



Rockcliffe First School

Uniform Policy

Introduction

All governing bodies have a statutory duty to decide on rules around appearance, on whether there should be a school uniform policy and, if so, what that should be, and on how the uniform should be sourced. This is intended to promote good behaviour and discipline amongst pupils. Schools are strongly encouraged 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.

At Rockcliffe First School, we have decided to adopt a uniform policy, which follows statutory guidance on the [cost of school uniforms](#). We have ensured that, in developing and implementing this policy, we have complied with the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010, and have taken into account key considerations such as safeguarding requirements and the health and safety of our pupils. We have:

- considered how comfortable our uniform is for pupils;
- taken a sensible approach to allow for exceptions to be made during extreme weather;
- ensured that our uniform is suitable and safe for pupils who walk or cycle to school;
- chosen a PE kit which is practical, comfortable, appropriate to the activity involved and affordable.

We are aware that manufacturing items of clothing can have a significant impact on the environment. We have, therefore, considered the environmental impact of our uniform and how branded items are sourced. We understand that organic and Fairtrade items are usually more expensive than the alternatives but aim to signpost parents/carers to suitable suppliers of ethically-sourced garments.

Cost considerations

Where a school's uniform is too expensive it can place an unreasonable burden on families and we have, therefore, given high priority to cost considerations. At Rockcliffe, we do not expect parents/ carers to source all, or even part, of their uniform from our preferred supplier. Children may wear items in the Rockcliffe colours of blue and grey – white polo shirts are also commonly worn - regardless of whether they include our school logo. This allows parents to purchase items cheaply from supermarkets and other retailers. However, we have selected <https://www.border-embroideries.co.uk/> as our preferred supplier of branded items as we believe the company offers these at a competitive price.

For many years, we have run a successful "Swap and Sell" second-hand uniform scheme. This allows parents/ carers to swap outgrown items for others of the appropriate size, or to purchase donated items for 50p each, or whatever they can afford. We expect uniform to be passed on to younger siblings within families, but always appreciate donations of used items once the last family member has left our school. We encourage this scheme as a way of lessening the environmental impact of buying school uniform, as well as a sensible way of saving money, and find that families are keen to take part.

When new pupils arrive in our school, both at and after the beginning of the academic year, we always offer them access to "Swap and Sell" items and many make use of the service, even if only as an interim measure until their order of new items arrives. We supply such items free of charge where we feel this would be welcome, and encourage parents/carers to let us know of any difficulties they have encountered purchasing items of clothing, including coats, shoes, etc. so that we can offer assistance.

Our uniform

Please note that we do not ask that Nursery pupils wear school uniform, although some parents/ carers do choose to purchase sweatshirts or other items.

We ask that children wear:

- Grey trousers (or skirts or pinafores, or long shorts in warmer weather)
- Light blue polo shirts (non-branded white polo shirts are acceptable should blue items not be available)
- Royal blue sweatshirts or cardigans
- Comfortable black shoes, or boots in colder weather

For PE/ sports lessons:

- White shorts, royal blue tee-shirts and black sandshoes (indoors)
- Navy joggers, royal blue tee-shirts and trainers (outdoors)
- Royal blue hoodies may also be worn, but school sweatshirts may of course be worn in colder weather

Branded book bags and gym sacs are available via our approved supplier and at Swap and Sell events, but children may use any bags which are of a suitable size. We do ask, however, that large back packs are avoided as we have no space in which to store them safely.

In Years Three and Four, our children take part in swimming lessons at a local pool, managed by North Tyneside Council. We follow the NTC guidelines on suitable swimwear, which are that:

- girls wear a one piece costume (rather than a bikini or tankini)
- boys wear trunks or short swimming shorts (no long “beach” shorts)
- children do not wear earrings or other jewellery
- long hair is tied back or plaited
- all children wear swimming goggles and bring a towel

We also ask children to tie back long hair during PE lessons, and discourage the wearing of jewellery in school. Ear piercing should take place at the beginning of the summer holiday so that earrings may be removed during the day by the start of the autumn term.

Human rights, equality and discrimination considerations

When making decisions about our uniform policy, we have had regard to our obligations under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). We have considered the impact of our policy on pupils who share a protected characteristic:

- age;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- religion or belief;
- race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin);
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy – although this is not a consideration at Rockcliffe given the age of our pupils.

We encourage all of our children to wear trousers, and comfortable shoes, as we believe these allow them to move more freely, especially during play times. However, we understand that some parents/carers prefer their daughters to wear skirts or pinafores. We also appreciate that some school shoes available to girls are designed with a (very) small heel and these are acceptable so long as they do not prevent them from walking safely, or cause them discomfort.

Religion or beliefs

Some religions and beliefs require their adherents to conform to a particular dress code or to otherwise outwardly manifest their belief. This could include wearing or carrying specific religious artefacts, not cutting their hair, dressing modestly, or covering their head. Pupils have the right to manifest a religion or belief, although not necessarily at all times, places or in a particular manner. We will be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important school policies, such as school safety or discipline.

Discrimination

In developing and implementing our school uniform policy, we have considered our obligations not to discriminate unlawfully and have made our uniform policy as inclusive as possible. We are willing to allow for some individual variations to our uniform policy, where they are necessary to avoid indirect discrimination, e.g. reasonable adjustments must be made, as appropriate, for pupils with a disability.

Complaints and challenges to school uniform policy

Disputes about school uniforms will be resolved quickly and in accordance with our complaints policy. We will consult and work closely with parents/carers so as to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

Our school uniform is inclusive, and we will be considerate when implementing our policy so that our uniform is able to be worn by all pupils. Where the subject of a complaint is due to a pupil's protected characteristic, we will carefully consider requests to vary our uniform policy.

Non-compliance

Although teachers are legally permitted to discipline pupils for breaching the school's rules on appearance or uniform, it is likely that the responsibility for any such breaches would lie with the children's parents or carers, rather than with the pupils themselves. In such instances, we would seek to explore reasons for non-compliance with the parents/ carers, and to resolve any underlying issues.

This policy was adopted by the full governing body on 31 March 2022 and 23 March 2023. It is reviewed on an annual basis, following consultations with parents, carers and pupils.