



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Saffron Walden

SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

No. STM-026

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Accountable Director (<i>Relevant ED</i>)	<i>Main Committee</i>

1. Introduction and Purpose

This policy sets out the school's expectations for pupil uniform and appearance. It is designed to:

- reflect the **Catholic ethos** of our school community;
- promote a sense of **belonging, identity and pride**;
- support positive behaviour and readiness for learning;
- ensure uniform is **affordable, practical and inclusive**; and
- comply with **Department for Education guidance** on school uniforms and cost considerations. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

This policy applies to all pupils from Reception to Year 6.

2. Our Catholic Ethos and Uniform

As a Catholic school, our uniform reflects our values of respect, community and equality. All pupils are expected to wear uniform with pride during the school day, on school trips and at certain other occasions as specified by the Headteacher.

The Governing Body has consulted with parents, pupils and staff in developing this policy to ensure it meets the needs of our community.

3. Uniform Requirements

Core Uniform – *all items are compulsory, with optional branded items indicated. Three branded items required, as specified below:*

- **Red school sweatshirt/cardigan** with logo (**required**) purchasable from Gray Palmer
- **Red school polo shirt** with logo (**required**) purchasable from Gray Palmer
- **Grey trousers, skirt or pinafore** from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Plain socks or tights** (Grey/black/white socks or grey/red tights) from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Black school shoes** (flat, not trainers, sensible and safe for play) from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Book bag (Infants)/rucksack (Juniors)** with logo (optional) purchasable from Gray Palmer/without logo from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Red school baseball cap** with logo (optional) purchasable from Gray Palmer/without logo from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Water bottle** – not metal
- **Tissues** (travel pack)
- **Spare underwear** (in Ziplock bag)
- Small pack of **glue sticks**
- **2 pots of Playdoh** *for Reception Class only* (name labelled)

Summer Alternatives

- **Light-coloured checked or striped dress** in school colours
- **Grey tailored shorts**

PE Kit

- **Red polo/PE t-shirt** with logo (optional) purchasable from Gray Palmer/without logo from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Black PE tracksuit trousers** with branded stripe (optional) purchasable from Gray Palmer/without branded stripe from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Black Hooded/Plain PE sweatshirt** with logo (**required**) purchasable from Gray Palmer
- **Red PE shorts/skorts (Juniors)** – not cycling shorts with branded stripe (optional) purchasable from Gray Palmer/without branded stripe from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Black PE shorts (Infants)** not cycling shorts (optional) purchasable from Gray Palmer/without stripes from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Red swimming hat** with logo (optional) purchasable from Gray Palmer/without logo from many high street stores/supermarkets/online
- **Small ruck sack** for P.E. kit (named on the outside)
- **Trainers** (Velcro fastening for pupils who cannot tie laces)
- **Goggles** (for pupils with swimming lessons)
- **Shin pads** (for pupils with hockey/football lessons or clubs)
- **Gum shield** (for pupils with hockey lessons or clubs)

Parents may purchase plain, unbranded items from a range of high-street or supermarket suppliers whenever possible to support affordability.

This aligns with guidance that branded items should be kept to a minimum and that families have choice and value for money. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

Please make sure all these items are named – including coats and shoes. The PE kit should be labelled on the outside and school uniform should be labelled on the inside labels of clothing. Your child will *not* require any additional bag.

4. Cost, Affordability and Second-Hand Uniform

We are committed to keeping uniform costs **reasonable** and avoiding barriers to attendance or participation. School branded items are minimised. Parents may source generic alternatives that meet the policy standards.

The school offers:

- access to a **second-hand uniform** store (dates and information shared via More News, newsletter) which takes place at least termly.
- clear information on where uniform can be purchased. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

If a family is experiencing financial hardship, we encourage parents/carers to contact the Headteacher in confidence for support.

Monies

The school operates a payment system called School Money.

