

St Colman's Primary School

School Uniform Policy



Policy Reviewed: December 2025

Ratified by Board of Governors: _____

Date of Review: _____

Signatures: _____

Introduction

It is our school policy that all children should wear school uniform when attending St. Colman's Primary School Lambeg, or when participating in a school-organised event outside normal school hours.

Our school uniform is very important to us. It helps us identify ourselves as a school family. We believe it promotes a strong, cohesive identity which supports high standards and expectations in all areas of school life.

Our school uniform promotes identity and togetherness in the school. It also enhances pupil safety, assisting the school to identify individual pupils to maintain good order.

We believe that by wearing a school uniform, we promote effective behaviour which contributes to more effective learning and teaching.

This Policy adheres to the guidelines presented by Department of Education to all schools on 12th November 2025.

We have also taken guidance of Circular 2017/04, "***Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools***" Updated September 2025.

We also refer to DE Permanent Secretary Mark Browne's letter to Boards of Governors dated 24th September 2024 outlining the requirements of a School's Uniform Policy and forthcoming legislation.

Compliance with Statutory Requirements

This School Uniform Policy complies with the *School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Act (Northern Ireland) 2026* and the statutory Department of Education School Uniform Guidelines. St Colman's ensures that our uniform is affordable, accessible, inclusive, and designed in line with the five statutory principles of affordability, equality, comfort, transparency and safeguarding participation.

Policy Rationale

Our school policy is based on the principle that our school uniform:

- *promotes a sense of pride in the school;*
- *instils a feeling of community, togetherness and belonging;*
- *is practical and smart;*
- *identifies the children with their school;*
- *is not distracting in class*
- *makes children feel equal to their peers in terms of appearance;*
- *is cost effective; and*
- *is designed with health and safety in mind.*

Affordability, Equality and Inclusion

St Colman's is committed to ensuring that uniform costs are manageable for all families, including those on lower incomes. We minimise branded items, encourage the use of generic uniform pieces and ensure all core items are available from several suppliers.

We ensure compliance with equality and human rights legislation. Reasonable adjustments, including alternative fabrics, fastenings or adaptations, will be provided for pupils with Special Educational Needs, disabilities or sensory needs. We take care to avoid indirect discrimination on the grounds of gender, religion, race, belief or any protected characteristic.

The Role of Parents

Our parents are valued as key parents in the outworking and success of our school. Their support to our daily work is outstanding. The partnership we work hard to maintain is a key strength of our school.

Our dialogue with parents informs that parents wish to send their children to school dressed in the school uniform and ready for their daily schoolwork. This feedback has been received in Curriculum Meetings and in conversations with individual parents. As part of our school's evaluation work we intend to formally canvass parental opinion of our school Uniform Policy in preparation for academic year 26-27.

Parents are also asked to clearly label all items of clothing, including footwear, with their child's name.

Our School Uniform:

SPEYF Acorn Class

- Blue Sweatshirt with Acorn Class Crest
- Yellow Polo Shirt with Acorn class crest
- Navy Jogging Bottoms

School Uniform in Years 1-7

Our School uniform consists of:

Girls	Boys
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grey skirt or grey pinafore• Blue school shirt• Blue V-neck school jumper with St. Colman's school crest or blue cardigan with St. Colman's school crest• A school tie• Grey socks or Grey/Black tights• Blue Gingham dress in warm weather.• Black shoes <p><i>Girls may wish to wear PE shorts under their skirt for active play.</i></p> <p><i>Girls may also choose to wear trousers as part of the school uniform if they wish, particularly in cold weather.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grey trousers• Grey shorts in warm weather• Blue school shirt• Blue V-neck school jumper with St. Colman's school crest• A school tie• Black shoes

Rationale for Uniform Items

The colours, styles and items selected for our school uniform reflect the long-established identity and ethos of St Colman's. Most items such as shirts, trousers, skirts, pinafores and shoes are generic and widely available from supermarkets and high-street retailers.

Crested items have been kept to a minimum to balance affordability with school identity. Optional items (e.g. dresses, tracksuit bottoms, ½-zip tops) are provided purely for comfort and choice and are **not** compulsory.

PE Uniform

Under Department of Education guidance, pupils should change for their PE lessons.

Teamwear Ireland based in Boucher Road supply our PE kit. Their web presence is via Teamwearireland.com

Our PE Top costs £15-£18

Tracksuit bottoms and ½ zip are non-essential items however many parents **opt** to purchase them.

School has secured the most cost-effective relationship with this supplier – parents can order online to reduce costs.

This supplier has committed to offering plentiful stock, comfort, sustainability and value for money. Online delivery times may change depending on demand at the time of order. The school receives no benefit in kind from our relationship with this supplier.

Affordability and Access to PE/Games Kit

In line with statutory guidance, branded PE kit is optional for primary-aged children. Pupils may wear generic, non-branded alternatives in suitable colours, and no distinction will be made between pupils based on whether their PE kit is branded. Parents may choose to dress their children in a plain navy T-shirt and navy jogging bottoms for PE lessons as an alternative to the branded PE top.

St Colman's provides school-owned kits for pupils representing the school and maintains stocks of commonly used PE equipment to support full participation.

