logo. Plain navy tracksuit bottoms or navy shorts should be worn. (MFC skinnies are optional.) The school jumper may be worn instead of the half-zip.

**OR**

- an unbranded pale blue polo shirt (with or without the school crest) with the school jumper and plain navy bottoms.

Suitable trainers must be worn to school on PE days.

### **Stockists of School Uniform**

Most items of our school uniform are available for purchase in high street shops and large supermarkets. The stockist for our crested school items and school tie is Select Kidz (Spencer Road, Derry). The school jumpers are also available in Grogans, Dungiven and we usually have school ties on sale at reception. The branded PE uniform is available from MFC through a link found in the Parent Area of our school website. This link opens at particular times during the year. *You will usually be informed by text when the link opens.*

### **Trips or Sporting Events**

For class trips, sporting events and special occasions, staff will advise pupils on the most appropriate attire for the activity. For example, children may be asked to wear their own clothing, their own running gear, their own sportswear or school-branded jerseys (which school provides).

### **Long Hair**

Pupils are encouraged to tie long hair back at all times. It is necessary for pupils to tie long hair back during P.E. activities (i.e. swimming and gymnastics) if the length of a child's hair is deemed to be a concern due to health and safety considerations. 'The Association for Physical Education's Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport', Seventh Edition (2008).

### **Jewellery**

On health and safety grounds, we do not allow children to wear jewellery in our school. The exceptions to this rule are plain gold or silver earring studs in pierced ears. Please note that

watches are not considered items of jewellery and may be worn. However, depending on the activity, it may be appropriate for children to be asked to remove their watches on health and safety grounds.

### **Uniform Grant**

Financial assistance is available through the Education Authority's 'School Uniform Grant Scheme' for certain categories of pupils attending primary schools. Further details are available from [www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants](http://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants)  
*Our local branch of St. Vincent de Paul is also available to support families in financial difficulties. Contact Mary Conway, Mrs Redmond or Father Micheál McGavigan for more information.*

### **Non-Compliance with our School Uniform Policy**

Where a pupil is not adhering to the school uniform policy, we will make discreet enquiries as to why this is the case as there may be a number of valid reasons for it. Where financial circumstances are preventing pupils from wearing the correct uniform, we will be sensitive to the situation and allow parents sufficient time to purchase the required items. Pupils should not feel uncomfortable or discriminated against because their parents are unable to provide them with the required items of uniform. The school will assist with the offer of uniform from its Swap Shop where needed.

### **The Role of Governors**

The Board of Governors supports the Principal and Senior Leadership Team in implementing the school's Uniform Policy. They consider all representations from parents regarding this Policy and liaise with the Principal to ensure that the Policy is implemented fairly and with sensitivity.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Board of Governors express thanks to parents/carers in anticipation of their valued support in this important area of school life. The Governors and Principal will consider carefully any request for an exception to be made for any individual pupil, on the grounds of religion, race, gender or a medical condition.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated in consultation with staff, parents and pupils. It will be posted on our school website and made available to parents on request.

Signed (Principal) Mary Redmond Date: 1/7/24

Signed (Chair of Governors) Fuif Tuohy Date: 1-July-24