

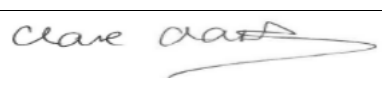


'Christ at the centre, children at the heart'

Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic

MAT Company No: 08444133

Registered Office: Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7AA

Approved by the Trust Board:	July 2026
Signed by Trust CEO:	
Review Date:	July 2027

SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

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1. Aims

This policy has been developed with regard to the Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021 and the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the cost of school uniform. 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 parents and carers;
- explain how we will avoid discrimination in line with our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and
- clarify our Trust and individual school expectations for school uniform.

2. Our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include sex, race, religion or belief, and gender reassignment.

To avoid discrimination, we will:

ensure that uniform requirements do not unlawfully discriminate against pupils on the basis of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and, where appropriate, pupils may choose from the approved uniform options available;

- make sure that our uniform costs the same for all pupils;
- allow all pupils to have long hair (though we ask for this to be tied back);
- allow pupils to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons;
- allow pupils to wear agreed religious or cultural symbols; and

consider reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, medical conditions, sensory needs or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and allow for adaptations to this policy on equality grounds by asking pupils or their parents to get in touch with the school (see school annex for contact details), which can respond to questions and any requests about the policy.

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3. Limiting the cost of school uniform

The Trust has a duty to make sure that the uniform we require is affordable, in line with statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the cost of school uniform.

No pupil will be disciplined solely because their family is unable to afford uniform requirements. Schools will work with families to identify appropriate support.

We understand that items with distinctive characteristics (such as branded items, or items that have to have a school logo or a unique fabric/colour/design) cannot be purchased from a wide range of retailers and that requiring many such items limits parents' ability to 'shop around' for a low price.

We will make sure our schools' uniforms:

- are available at a reasonable cost; and
- provide the best value for money for parents/carers.

We will do this by:

- carefully considering whether any items with distinctive characteristics are necessary;
- limiting any items with distinctive characteristics where possible eg only asking that any blazer, worn over the jumper, features the school logo;
- limiting items with distinctive characteristics to low-cost or long-lasting items, such as ties;
- considering cheaper alternatives to school-branded items, such as logos that can be ironed on, if this doesn't compromise quality and durability;
- avoiding specific requirements for items pupils could wear on non-school days, such as coats, bags and shoes;
- keeping the number of optional branded items to a minimum, so that the school's uniform can act as a social leveler;
- avoiding significant different uniform requirements for different year/class/house groups;
- avoiding different uniform requirements for extra-curricular activities;
- considering alternative methods for signaling differences in groups for interschool competitions, such as creating posters or labels;
- making sure that arrangements are in place for parents to acquire second-hand uniform items;
- avoiding frequent changes to uniform specifications and minimising the financial impact on parents of any changes; and
- consulting with parents and pupils on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy and carefully considering any complaints about the policy.

4. Expectations for our school community

4.1 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; and
- at out-of-school events or on trips that are organised by the school, or where they are representing the school (if required).

Pupils are also expected to contact the nominated school lead (see annex) if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to their protected characteristics, disability, medical needs, sensory needs or SEND.

4.2 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 are also expected to contact the nominated school lead (see annex) if they want to request an amendment to the uniform policy in relation to:

- their child's protected characteristics; and
- the cost of the uniform.

Parents are expected to lodge any complaints or objections relating to the school uniform in a timely and reasonable manner.

Disputes about the cost of the school uniform will be:

- resolved locally; and
- dealt with in accordance with our OLOW Trust complaints policy.

All schools will aim to work closely with parents in order to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

4.3 Staff

Staff will closely monitor pupils to make sure they are in correct uniform. They will give any pupils and families breaching the uniform policy the opportunity to comply but will follow up with school leadership if the situation doesn't improve.

Ongoing breaches of our uniform policy will be dealt with by reference to individual school's Behaviour Policies. 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. No pupil will be disciplined solely because their family is unable to afford uniform requirements.

4.4 Governors

The OLOW Trust Board will review this policy and make sure that it:

- is appropriate for our schools' context;
- is implemented fairly across all schools;
- takes into account the views of parents and pupils; and

offers a uniform that is appropriate, practical, safe and takes account of health, safety and safeguarding considerations for all pupils.

The Board will also make sure that schools' uniform supplier arrangements are periodically reviewed to ensure best value and compliance with statutory guidance.

5. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Annex requirements

Each school annex should set out the specific uniform requirements and local arrangements for parents and pupils. As a minimum, the annex should include required uniform items, optional items,

PE kit, jewellery rules, hair and make-up rules, footwear requirements, supplier details, second-hand uniform arrangements, any hardship support available, and school contact details.

Schools should make information about second-hand uniform clear to families, including who manages the arrangements, how often items are available, whether grants or hardship support exist, and how families can access support confidentially.

6. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to school and Trust level:

- Behaviour policy;
- Equality information and objectives statement;
- Anti-bullying policy;
- Complaints policy; and Health & Safety Policy