



ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

BACUP

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Appearance, Affordability and Inclusion Policy

“Jesus is the Centre of our lives”

God wants me to be the best me I can be

Our Mission

Through His teaching we aim to value ourselves and each other as unique and precious individuals created by God; we encourage and develop love and respect for each other and for our world; we strive to promote and deepen our Catholic faith through prayer, work and play; we aim to foster a loving, caring environment in which each child can freely learn and develop to their full potential.

2026–2027

Policy information

Document control	Details
Policy title	School Uniform Policy
Policy lead	Head Teacher
Review date	September 2028
Audience	Staff, governors, families and other stakeholders

Our commitment Uniform should strengthen belonging without creating a financial, cultural, religious, disability or attendance barrier. Most items may be bought without a logo from any retailer; support and good-quality second-hand uniform are available confidentially.

1. Purpose, scope and principles

This policy sets out the uniform and appearance expectations for pupils at St Joseph's RC Primary School, Bacup. It applies during the school day and, where appropriate, on visits, performances and other activities when pupils represent the school.

Our mission—'Jesus is the Centre of our lives'—calls us to value every child as unique and precious. Our motto, 'God wants me to be the best me I can be', is reflected in a policy that promotes dignity, equality, practical participation, pride and responsible stewardship.

- create a shared identity and sense of belonging;
- support a calm, purposeful and safe learning environment;
- be comfortable, practical, durable and suitable for primary-aged pupils;
- provide value for money and keep compulsory branded items to the legal minimum;
- respect protected characteristics, culture, religion or belief, disability, SEND and individual need; and
- be applied fairly, sensitively and proportionately, with education and attendance protected.

2. Legal and guidance framework

- Education Act 1996, including section 551A, as amended;
- Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021;
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and the legal limit on compulsory branded uniform and PE-kit items applying from 1 September 2026;
- DfE statutory guidance, Cost of school uniforms, updated July 2026;
- DfE non-statutory guidance, Developing school uniform policy, and Procuring school uniform supplies, updated July 2026;
- Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and the Public Sector Equality Duty; Human Rights Act 1998; Children and Families Act 2014;
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 and current DfE behaviour guidance; and
- Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance on preventing hair discrimination in schools.

The governing body has regard to the statutory cost guidance and complies with the branded-item limit. If legislation or guidance changes, the current requirement will be followed and this policy reviewed promptly.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing body	Considers equality and cost impact; assures compliance, consultation, procurement, second-hand provision and publication.
Headteacher	Implements the policy consistently; considers adjustments, hardship and exceptions; ensures any response to non-compliance is supportive and proportionate.
Staff	Model respectful expectations; notice barriers; avoid public correction or embarrassment; refer persistent concerns through the agreed pastoral route.
Parents/carers	Support pupils to attend in suitable uniform; label items; contact school early if cost, fit, faith, disability, sensory or other needs create difficulty.
Pupils	Wear agreed uniform with pride, care for belongings and speak to a trusted adult if clothing or appearance requirements cause concern.

4. Standard school uniform

Choice and affordability Unless expressly stated, a school logo is not required. Plain items in the correct colours may be purchased from supermarkets, high-street shops, online retailers, the named supplier or the second-hand scheme.

Item	Permitted option
Top layer	Purple sweatshirt, jumper or cardigan. A school-branded version is optional.
Polo shirt	Forest-green polo shirt; a school-branded version is optional.
Trousers / shorts	Plain charcoal-grey or black school trousers or tailored school shorts.
Skirt / pinafore	Purple-and-green checked school skirt/pinafore, or plain charcoal-grey/black school skirt.
Summer dress	Purple checked school dress.
Socks / tights	Plain black, grey, white or purple socks or tights.
Shoes	Plain black, safe, enclosed school shoes. Discreet all-black practical footwear may be agreed as a reasonable adjustment.
Outdoor wear	Weather-appropriate coat. The purple school coat is optional; hats, gloves and sun hats may be worn when conditions require.

All listed garment options are available to every pupil. No option is assigned by sex or gender. Clothing should be clean and in a reasonable state of repair; ordinary wear is understood.

