St Thomas the Apostle School & Sixth Form College

Uniform Policy

Agreed by Governors: October 2023

Reviewed September 2025 with no changes

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1. 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 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

2. 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 sex, race, religion or belief, 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 or that most reflects their self-identified gender
- Make sure that our uniform costs the same for all pupils
- Allow all pupils to have long hair (though we reserve the right to ask for this to be tied back)
- Allow all pupils to style their hair in the way that is appropriate for school yet makes them feel most comfortable. We aim for this to be business appropriate for 6th Form pupils
- Allow pupils to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons
- Allow pupils to wear headscarves and other religious or cultural symbols
- Allow for adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality by asking pupils or their parents to get in touch with Mr C. Smart, Deputy Headteacher, 0207 639 0106, who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests

3. 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 on the cost of school uniform.

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 uniform:

- Is available at a reasonable cost
- Provides 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, for example, by only asking that the blazer, worn over the jumper, features the school logo
- Limiting items with distinctive characteristics to low-cost or long-lasting items, such as ties, blazers and jumpers
- Considering cheaper alternatives to school-branded items, such as logos that can be ironed on, as long as 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 different uniform requirements for extra-curricular activities
- 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

We also have pre-owned/new uniform available for families in need. These families are identified by the Pastoral team.

4. Expectations for school uniform

4.1 Our school's uniform

ALL ITEMS OF UNIFORM AND P.E. KIT MUST BE CLEARLY LABELLED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

- Maroon blazer with embroidered school badge
- Plain white shirt
- Plain mid grey trousers
- Black shoes (no trainers, plimsolls or canvas shoes)
- Grey V-neck jumper with school stripe
- School tie **(in house colour)**
- Maroon woollen hat (worn only during cold weather and must be stored in lockers during lesson time)
- School Bag

Top Coats

These should be **plain black**. Coats of any other colour or shade or with any logo on are not allowed. Pupils are to leave their coats for safe keeping in their lockers. Any pupils wearing a non-uniform coat will have it confiscated.

Coats are not to be worn during lesson time or around the corridors. 'Hooded tops'/tracksuit type jackets are not allowed. Any outdoor clothing worn in the building will be confiscated.

P.E. Kit

P.E lessons are compulsory and so is the wearing of the correct P.E. kit. If pupils do not bring in their kit, a bad point will be given and their parents/guardians will be contacted. If a pupil has a medical condition, a doctor's note is required.

- Polo shirt with school logo
- Trainers
- Football boots
- Black shorts and socks (summer)
- Black tracksuit bottoms (cold weather)
- College Maroon Sweat Shirt
- Swimming trunks (not shorts)
- Swimming cap (in house colour)
- Rugby shirt (Maroon)

NO JEWELLERY (including studs) IS PERMITTED DURING P.E. LESSONS

4.2 Where to purchase it

The school uniform can be purchased from the following shop:
Whitehall Clothiers
77 Camberwell Road
London
SE5 0EZ

Phone: 0207 703 3604
Website: www.whccamberwell.co.uk

Store Opening Hours:
Monday to Saturday – 9:15am to 5:30pm
Sunday – Closed

4.3 6th Form Dress Code

- A smart business suit in dark colours (dark means navy, black or dark grey)
- A smart business shirt/blouse. Low-cut or see-through blouses and shirts are not permitted
- Smart business shoes
- Hair styles must be such that they can easily be kept neat and do not prevent students from participating effectively and safely in all school activities. The dying, high or low lighting of hair in natural colours is acceptable – other colours are not permitted
- No student is to wear any extreme fashion that would draw undue attention to them. This includes shavings/markings cut into hair or eyebrows.
- No hoodies to be worn to, from and around school
- Only modest jewellery is allowed e.g. one necklace, ring, one small stud earring in each lobe.
- No visible tattoos are allowed

- Business shirts should have a button down, or stiff collar – casual shirts are not permitted.
- Smart jumpers may be worn in colder weather but not in place of a blazer. They should not be baggy and loose fitting.

BOYS:

- Ties must be worn

GIRLS:

- Dark, tailored jacket, dark skirt/trousers or dress. Skirts and dresses should be on or below the knee. Skirts are available from Whitehall Clothiers
- Only fitted blouses may be worn outside the skirt. All other blouses must be tucked in.
- Fine or opaque (navy/black/flesh coloured) tights may be worn – no fishnets or patterns
- Makeup (including nails) should be minimal and discreet.
- Skirts must not be thin material or too tight.
- Skirts cannot have silver zips down the back of the skirt
- Fashion scarves on the hair are not allowed

5. Expectations for our school community

5.1 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
- At out-of-school events or on trips that are organised by the school, or where they are representing the school (if required)

5.2 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. In the event of lost or damaged uniform parents are expected to communicate this with their child's Form Tutor

Parents are also expected to contact Mr C. Smart, Deputy Headteacher, 0207 639 0106] 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 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

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

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

5.3 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 the headteacher if the situation doesn't improve.

Ongoing breaches of our uniform policy will be dealt with by the pupil will be given lunchtime detention

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.

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

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed biannually by Mr Smart. At every review, it will be approved by the full Governing Body.

7. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

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

This Uniform Policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body in September 2023 and was reviewed in September 2025 with no changes made. This policy will be reviewed in September 2026.

Signed By Chair of Governors (Joseph Reed):

Signed by Headteacher [Eamon Connolly]: