

School Uniform Policy

This policy is in line with the DfE's statutory '[Cost of school uniforms](#)' guidance. Schools are expected to be compliant with the majority of this guidance by September 2022; however, there are exceptions, such as where the school is tied into a contract with a supplier and where a competitive tender must be run to set up a new uniform contract. All schools should be fully compliant by September 2023 where possible. Read our [Up-to-speed on: Statutory 'Cost of school uniforms' Guidance](#) for more information.

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Statement of intent

Rossmere Academy believes that a consistent school uniform policy is vital to promote the ethos of the school and provide a sense of belonging and identity for all pupils, regardless of their protected characteristics or socio-economic circumstances.

For the purposes of this policy, “**uniform**” includes the following elements of pupils’ appearance:

- Clothing, including the school uniform itself, variations of the school uniform such as PE kits, and other clothing worn at school, e.g. non-uniform.
- Hairstyles and headwear.
- Jewellery and other accessories.
- Cosmetics such as makeup and nail polish.

This policy lays out the measures the school has taken to ensure a consistent, fair and inclusive uniform policy, and to implement a uniform that reflects the needs of all pupils, is affordable, and provides the best value for money for both the school and pupils’ families.

We believe that pupils learn most effectively and achieve their best outcomes when they are comfortable, able to be themselves, and dressed in a way that sets an appropriate tone for education.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021
- DfE (2021) 'Cost of school uniforms'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2021) 'School uniforms'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2022) 'Preventing hair discrimination in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust and school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- LGBTQ+ Policy
- Tendering and Procurement Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- Establishing, in consultation with the LGB, Headteacher and school community, a practical and smart school uniform that accurately reflects the school's vision and values.
- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible, inclusive, and does not disadvantage any pupil because of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.
- Ensuring that the school's uniform is accessible and affordable.
- Ensuring compliance with the DfE's '[Cost of school uniforms](#)' guidance.

The Local Governing Board

- Listening to the opinions and wishes of parents, pupils and the wider school community regarding changes to the school's uniform.
- Demonstrating in this policy how best value for money has been achieved.
- Processing and approving all eligible School Uniform Assistance Application Forms.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Enforcing the school's uniform rules on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensuring that teachers understand this policy and what to do if a pupil is in breach of the policy.
- Listening to the opinions and wishes of the school community in regard to the school's uniform and making appropriate recommendations to the governing board.

- Providing pupils with an exemption letter as appropriate, e.g. for a pupil who has a broken arm and requires a loose-fitting shirt.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that pupils dress in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Ensuring that pupils understand why having a consistent and practical school uniform is important, e.g. school identity.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing their children with the correct school uniform as detailed in this policy.
- Informing the Headteacher if their child requires an exemption to the uniform rules for a period of time, with a reason why.
- Ensuring that their child's uniform is clean, presentable and the correct size.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Wearing the correct uniform at all times, unless the Headteacher has granted an exemption.
- Looking after their uniform as appropriate.
- Understanding and respecting why a school uniform is important to the school, e.g. school identity and community.

3. Cost principles

The Trust with schools, will ensure that its school uniform is affordable and accessible to all pupils, and does not place an unreasonable financial burden on parents.

In accordance with the 'School Admissions Code', the Headteacher will ensure that the school's uniform requirements do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

The Trust with schools, will assess the overall cost implications of its uniform policy regularly, including prior to making any changes to the school uniform. When evaluating whether costs are reasonable and proportionate, the school will take into account the opinions and situations of:

- Economically disadvantaged parents.
- Parents with multiple children who are, or will be in the future, pupils at the school.
- Parents of younger children, as they are likely to grow quickly and require new sets of uniform more frequently.
- Parents of pupils with protected characteristics that may impact their ability to access the uniform.
- LAC and PLAC.

The school will evaluate the cost of its uniform based on the overall collection of uniform items that parents would need to purchase for a pupil, rather than on the cost effectiveness of individual items; this will include consideration of the fact that parents will need to purchase multiples of certain items, e.g. shirts and socks, to ensure their child can come to school in clean uniform every day.

The school will keep variations in school uniform for different groups of pupils, e.g. year group specific items or house colours, to a minimum to ensure that pupils can get the most wear out of their uniform and that parents can pass some items down to younger siblings.

The school will keep branded uniform items to a minimal level that is reasonable for all members of the school community. The school defines a branded uniform item as any item of clothing that cannot be purchased at a range of retailers, e.g. supermarkets, due to the item's logo, colour, design, fabric or other unique element. Where the school requires an item of branded clothing, it will assess how prices can be kept as low as possible and put measures in place to facilitate this. This may include:

- Offering sew- or iron-on logo patches for jumpers that can be bought at non-specialist retailers, instead of requiring specific branded jumpers.
- Making donated second-hand uniform available for free.

The Trust and its schools will meet the DfE's requirements and recommendations on costs and value for money. Care will be taken to ensure that school uniform is affordable for all current and prospective pupils, and that the best value for money is secured through reputable suppliers.

The school will work with multiple suppliers to obtain the best value for money possible. Any savings negotiated will be passed to parents where possible. The school will not enter into exclusive single-supplier contracts or cash-back arrangements. More information on supplier processes can be found in the ['School uniform supplier'](#) section of this policy.

The Trust and its schools will not make frequent changes to uniform requirements and will take the views of parents and pupils into account when considering any changes.

4. Equality principles

The school takes its legal obligation to avoid unlawfully discriminating against any protected characteristic very seriously. In line with this, the school will aim to ensure that its uniform policy is as inclusive as possible so that all pupils can access a school uniform which is comfortable, suitable for their needs, and reflects who they are, while avoiding any direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics or socio-economic status.

The school will ensure that parents and pupils are consulted over any changes to school uniform, and that, where appropriate and with pupils' consent, views and advice are sought specifically from pupils, and parents of pupils, who:

- Are transgender or non-binary.
- Are of a religious or cultural background that has specific dress requirements.
- Have SEND and/or sensory needs.

Parents' concerns and requests regarding school uniform and amendments to it are handled on a case-by-case basis by the headteacher and governing board, and always in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Information on how the school ensures its uniform policy does not discriminate against pupils with specific protected characteristics is outlined below.

Gender

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain gender, the school will ensure that the cost of uniform is as equal in price as possible across items for all genders.

This includes:

- Adhering to the procedures laid out in the '[Cost principles](#)' section of this policy.
- Not directly requiring pupils of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by requiring female pupils to buy both trousers and skirts.
- Not indirectly requiring pupils of a certain gender to buy additional uniform, e.g. by offering football in PE to only male pupils and requiring they buy football boots to participate.
- Not holding pupils of different genders to different uniform standards, e.g. by banning certain hairstyles for only one gender.

The school will implement a gender-neutral uniform, meaning that pupils will not be required to wear specific items based on their gender, and may wear any of the uniform items listed in the '[School uniform](#)' section of this policy regardless of the legal sex recorded on the school's records. Transgender pupils are supported to access the uniform that best reflects their gender expression in line with the LGBTQ+ Policy.

Religion and belief

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain religion, belief or culture, the school will ensure that there is flexibility to allow pupils to present themselves in a way that adheres to their dress requirements as far as possible, within the school's uniform policy.

The school will endeavour to meet all requests for amendments to the uniform for these purposes; however, the needs and rights of individual pupils will be weighed against any health and safety concerns appropriate to the circumstances, e.g. if safety headgear needs to be worn.

Race

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils of a certain race, the school will ensure that its uniform policy does not constitute unlawful indirect discrimination through blanket rules. This includes:

- Not banning hairstyles related to a pupil's ethnic origin, e.g. natural Afro hairstyles.
- Not banning hairstyles worn because of cultural, family and social customs, e.g. cornrows.
- Not banning head coverings related to a pupil's culture or ethnic origin, e.g. African heritage head wraps.

The school will follow the good practice guidance provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission on '[Preventing hair discrimination in schools](#)'.

SEND and medical conditions

To avoid disproportionately impacting pupils with SEND or medical conditions, the school will ensure its uniform policy takes into account the needs of these pupils. This includes:

- Ensuring the school uniform uses soft, stretchy fabrics and avoids intricate buttons or hard seams.
- Allowing variations to the standard uniform for pupils whose medical conditions may impact how they dress, e.g. pupils with casts who require loose-fitting clothing or pupils with hair loss-related conditions who wish to wear head coverings.

Where the needs of these pupils cannot be met in the standard uniform policy, individual adaptations to the uniform will be considered and permitted wherever possible.

5. Complaints and challenges

The school will endeavour to resolve all uniform complaints and challenges locally and informally, in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Policy.

The school will refer individuals who wish to complain to the Complaints Policy and request that they follow the procedures outlined therein.

When a complaint is received, the school will work with the complainant to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

6. School uniform supplier

The school's current school uniform supplier is:

Motif8 Embroidery and Print Ltd, Stockton on Tees

01642601501

Website- www.motif8.co.uk

We also provide our logo to any other supplier that is able to offer reasonably priced school uniform.