An email will be sent at the beginning of term giving you information about the system and enclosing your username and password.

We would request that you make use of this facility at the start of the new term and do not send cheques or cash into school unless instructed otherwise.

5. Religious and Cultural Considerations

We respect the right of pupils to **manifest their religion or belief**, including Catholic identity and practice. Parents must inform the school of any religious requirements relating to uniform, so that these can be accommodated respectfully and safely, in line with governmental guidelines. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

Examples may include:

- A simple crucifix necklace, *Juniors only* (must be removable for PE sessions).
- modest options for warmer weather.

These adjustments are made unless there is a compelling health and safety reason not to do so.

6. Equality and Inclusion

Our uniform policy complies with the **Equality Act 2010** and the Human Rights Act, and the school will not discriminate unlawfully in its application. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

We offer multiple options for all pupils, ensuring no pupil is disadvantaged because of sex, disability, religion or belief, race or other protected characteristic.

Reasonable adjustments will be made for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, for example offering softer fabrics, adaptive clothing options, or flexibility in PE kit where appropriate.

7. Seasonal and Practical Considerations

Pupils should bring a **coat** appropriate for weather conditions and, where relevant, sun hats during summer months (preferably in school colours). The school reserves the right to require suitable clothing for health and safety in all weather.

8. Non-Uniform and Special Days

On charity days or special occasions, the school will communicate clear expectations in advance regarding appropriate dress and any contribution requirements. Participation will not be dependent on donations.

9. Miscellaneous

The school reserves the right to request any additions to attire that fall within the remit of this policy are adhered to. This includes, although not exclusively so, the following items which are not permitted at school:

- unnaturally coloured hair extensions, or dye
- any hair extensions not permanently fixed
- earrings (during PE lessons)*
- any nail extensions
- nail varnish

*Please note the following: Essex County Council's ruling (January 1995) states that for physical education: "All jewellery, including studs in newly pierced ears, must be removed for safety reasons. Those children who do not comply will not be permitted to participate in the activity".

Essex County Council advises that all jewellery, including earrings, must be removed for Physical Education (PE) lessons due to safety reasons. Schools are not permitted to tape over earrings for PE. If a child cannot remove their earrings, they will be unable to participate in the PE lesson.

Elaboration:

- **Safety First:**

The primary reason for this policy is to ensure the safety of students during physical activity.

- **No Taping:**

Essex County Council explicitly prohibits taping over earrings for PE.

- **Removal Requirement:**

Students are required to remove earrings for PE, and if they are unable to do so, they will not be able to participate in the lesson.

- **Piercing Recommendation:**

Schools often recommend having ears pierced during the summer holidays to allow for healing and easier earring removal.

If your child has pierced ears they may wear **one small single pair of studs**. Children **MUST** be able to remove earrings in order to take part in PE. Staff are not permitted to remove earrings and the school is unable to take responsibility for any jewellery that is lost.

If you intend to have your child's ears pierced, **please be aware that unless they can remove the earrings for PE or swimming themselves, they will not be able to take part in sessions.**

Other items

- Wristwatches may be worn at the child's own risk, but children need to be able to remove and replace them independently. Smart Watches are not permitted nor are watches which have cameras and microphones are not permitted.
- Charity wrist bands if the school is promoting the cause.
- No other jewellery is allowed.

10. Compliance and Support

The Headteacher, supported by staff, will monitor uniform compliance fairly and consistently.

Before any sanctions for non-compliance are applied, the school will consider whether:

- a pupil's uniform is unaffordable for their family;
- there are religious, cultural or medical reasons affecting compliance;
- reasonable adjustments are needed. ([GOV.UK](#))

Parents will be informed promptly if a pupil is not in correct uniform and offered support where needed.

10. Communication and Review

This policy will be published on the **school website** and sent to parents at the start of each academic year. It will be reviewed by the Governing Board annually, or earlier if required, to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects the latest guidance. ([GOV.UK](#))