5. Year 6 uniform

Year 6 pupils may wear the following distinctive items:

- purple V-neck jumper or sweatshirt;
- plain white short-sleeved school shirt or blouse; and
- the school tie presented to Year 6 pupils.

The gifted tie does not create a purchase requirement. Families should contact the school if replacement or adapted items are needed.

6. PE kit and active participation

Item	Requirement
Indoor / general PE	Plain white T-shirt and plain black PE shorts.
Outdoor PE	Plain black jogging bottoms may be worn when appropriate.
Footwear	Black trainers, preferably all black, or suitable PE pumps.
Branding	No school logo or specialist branded sportswear is required.

Kit should be named, taken home regularly for laundering and returned for the next lesson. Staff will make reasonable adjustments and provide discreet support or spare kit where needed so that clothing does not become a barrier to participation.

7. Affordability, branded items and suppliers

From 1 September 2026, primary schools must not require more than three compulsory branded items across everyday uniform and PE kit. This policy requires no purchased branded item: families may choose plain, logo-free versions of the core garments. Optional branded items must never be treated as compulsory in practice.

- The school considers the total cost across the year, including PE kit, footwear, seasonal wear, durability and laundering—not only the price of individual items.
- Uniform will not normally be changed frequently. Parents, carers and pupils will be consulted before significant changes, particularly about cost and equality impact, and a reasonable transition period will be given.
- At the date of adoption, branded items may be obtained from Ann's Childrenswear, 5a Union Street, Bacup OL13 0AA, telephone 01706 875127, or www.anns-schoolwear.co.uk. This information is not an instruction to use that retailer.
- Where the school enters a sole-supplier arrangement, it will prioritise cost and value for money, use a transparent competitive process where required, avoid cash-back arrangements that increase family cost, and review the contract regularly.
- Current uniform requirements, places to buy optional branded items, and second-hand arrangements will be published clearly on the school website.

8. Second-hand uniform and financial support

- Families experiencing difficulty should contact the headteacher or school office confidentially. Support may include second-hand or spare items, a hardship contribution, phased replacement or signposting to local help.
- A child will not be prevented from applying to, starting at or attending the school because a family cannot afford uniform.
- Staff will not ask pupils to explain family finances publicly or identify recipients of support to other families.
- The school encourages reuse and donation as part of stewardship of our world; donated items must be clean, safe and in wearable condition.

9. Jewellery, watches, make-up and nails

- For safety and practicality, jewellery is not normally worn. One pair of small, plain round stud earrings and an ordinary watch are permitted.
- All jewellery, including earrings and watches, must be removed for PE, swimming and other activities where the risk assessment requires it. Staff do not remove earrings for pupils. Newly pierced ears should, where possible, be planned for the start of a longer holiday.
- Religious or culturally significant items will be accommodated wherever possible. Any restriction must be justified by a genuine and proportionate safety or safeguarding concern, with an appropriate alternative considered.
- Smartwatches, recording devices and internet-connected watches must not be used in school and should be left at home unless specifically agreed for an individual medical or accessibility need.
- Make-up, nail varnish and artificial nails are not appropriate for routine school attendance. Reasonable exceptions may be agreed for medical, religious, cultural or school-event reasons.

10. Hair, head coverings and personal appearance

Hair should be clean and arranged so pupils can learn and take part safely. Long hair must be secured for PE, food preparation and any activity identified by risk assessment. Protective, natural, Afro-textured, braided, loc'd and culturally significant hairstyles are welcomed and must not be treated less favourably.

Religious head coverings and other items associated with religion or belief are permitted. The school will work with the pupil and family on a safe adaptation where an activity creates a genuine risk. Appearance rules will not rely on vague labels such as "extreme" or on minimum hair lengths. Any concern will be considered objectively, individually and with regard to equality, culture, SEND, sensory and medical needs.

11. Equality, SEND and reasonable adjustments

The school will not discriminate unlawfully in the content or application of this policy. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disability, medical conditions and SEND, including sensory sensitivities, mobility, continence, orthotics, skin conditions and dexterity. The school will also consider religion or belief, race and culture, sex, gender reassignment and other relevant circumstances under equality and human-rights law.

