



Policy Name	SCHOOL UNIFORM
Relevant To	Federation ☒ Bidwell Brook Only ☐ Ellen Tinkham Only ☐
Type of Policy	Model ☐ School ☒
Name of Policy Holder	Christine Walker
Subject/Department	Communications
Approved By	Full Governing Body ☒ CBT Governors ☐ T&L Governors ☐ SLT ☐
Version Date (if applicable)	n/a
Date of Last Review	Autumn Term 2025
Date of Next Review	Autumn Term 2028

This policy:

- sets out our approach to requiring a uniform that is of reasonable cost and offers the best value for money for parents and carers;
- explains how we will avoid discrimination in line with our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010;
- clarifies our expectations for school uniform.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) prohibits discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include sex, race, religion or belief, and gender reassignment.

To avoid discrimination, our schools will:

- avoid listing uniform items based on sex, to give all pupils the opportunity to wear the uniform they feel most comfortable in or that most reflects their self-identified gender;
- allow all pupils to have long hair (though we reserve the right to ask for this to be tied back, if needed);
- allow all pupils to style their hair in the way that is appropriate for their school day yet makes them feel most comfortable;
- allow pupils to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons;
- allow pupils to wear headscarves and other religious or cultural symbols;
- allow for adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality by asking pupils or their parents and carers to get in touch with their Head of Site, who can answer questions about the policy and respond to any requests following consultation with the Federation Senior Leadership Team, if necessary.

Across our Federation, we encourage our children and young people from Early Years to Key Stage 4, to wear a school uniform each day. This:

- helps provide a sense of belonging and identity within our schools;
- supports children and young people to identify and help prepare themselves for a school day;
- acts as a “leveller” with their peers whilst in school or college;
- ensures personal and possibly expensive clothing does not become damaged or blemished during the school day.

For those students who are educated in our Sixth Form Department, we acknowledge their status of transitioning from Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5 and moving even closer to adulthood and independence. In line with mainstream Colleges with students of the same age, it is permitted for Key Stage 5 students to wear their own choice of clothing whilst on site. However, clothing guidance for these students has been produced by the Student Council which should be adhered to:

Clothing must be appropriate for the school environment. This means ...

- It must be practical for all the requirements of the individual's education and care needs.
- It must not reveal private areas of their body, either on purpose or as a side effect of engaging in their learning.

Clothing must not be offensive, this means:

- It must not have sexualised, violent, political, or insensitive imagery.
- It must not have sexualised or violent language, swear words, or language that is insensitive.

Clothing worn by Sixth Form students should be respectful of their environment eg jeans should not be ripped, shorts should reach knee length or just above the knee, tops should fully cover the midriff, no vest tops, no see-through leggings.

Whilst we encourage all our pupils up to Key Stage 4 to wear a school uniform, we acknowledge there may be reasons why some of our pupils may not be able to do so eg specific sensory needs. If a child or young person is better able to engage with their education and school life wearing their own clothing during the day, we respect this decision and allow non-school uniform to be worn. A pupil's own clothing must still be appropriate for a school setting.

Parents and carers are expected to ensure their child or young person is wearing suitable clothing to school that is:

- clean;
- clearly labelled with the child's or young person's name;
- in good condition;
- respectful of the education environment and other pupils on site eg jeans should not be ripped, shorts should reach knee length or sit just above the knee, tops should fully cover the midriff, no vest tops or spaghetti-strap tops are permitted, no see-through leggings to be worn.

Official School Uniform

The proposed upcoming [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill](#) will be placing a focus on primary and secondary schools to cap the number of branded school uniform items that families are expected to purchase. For example, Primary schools will be banned from requiring more than three branded items, across the school year, including items for PE or for participation in any school club, activity or event (whether compulsory or optional). Secondary schools will be permitted to include a school tie in addition to the three branded items. This change is expected to come into force from September 2026. Although 'all-through' (4-19 years) Special Schools are not explicitly mentioned in the Bill, our families are not required to purchase branded uniform in order for their child to attend school.

Across our Federation, we have a limited number of branded uniform items which our families are able to purchase, should they wish to do so. We have a duty to ensure the branded uniform on offer is affordable, in line with statutory [guidance](#) from the Department for Education.

We also recognize that items with our school logo cannot be purchased from a wide range of retailers and that requiring such items, limits our parents' ability to 'shop around' for a low price. We therefore allow our pupils to wear non-branded, similarly coloured uniform as an alternative which can be purchased from various retailers including supermarkets.

