

# Ballyclare Secondary School



## Uniform & Appearance Policy

*"The community of Ballyclare Secondary School strive to provide an inclusive learning and teaching environment in which all can reach their full potential. We aim to do this by fostering the core values of respect, kindness, compassion and joy."*

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## **1. Rationale**

Research indicates that maintaining high standards of uniform and appearance helps with creating a positive school identity, reducing social barriers; creating self-esteem and self-respect; and a sense of order. Some aspects of this uniform and appearance policy relate to Health and Safety concerns.

Ballyclare Secondary School has a very smart uniform. It looks its best when clean and tidy and well looked after. The school expects pupils to travel to and from school wearing school uniform correctly.

The uniform includes the school crest of Ballyclare Secondary School, and it is a symbol of personal excellence, respect, and responsibility to the local and wider community. Accordingly, the school has an interest in how the uniform is worn inside school and outside school.

We believe that high standards of school uniform and appearance can help all pupils by setting an appropriate tone for our conduct; instilling pride; supporting positive behaviour and discipline; encouraging identity with and support for the school ethos; ensuring all pupils feel welcome; protecting children from social pressures to dress in a particular way; and nurturing cohesion and promoting good relations between different groups of pupils. We also believe that having high standards of school uniform supports effective learning and teaching.

Adherence to our high standards of uniform is regarded as an indicator of positive behaviour. Refusal to adhere to uniform standards will therefore be seen as a refusal to abide by school rules/ expectations which can result in consequential action. Ballyclare Secondary School considers pupils coming to school in their uniform as a demonstration of being 'ready' as part of our 3Rs (ready, respectful and responsible).

Uniform regulations apply to anyone when the uniform is worn outside school at trips or other events.

## **2. PE Uniform**

Advice given to parents and guardians upon entry to school clearly states the correct daily and PE uniform. It is expected that pupils will bring the correct items of uniform and wear them in the correct way during PE and games classes and when representing school in a sporting event.

## **3. Practical & Affordable**

A school uniform should be as affordable and practical as possible and represent value for money for families. A well cared for uniform is the most effective way to ensure durability and value for money. Ballyclare Secondary School is committed to working with our local suppliers to ensure that families in our community have access to a reasonably priced uniform. Ballyclare Secondary School is committed to working with local charity groups and other organisations that provide free, professional cleaned, pre-loved uniforms.

Ballyclare Secondary School will monitor and take into consideration the advice and guidance published by the Department of Education, including published circulars.

## **4. Uniform and Appearance Ethos:**

Some may argue that strict adherence to school uniform is 'stifling to individuality', but in Ballyclare Secondary School we refute that argument. One of the highest values we promote is that of teamwork, and there is no one who would make such a claim of stifling individuality against any professional

sports team or business.

On the matter of appropriate reasonable adjustments, subjectivity on this matter (in terms of exercising and affording reasonable adjustments) rests with the *Senior Leadership Team*, who are committed to ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met. The *Principal* and/or *Senior Leadership Team* reserve the right to permit circumstantial allowances on a case-by-case basis, arising from consultation and agreement amongst members. Reasonable adjustments in respect of uniform extends to permitting pupils to wear different items of school uniform, as decided by the named parties above.

The values we promote about uniform to all our pupils are based around ten areas we care deeply about:

### **The Responsibilities of Pupils**

#### **We care about uniform and appearance because:**

- 1) We care about **equality** - uniform is a great leveler, it is an outward sign that all pupils are equal. Less competition, less keeping up with fashion, less distractions.
- 2) **We care about preventing bullying** - there is less opportunity for bullying with a school uniform.
- 3) **We care about standards of presentation (and so do employers)** - as long as it is worn correctly, uniform provides us with a sense of identity and pride in our school. Mornings become easier, and it removes the “what to wear” dilemma.
- 4) **We care about belonging** - uniform gives us a common identity and a sense of belonging.
- 5) **We care about practicality** - our uniform is designed to withstand wear, tear, and life in school much better than highstreet fashion items. It also creates a more work-like atmosphere.
- 6) **We care about better behaviour** - we behave better when we wear our uniform correctly; it is a symbol of our school’s set of expectations as to what is and isn’t acceptable, and we behave accordingly.
- 7) **We care about routines** - we learn the importance of following rules even if we don’t like them, a valuable lesson for life. When we wear our uniform, we know we must follow our rules.
- 8) **We care about doing things right** – if something is worth doing, it is worth doing to the best of our ability, and that is why it’s not just about wearing our uniform but wearing it with pride. This means it should be correct, clean, tidy, top buttons in, and shirts tucked in.
- 9) **We care about standards of work** - we have a much better attitude to our work when we are wearing our uniform. It helps encourage a sense of purpose when we put on our uniform in the mornings.
- 10) **We care about identity** - uniform gives our school a profile in our community and means we are all easily identifiable when outside school. It enhances the appearance of our pupils and therefore the reputation of our school.

It is the responsibility of our pupils to make themselves aware of the uniform regulations. These are provided, before the start of the academic year, to their parents. Pupils should understand from these regulations:

- The correct uniform to be worn, and;
- The correct way in which the uniform should be worn.

Pupils should also be aware that failure to follow these regulations may lead to consequences, which are outlined in this policy. Pupils in the senior school and especially those with the position of school prefect have responsibility as a role model and so the way in which they wear their uniform must be exemplary. Consequently, a student who fails to follow the regulations will not be able to continue to hold this position.

### **The Responsibility of Parents**

Parents/Carers should be familiar with the uniform regulations provided by the school and should facilitate their child/children in obtaining the correct items. Parents are expected to support the school in its insistence that their child follows the regulations. If disciplinary action proves necessary, then parents will be expected to support the school in the enforcement of whatever action is deemed necessary.