A parent, carer or pupil may request an adjustment from the headteacher. The school will listen, consider evidence proportionately, discuss practical alternatives, record the outcome and review it when needs change. Urgent temporary adjustments may be agreed without delay.

12. Weather, health and safety

- Expectations may be relaxed during hot, cold or severe weather; pupils may wear practical layers, shorts or other suitable alternatives where advised by the school.
- Footwear and clothing must permit safe movement and evacuation. Individual medical, disability and orthotic needs take priority through an agreed adjustment.
- Items presenting a specific risk in PE, play, practical work or visits may be removed, secured or adapted following the activity risk assessment.
- Parents should clearly label uniform. The school handles lost property sensitively and periodically returns, donates or recycles unclaimed items after reasonable notice.

13. Supporting compliance

Education first Uniform concerns will not be allowed to become an avoidable barrier to attendance, learning, play, lunch or belonging.

Staff will begin with a private, respectful conversation and establish whether cost, availability, laundry, housing circumstances, religion, culture, disability, SEND, safeguarding or another need is involved. The school will normally provide time, a spare item or practical support before considering any response under the Behaviour Policy.

- Pupils will not be publicly shamed, made to remove culturally or religiously significant items without proper consideration, or routinely excluded from lessons because of uniform.
- Responses to deliberate or repeated refusal after support will be reasonable, consistent and proportionate. Exclusion is not a standard uniform sanction.
- Where a concern may indicate neglect, hardship or another safeguarding issue, staff will follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy rather than treating it only as misconduct.
- Parents may raise unresolved concerns through the school Complaints Policy.

14. Consultation, monitoring and review

The governing body reviews this policy bi annually and before any significant change. Review evidence includes family and pupil feedback, equality and SEND issues, the number and cost of required items, supplier value and accessibility, availability and uptake of second-hand uniform, hardship support, complaints and patterns of non-compliance.

The school will engage parents/carers and pupils on significant proposals, record how cost and protected characteristics were considered, publish the approved policy, and allow reasonable lead-in time so usable items are not wasted.

Appendix 1: Family quick guide

Question	Answer
Must items carry the school logo?	No. Plain items in the specified colours are accepted; branded versions are optional.
Where can I buy uniform?	Any suitable retailer, the optional named supplier.
What if cost is difficult?	Contact the headteacher or school office confidentially. Support will be considered without stigma.
Can my child wear trousers or a skirt?	Yes. All listed options are open to every pupil.
What about faith, culture, disability or sensory need?	Ask for an adjustment. The school will consider individual need and seek a safe, dignified solution.
What if an item is temporarily unavailable?	Tell the school; a reasonable period or spare item will normally be arranged.
How do I challenge a decision?	Speak to the headteacher first; the published Complaints Policy is available if the matter is unresolved.

Appendix 2: Governance affordability and equality check

Review point	Evidence to record
Compulsory branding	Number of compulsory branded items across uniform and PE kit; confirmation that the legal maximum is not exceeded.
Whole-year cost	Indicative prices, footwear/PE/seasonal costs, durability, laundering and impact on families with more than one child.

Review point	Evidence to record
Retail choice	Unbranded alternatives, supplier accessibility, contract/tender review and value for money.
Second-hand access	Supply route, website information, frequency, affordability, dignity and uptake.
Equality / SEND	Consultation and impact on protected groups; hair, faith dress, gender-neutral choice, disability and reasonable adjustments.
Implementation	Attendance/learning impact, support offered, complaints, sanctions and staff consistency.
Consultation	Views of pupils and families, changes made, approval and transition period.

Appendix 3: Key references current at adoption

Source	Reference
DfE statutory guidance	Cost of school uniforms, updated 6 July 2026.
DfE policy guidance	Developing school uniform policy; Procuring school uniform supplies, updated 6 July 2026.
Primary legislation	Education Act 1996; Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021; Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026.
Equality and rights	Equality Act 2010; Human Rights Act 1998; Children and Families Act 2014; EHRC guidance on preventing hair discrimination in schools.
Related school policies	Behaviour; Safeguarding and Child Protection; Equality; SEND; PE; Online Safety; Complaints; Health and Safety.