Uniform Colours

Bidwell Brook School

Primary (Early Years to KS2):

Royal Blue sweatshirt or cardigan

White polo shirt

Mid grey skirt, mid grey trousers, mid grey shorts, mid grey skirt

Optional for the Summer Term: Blue gingham dress

Secondary (KS2 to KS4):

Navy Blue sweatshirt or cardigan

White polo shirt

Mid grey skirt, mid grey trousers, mid grey shorts

Ellen Tinkham School

Primary (Early Years to KS2 @ Hollow Lane):

Red sweatshirt, cardigan, microfleece, fleece jacket

White polo shirt

Mid grey skirt, mid grey trousers, mid grey shorts, mid grey skirt

Optional for the Summer Term: Red gingham dress

Secondary (KS2 to KS4 @ Wayside Crescent):

Navy Blue sweatshirt, microfleece, fleece jacket

White polo shirt

Mid grey skirt, mid grey trousers, mid grey shorts

For branded items of clothing, we ensure our uniform:

- is available at a reasonable cost;
- provides the best value for money for parents and carers.

We do this by:

- carefully considering whether any items with distinctive characteristics are necessary;
- keeping the number of branded items to a minimum, so that the school's uniform can act as a social leveller;
- considering cheaper alternatives to school-branded items, such as logos that can be ironed on, as long as this doesn't compromise quality and durability;
- avoiding different uniform requirements for different key stages from Early Years to Key Stage 4;
- making sure arrangements are in place for parents and carers to acquire pre-loved uniform items through the PTFA (Parents, Teachers, Friends Association);
- avoiding changes to uniform specifications and minimising the financial impact on parents and carers of any changes;
- consulting with parents and pupils on any proposed significant changes to the uniform policy and carefully considering any complaints about our uniform or this policy.

At Bidwell Brook School, our school uniform is available to purchase direct from Riviera Schooldays. Their website is available [here](#). Branded items available to purchase include polo shirts, sweatshirts and cardigans.

For Ellen Tinkham School & Ellen Tinkham College school uniform, we request families contact the Reception Office in the first instance. The Office has a small stock of uniform available to purchase or to use for sizing purposes. Ellen Tinkham branded items include sweatshirts, fleeces, polo shirts and hats. Families can also purchase Ellen Tinkham uniform direct from our suppliers [A1 Print & Stitch Ltd](#).

As well as our branded standard uniform, we also encourage our pupils to wear appropriate clothing for physical activities. If a pupil has a PE lesson or sporting activity, we suggest the pupils wears a plain white t-shirt, black shorts or black tracksuit bottoms and trainers or daps (PE kit). For Early Years and Key Stage 1 pupils, we suggest PE kit is worn into school on the morning of the activity, avoiding the need for clothing changes during lesson time. For Key Stage 2 and above, we request the PE kit is brought into school separately and pupils change prior to and after their sporting activity.

Additional Items

Shoes

Shoes worn to school must be fit for purpose and provide the necessary support and protection. The wearing of flip-flops, "crocs" and open-toed sandals or shoes is not permitted.

Coat

We encourage our pupils to wear a coat into school that is suitable for the weather conditions. Education is not confined to the classroom – our pupils regularly access outdoor learning and need, for example, a warm and waterproof coat to wear in the Winter months. In wet weather, we also recommend our pupils bring waterproof trousers into school for outdoor learning and pursuits.

Bags

Day bags brought into school should be no larger than a backpack. Sixth Form students have access to lockers, but otherwise all bags are kept on wall hooks outside the classroom. If a pupil needs to bring an overnight respite bag into school, this will be stored separately for pupils at Bidwell Brook, and in class at Ellen Tinkham.

Jewellery

If a child or young person has an ear piercing, stud earrings should be worn into school. Pupils are not permitted to wear hoop, pendant or drop earrings. If a pupil wishes to wear a facial or other bodily piercing into school, the parent or carer must contact the Head of Site for a discussion prior to arrival. This discussion will be based around any potential health & safety issues and concerns.

Hair Styles

With regards hair styles and hair colourings, we respect the right for pupils to express their individuality. Families will only be consulted by the Head of Site if the chosen hair style could possibly have a health & safety risk which affects their child's or young person's education.

Queries regarding this Policy

Parents are expected to lodge any complaints or objections relating to the school uniform in a timely and reasonable manner. Please contact your Class Teacher in the first instance.

Disputes about the cost of the school uniform will be:

- resolved locally;
- dealt with in accordance with our Complaints policy.

The school will work closely with parents to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome.

Staff will monitor pupils to make sure they are appropriately dressed for their educational setting. Any concerns will be raised first with families but may be followed up by the Head of Site if the situation does not improve. All staff will take a mindful and considerate approach to resolving the situation. If persistent breaches of dress code continue following conversations with the family, the school may request the pupil to change into clothing provided by ourselves during the school day.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Governing Board will review this policy and make sure that it:

- is appropriate for each school's context;
- is implemented fairly across the school and college;
- takes into account the views of parents and pupils through surveys, where necessary;
- offers a uniform that is appropriate, practical and safe for all pupils.

Governors will also make sure that the school's uniform supplier arrangements give the highest priority to cost and value for money.

This policy is linked and may be read in conjunction with our:

- Behaviour Policy
- Equality and Cohesion Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Complaints Policy