### **The Responsibility of Staff**

Form Teachers will ensure that the pupils in their class are made aware of the contents of this policy. It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves with the uniform regulations as issued to parents. It is expected that all staff will help to ensure that the uniform regulations are followed.

## **5. Promotion of High Standards of Uniform and Appearance**

All Staff have a very important role to play in maintaining a high standard of uniform in the school. They can do this in the following ways:

- i. In class assembly those pupils not in full school uniform should be taken note of and spoken to about the matter. In circumstances where there is a genuine reason for uniform standards not being met (medical, temporarily misplaced etc.) a written explanation from home must be provided on the first day.
- ii. Form Teachers should send persistent offenders to the Head of Year who will decide what action is to be taken after consulting with relevant pastoral staff (as appropriate). This may include going on daily report or withdrawal from classes.
- iii. Senior Staff may ask Form Teachers, Heads of Key Stage or Heads of Year to withdraw a pupil from general circulation and keep them in the teacher's room for the day if uniform or appearance is not acceptable. Work will be provided for the pupil(s) so that they do not miss out on their learning until their uniform meets acceptable standards.
- iv. The Principal, or a person authorised by the Principal, may ask a pupil to go home briefly to remedy a breach of the school's rules on appearance or uniform. This is not an exclusion, but an authorised absence. However, if the pupil continues to breach uniform rules in such a way as to be sent home to avoid school or takes longer than is strictly necessary to effect the change, the pupil's absence may be counted as unauthorised absence. In either case the pupil's parents must be notified, and the absence should be recorded.

## 6. Standard of Uniform and Appearance

### Boys

<u>Item</u>	
Blazer	Royal blue blazer with school badge.
Trousers	Dark grey or black trousers.
Shirt	White school shirt.
Tie	School tie.
Pullover	Grey long sleeved v neck sweater (optional).
Socks	Dark socks.
Coat	Plain navy-blue outdoor coat. No hoodies except the official school hoodie to be worn.
Shoes	Black shoes (not high heels, trainers of any kind or ballet pumps).
Scarf	A school scarf is available from the school suppliers.
Jewellery	Boys are allowed to wear one ring. All other jewelry, earrings, and facial piercing, including tongue bars, are not permitted at Ballyclare Secondary School.

### Girls

<u>Item</u>	
Blazer	Royal blue blazer with school badge.
Skirt	Royal blue 4 gored skirt (not pleated) - <b>to sit at knee</b> length (years 8-10) royal blue straight skirt with kick pleats (years 11-14).
Blouse	White school blouse.
Tie	School tie.
Pullover	Grey long sleeved v neck sweater (optional).
Socks	Grey knee length socks or grey tights.
Coat	Plain navy-blue outdoor coat.
Shoes	Black sensible shoes, no high heels, platforms, pumps, plimsolls.
Scarf	A school scarf is available from the school suppliers.
Jewellery	Girls are allowed to wear one stud in each ear and one ring. All other jewellery, earrings, and facial piercing, including tongue bars, are not permitted at Ballyclare Secondary School.
Nail Polish	Coloured polish or acrylic nails are not to be worn in school.
Makeup	Excessive makeup is not to be worn in school.
Eye Lashes	False eyelashes should not be worn, Eye lashes should be natural.

### **Special Points:**

- **Uniform should be worn correctly at all times:** top buttons properly in, tie is the correct length and pushed up fully, shirt is fully tucked in neatly, blazer on, undergarments are plain white and not protruding above the collar line.
- **‘Hoodies’** – of any kind or description are not to be worn with the school uniform at any time. The only exception to this rule is the official school branded hoodie which may be worn **over the blazer** when travelling to and from school. School hoodies are not worn underneath blazers.
- **Sweatshirts or zip up tracksuit tops** of any type or colour must not be worn under the blazer at any time – only a school jumper or cardigan is permitted.
- **Outdoor coats** – The only outdoor coats acceptable are plain navy, blue or black outdoor coats. Denim, Parka and Bomber jackets are **not** allowed as outdoor coats. Coats are not permitted to be worn underneath blazers. In inclement weather, pupils are permitted to come into the front foyer to remove their coats, but should not wear their coats throughout the school buildings(s) for the course of the day. It is permitted that pupils can put their coat on when leaving school at the end of the day, as long as it is over the top of their blazer.
- **Blazer** - Blazers are compulsory for all pupils. As they are so expensive, good care should be taken of the blazer. It must be worn to and from school, in corridors, and it must be treated with respect. The blazer may be removed in class with the teacher’s permission.
- **Names must be on all garments** including PE kit.

### **Physical Education Kit**

#### **Boys**

Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri polo shirt

Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri rugby shirt

Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri shorts

Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri socks

Training shoes (no baseball, basketball or converse style trainers are permitted)

Football boots.

#### **Girls**

Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri polo shirt

Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri shorts

Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri skort

Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri socks (compulsory for sports teams only)

White socks

Training shoes (no baseball, basketball, or converse style trainers are permitted).

### **Optional Physical Education Kit**

- Navy blue/ royal blue/amber Kukri smock top
- Navy blue/ royal blue/amber Kukri track bottoms
- Royal blue/navy blue/amber Kukri hooded top (to be worn for sport only, not with the regular uniform)

### **Disputes over Uniform and Appearance**

Some aspects of uniform and appearance are subjective, and the Board of Governors and School Leadership Team reserve the right to rule on matters of subjectivity.

The rules and regulations outlined above are neither exhaustive nor exclusive and the Board of Governors and School Leadership Team reserve the right to rule on all matters pertaining to the uniform and appearance of Ballyclare Secondary School pupils.