



Millais Parents Forum

School Uniform Policy

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Staff Governor

Overview

My role

Staff governors are elected by the staff of the school to represent them on the governing body, and bring with them professional experience and knowledge.

Staff governors have the same responsibilities to work with other governors to:

- plan the school's strategic direction
- oversee the school's financial performance, ensuring money is well-spent
- hold the headteacher or school leadership to account

*Speaking to you as a member of the governing body not **FOR** the governing body*

- Explain the '**what**' and '**why**' of school uniform
- Explain '**what**' factors are considered in setting uniform policy
- Describe '**how**' the school is addressing new government and other guidance on school uniform policy
- Outline '**what**' changes have been made as a result
- Describe '**when**' and '**how**' parent views are taken into account

Government policy on school uniform

It is for the governing board of a school to decide:

- rules around appearance
- whether there should be a school uniform policy and if so, what that should be
- how the uniform should be sourced

These duties are placed upon all governing boards by statute to ensure that school policies promote good behaviour and discipline amongst the pupil body.

Government encourage schools to have a uniform as it can play a key role in:

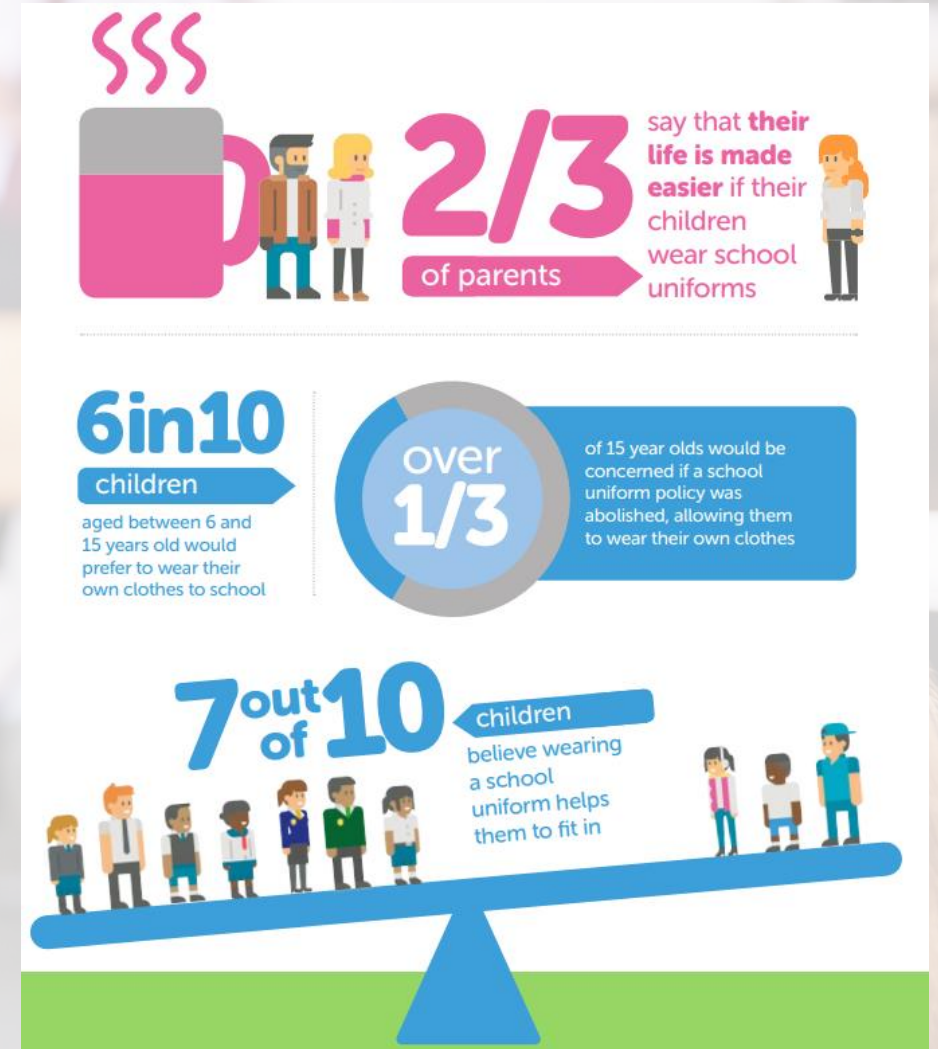
- **promoting the ethos of a school**
- **providing a sense of belonging and identity**
- **setting an appropriate tone for education**

Statutory guidance on uniform costs – November 2021

- **Applies to all state-funded schools in England**
- Requires schools to consider the cost to parents of **NOT** having a uniform
- **Where schools have a uniform it requires them to ensure that:**
 - Uniform is affordable taking into account the total cost of school uniforms
 - Use of branded items is kept to a minimum
 - Uniform policy should be published on the school's website, made available for all parents, including parents of prospective pupils, and is easily understood.
 - Uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money (including the quality and durability of the garment).
 - Single supplier contracts should be avoided unless regular tendering competitions are run where more than one supplier can compete for the contract and where the best value for money is secured. Contracts should be retendered at least every 5 years.
 - Second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms should be clear for parents of current and prospective pupils and published on the school's website.
 - Schools engage with parents and pupils when they are developing their school uniform policy.