The governing board will ensure that a written contract is in place with the supplier for branded items. The school will tender the uniform contract regularly, whether changes to the uniform are made or not, in line with best value principles.

The governing board will be able to demonstrate how uniform is procured at the best value for money. The Headteacher will work to ensure that the items are procured as cheaply as possible without compromising on the quality, e.g. by requesting standard-style items from the supplier rather than more intricate and unique designs.

The school will not sign contracts with suppliers before requesting visualisations and samples of proposed uniform.

7. Uniform assistance

The school will support disadvantaged families in meeting the costs of uniforms. School uniform assistance will be provided by the school to any family that request help. This may be by providing a free sweatshirt to a child where we know there is hardship. We also have a cupboard full of donated second hand uniform in the main entrance. Any parent is able to take items from this cupboard to ensure their child is correctly dressed for school. We make this process as informal as possible so that there is no stigma attached to asking for help.

We will provide a PE T-shirt, shorts and a PE bag to every child in the school every year. These will remain in school and be washed in school. This is to ensure every child can access PE lessons.

We will provide spare swimming kit for any child who does not bring their own kit, as we are aware that financial hardship may be the reason they do not have kit.

We will provide every child new to the school with a high quality book bag each year.

By providing these things to every child, we hope to reduce the stigma some families may feel about not being able to afford these 'extras'

8. Non-compliance

Staff will be permitted to challenge parents for breaching this policy, where relevant to their role.

9. School uniform

Clothing

The school uniform is as follows:

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire	Cost per item from school supplier
Regular school uniform				
Red sweatshirt or cardigan	Required	Branding is available but not essential	Branded from Motif8 (available from school) Non-branded available from any supermarket	Sweatshirt - £11 Cardigan £13 Tesco - £6 for 2
White polo shirt	Required	Branding is available but not essential	Branded from Motif8 (available from school) Non-branded available from any supermarket	Branded - £7.95 Tesco - £4 for 3
Grey or black trousers, skirt, pinafore or shorts	Required	No branding	Available from any supermarket	

Plain black shoes or trainers (with black soles and no coloured logos)	Required	No branding	Available from regular shops	
PE kit				
Red t-shirt	Provided by school	School logo on right-hand side	Provided by school	
Plain black or navy shorts, leggings or jogging bottoms	Optional	No branding	Shorts are provided by school. Others can be bought from any supermarket.	
Trainers or gym shoes	Required	No branding	Available from regular retailers	
Accessories				
School book bag	Required	School logo	Provided on entry to school. Replacements must be bought	£8.50

Jewellery

The school rules on jewellery are as follows:

- One pair of stud earrings may be worn – no other piercings are permitted.
- A smart and sensible wrist watch may be worn.

Pupils will be advised that jewellery is their personal responsibility and not that of the school. Lost or damaged items will not be refunded. All jewellery must be removed during practical lessons, including PE lessons.

Bags

Pupils are expected to use a book bag to transport reading books and homework between home and school. As pupils get older, many choose to bring a normal bag instead.

Large bags are discouraged as there is nowhere to store them. As PE kits stay in school on pegs, children only need to bring a book bag.

Hairstyles and headwear

The school reserves the right to make a judgement on whether a pupil's hairstyle, hair colour or headwear is inappropriate for the school environment; however, the school will ensure that

any such judgements do not discriminate against any pupil by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual pupil's scenario will be taken into account where any judgements on appropriateness are to be made, and parents will always have the freedom to complain via the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Pupils with long hair must ensure that this does not impede their vision, cover their face, or cause a health and safety risk. Long hair must be tied up during practical lessons, e.g. during PE.

The following hairstyles, hair colours and headwear are not considered appropriate for school:

- Extreme shaved patterns or mohican hair styles
- Brightly coloured, dyed hair

10. Adverse weather

All pupils will be advised to wear weather-appropriate clothing as they will be playing outside or accessing outdoor learning in all weathers.

Pupils will be advised not to wear any jumpers during heatwaves. If outside during break times, pupils not wearing sun-safe clothing will be advised to stay in an area protected from the sun, or spare clothing is provided.

For bad weather, this includes wearing a waterproof coat, wellington boots, hats and gloves.

11. Labelling and lost property

Parents will be advised to ensure that all pupils' clothing and footwear is clearly labelled with their name and year group.

Any lost clothing will be taken to the lost property box in the entrance hall. All lost property will be retained for one month. If it is not collected in this time, school uniform will be washed and redistributed as spare. Other items will be disposed of.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the chair of governors and the Headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2025. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff, pupils, parents and other relevant stakeholders.