Stockists of School Uniform

Most items of our school uniform are available for purchase in high street shops and large supermarkets i.e. Trousers and school shirts.

To support parents in securing the best value, there are a range of stockists for our crested school sweater and school tie. They are:

- McCalls of Lisburn
- Truly Fayre, Belfast
- Chaplins, Belfast

Our Crested Jumper costs approximately £20 and tie £5.

Note: Our Uniform suppliers offer discount incentives to parents annually during the months of June & July.

School has secured the most cost-effective relationships with these suppliers.

These suppliers have committed to offering comfort, sustainability and value for money in their uniform selection.

The school receives no benefit in kind from our relationship with these suppliers.

Supplier Accessibility and Value for Money

To ensure affordability and open competition, St Colman's uniform items are available from multiple suppliers, which are all independent suppliers. Parents may purchase generic items from any high street or online retailer of their choice.

If the school enters into any limited supplier agreement, a statutory Value for Money Declaration will be published on the school website detailing cost comparisons with and without the agreement, however there is no plan for this to happen.

Trips or Sporting Events

For class trips, sporting events and special occasions, staff will advise pupils on the most appropriate attire for the activity – whether it be our formal shirt/tie uniform or PE kit. On occasions children may be asked to wear their own clothing or school-branded jerseys (which school provides).

Transition Periods for Uniform Changes

If future changes are made to the school uniform, St Colman's will provide a reasonable transition period during which existing uniform items may continue to be worn. Pupils in the final year of a key stage (e.g. Primary 7) will not be required to purchase new uniform items. Parents and suppliers will be given clear advance notice.

Long Hair

Pupils are encouraged to always tie long hair back. It is especially necessary for pupils to tie long hair back during specific P.E. activities if the length of a child's hair is deemed to be a concern due to health and safety considerations. (i.e. swimming and gymnastics)

Ref: *'The Association for Physical Education's Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport', Seventh Edition* (2008)

Jewellery

On health and safety grounds, we advise that children do not wear jewellery in our school. The exceptions to this rule are plain gold or silver earring studs in pierced ears. Please note that watches are not considered items of jewellery and may be worn. However, depending on the activity, it may be appropriate for children to be asked to remove their watches on health and safety grounds.

Uniform Grant

Financial assistance is available through the Education Authority's 'School Uniform Grant Scheme' for certain categories of pupils attending primary schools. Further details are available from www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants

Uniform Bank

The school operates a sizeable uniform bank which parents are encouraged to avail of. Parents can discreetly visit the bank and help themselves to uniform pieces that may fit their child. School operates an organised "Lost & Found" Facility.

Parents of any child who joins us mid-year can avail of our Uniform Bank rather than having to purchase new uniforms.

These items can be accessed via the school office.

Non-Compliance with our School Uniform Policy

Where a pupil is not adhering to the school uniform policy, we will make discreet enquiries as to why this is the case as there may be several valid reasons for it.

Where financial circumstances are preventing pupils from wearing the correct uniform, we will be sensitive to the situation and allow parents sufficient time to purchase the required items. Parents will be advised of our Uniform Bank where school has built a stock of varying sizes of uniform items.

Pupils should not feel uncomfortable or discriminated against because their parents are unable to provide them with the required items of uniform. The school will assist with the offer of uniform from its Uniform Bank where needed.

Our priority will always be that the children attend school regardless of uniform or not.

Participation and Access to School Activities

Uniform costs should never deter families from applying to St Colman's, nor should they prevent any pupil from participating in curricular or extracurricular activities. No pupil will be sent home or excluded solely due to a uniform breach, particularly where affordability is a factor.

The Role of Governors

The Board of Governors supports the Principal and Senior Leadership Team in implementing the school's Uniform Policy. They consider all representations from parents regarding this Policy and liaise with the Principal to ensure that the Policy is implemented fairly and with sensitivity.

Monitoring and Review of our work in this area

The Board of Governors is rightly proud of how pupils look in their school uniform and express thanks to parents/guardians in anticipation of their valued support in this important area of school life.

The entire school is delighted with how proud our children are of their school and how they represent their school with such distinction.

Parent and pupil views are valued and considered when the Policy is being reviewed and will be taken into consideration at the next review of this policy. Parents are most welcome to provide feedback to school at any time. Additionally, the school seeks formal feedback each year in Term 3 as part of our self- evaluation work. The Governors and Principal will carefully consider any request for an exception to be made for any individual pupil, on the grounds of religion, race, gender or a medical condition.

Review Cycle and Affordability Monitoring

St Colman's will review this Uniform Policy at least once every three years in line with statutory requirements. Additionally, an annual affordability check will be carried out to ensure all uniform items remain accessible to lower-income households. Where affordability concerns arise, the Board of Governors will conduct an early review.

Publication of Uniform Information

In accordance with the School Uniforms Act, the following information will be published on the school website:

- The full Uniform Policy
- The rationale for each uniform item
- The cost of each item and total uniform cost
- A list of all suppliers
- Any supplier agreements and value-for-money declarations
- Outcomes of uniform consultation with parents and pupils
- Details of the uniform bank and loan items
- The date of the last policy review

St Colman's Primary School

Pupil Uniform

This Policy will be reviewed following Term 2 (2025/26) consultation with parents in preparation for Sept 2026.



St Colman's



Lambeg