Why Millais has a school uniform

- Support student safety and wellbeing
- Develop pride, self-confidence, and a feeling of belonging
- Promote behaviour for learning and reduce bullying
- Prepare students for the 'world of work'
- Create a sense of equity and inclusiveness



What factors are taken into account in setting/changing school uniform policy?

- Comfort, practicality, safety, and durability of garments
- Legal duties eg: the Equality Act 2010
- Cost for parents of the uniform and any changes to it
- Cost for school/suppliers of making changes
- Consistency with school ethos and ease of ensuring compliance



Why we believe some branded items are essential

- Non-branded school uniforms are open to broad interpretation.
- For example a policy stipulating that pupils should wear a 'black trousers' could lead to any number of brands, shades and styles being worn.
- Brand pressure between pupils would become common place, leading to inconsistency, inequality and pressure to follow certain trends.
- In short, the whole premise of uniform would break down as it is no longer uniform.



Does a branded uniform completely eliminate peer pressure?

No!

- But it does reduce it substantially
- Limiting the number of garments where students (and their parents) feel pressured to follow the latest trend
- Preserving inclusivity and reducing the cost of 'fitting in'

£125



What governors have done to review school uniform policy

- Reviewed compliance with requirements of the statutory guidance on the 'cost of school uniforms'
- Established uniform working to address areas where further work was required (May 2022)
- Supported immediate changes to uniform policy eg: relaxation of 'black shoes' (September 2022)
- Taken into account other related issues eg: EHRC guidance on hairstyles
- Considered feedback from parent and staff surveys
- Established a set of principles to consider the cost of uniforms

Where we already fully complied with the statutory guidance

- *Uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money (including the quality and durability of the garment).*
 - *Single supplier contracts should be avoided unless regular tendering competitions are run where more than one supplier can compete for the contract and where the best value for money is secured. Contracts should be retendered at least every 5 years.*
 - *Second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms should be clear for parents of current and prospective pupils and published on the school's website.*
- ✓ Uniform available from two suppliers and governed by 'agreements to supply'
 - ✓ Active discussions with suppliers to ensure quality and durability are maintained
 - ✓ Second-hand uniform available through regular PTA sales at events and advertised via the website

What the draft policy covers

- ✓ Our school's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010
- ✓ Principles on limiting the cost of school uniform
- ✓ Requirements for school uniform (what it is and how it should be worn)
- ✓ Expectations for our school community (students, parents, staff and governors roles)
- ✓ Monitoring arrangements (review)
- ✓ Links to other policies

Governors draft principles to address to cost of school uniform

- Carefully considering whether any items with distinctive characteristics are necessary
- Limiting any items with distinctive characteristics where possible for example by making some items (eg: jumpers) optional
- Limiting items with distinctive characteristics to long-lasting items
- 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 leveller
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for different year, band and class groups
- Avoiding seasonal uniform requirements for example the need to purchase summer dresses or trousers with different fabric weights
- Avoiding different uniform requirements for extra-curricular activities and providing kit for competitive sports fixtures
- Using alternative methods for signalling differences in groups for interschool competitions, such as wearing sports bibs or creating posters or labels
- Making sure that arrangements are in place for parents to acquire second-hand uniform items through the Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Avoiding frequent changes to uniform specifications and minimising the financial impact on parents of any changes
- Consulting with parents and pupils on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy and carefully considering any complaints about the policy
- Making sure that branded items are available from at least two suppliers and by working with suppliers to ensure that garments are durable and good value for money
- Phasing in any changes to uniform so that existing students are not required to purchase new garments as a result of any change

Where we wanted to reflect further

- *Uniform is affordable taking into account the total cost of school uniforms*
 - *Use of branded items is kept to a minimum*
- ✓ Governors reviewed current uniform using the principles and in particular: cost, quality durability etc.
 - ✓ Compared the Millais uniform cost and number of compulsory items to other local secondary schools
 - ✓ Reflected on the intent of the statutory guidance and the principles on the previous slide
 - ✓ Considered whether there were branded items we could remove without reducing the overall integrity of the uniform
 - ✓ Concluded that the current uniform is 'fit for purpose' and consistent with the guidance
 - ✓ Nonetheless decided to:
 - Dispense with the school scarf as an unnecessary branded item
 - Endorse the decision to allow students to wear any plain black shoe (including trainers)
 - Review the design of the blouse (especially sleeves)*
 - Give further consideration to the mandatory PE items*

**Any resulting changes will be made in September 2024*

Where we need your help

- *Schools engage with parents and pupils when they are developing their school uniform policy.*
- ✓ What is your view of the current uniform?
- ✓ What feedback would me to take back to Governors?
- ✓ How should we publicise this issue to parents and carers?

Next steps

- At the Full Governors Body meeting on 30 January
 - Receive report from this forum
 - Consider draft policy on school uniform
 - Agree 'next steps' to finalise this phase of work on this issue
- Publicise the uniform policy to staff and parents highlighting in particular changes and clarifications
- Encourage parent feedback through this forum and parent survey on an ongoing basis