

FORT HILL INTEGRATED COLLEGE



School Uniform Policy

VP (Pastoral)

Issued

2011

Revised

November 2017, 2019, June 2022, June 2023, June 2024, Dec 2025

Revised

September 2026

The body of the text and the attached appendices constitute the School Uniform Policy. This Policy has been developed in line with the **School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Act (Northern Ireland) 2026**

Any queries regarding this policy should be directed to the school via e-mail.

Introduction

The wearing of school uniform plays a valuable role by:

- Nurturing a sense of community and belonging.
- instilling pride,
- supporting positive behaviour for learning,
- supporting the College Ethos,
- ensuring pupils of all backgrounds feel welcome,
- protecting children from social pressures to dress in a particular way,
- nurturing cohesion and promoting good relations.
- Supporting safeguarding.

In Fort Hill Integrated College, we also feel that high standards of school uniform support effective teaching and learning.

The day to day running of the school, including the school uniform policy, is a matter for the school Principal, subject to any directions given by the Board of Governors. Any concerns regarding the uniform policy should be addressed to the Principal in writing. It should be noted that it may not be practical to accommodate fully the concerns of all groups.

It should also be noted that the freedom to manifest a religion or belief does not mean that an individual has the right to manifest their religion or belief at any time, in any place, or in any particular manner. The school retains the right to balance the rights of the individual against the best interests of the School as a whole.

See appendix 6 (further information on rationale for uniform)

Integrated Ethos

“We believe that every single student, regardless of their background, culture, religion, ethnicity or gender has the right to a high-quality education in a safe environment free from prejudice and barriers. We strive to provide all students with the opportunity to fulfil their potential by removing any possible barriers to their success.

We recognise that our college community is drawn from a broad spectrum of our society. We work hard to acknowledge the value in this diversity, to celebrate the strength and depth that it brings and to learn from the broader range of knowledge and experiences that this diversity has to offer.”

Within and under this ethos, we take pride in wearing our school uniform and representing our learning community in its breadth. However, flags, emblems and non-school crested sports garments are not to be worn without express permission from the Principal.

School uniform

Cost

Fort Hill Integrated College uniform is practical, comfortable, appropriate and represents excellent value for money. There are a number of local uniform suppliers, including Warnocks and McCalls, but there is also the option to purchase some generic items from a range of alternative suppliers, e.g. white shirts, /black trousers etc.

Pupils leaving during the school year and those leaving in Year 12 are encouraged to donate items of day uniform and PE uniform to be used for donation to those in need. (This request is made to all Parents throughout the year via various communication streams.) Items of clothing in good condition which are left unclaimed at the end of the school year are either forwarded to the PE department to use as “spare kit” or are washed and kept for second hand/emergency use.

Financial assistance is available through the Education Authority’s Uniform Grant for certain categories of families. This assists with the cost of school uniform and PE uniform. The eligibility criteria are the same as those used for free school meals. Applications are made online through the Education Authority website:

(<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/pupil-applications-and-grants/free-school-meals-uniform-grants>).

See appendix 6 (for further information on Uniform costings)

Changes to the current uniform

From time to time there may be changes to the current uniform. This will be done in consultation with suppliers, Governors, staff, parents and the students. A transitional period for phasing out the old uniform and introducing the new one will be allowed to ease the cost involved.

Any proposed changes and reminders of the approved uniform list will be sent to parents at least once a year and normally at the end of the school year. (See Appendix 1). Clarification on certain areas of uniform/appearance will also be communicated to parents as needed (e.g. See Appendix 2) and will be discussed with pupils as required throughout the year. There are also reminders in the Code of Conduct (See Appendix 3).

The up-to-date uniform list is available on the school website.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of pupils wearing the school uniform is of paramount importance.

- The wearing of boots, canvas shoes and ballet type shoes is not allowed for health and safety reasons. (See Appendix 2).
- No facial piercings. Any ear piercings should be studs only. (see Appendix 4)
 - No bars, hoops, spacers, or dangling earrings.
 - All piercings must be removed before engaging in any activity where they, as deemed by staff, present a health and safety risk.
 - Plastic fillers / Blankers will only be acceptable for an agreed timeline while a piercing heals. However, they will be treated as standard piercings for health and safety considerations.

- A summer version of the day uniform is permitted during Term 3 and September. In cases of extreme weather, a degree of flexibility will be permitted and communicated via the usual channels.
- School scarves can't be worn in the school building.
- PE is a compulsory part of the statutory curriculum, clothing and footwear are important aspects of safety in PE. A separate PE uniform is included in the uniform list to allow pupils a change of clothing. This is for reasons of hygiene, practicality and to ensure that the clothing is suited to the physical activity.
- PE Uniform is not permitted to be worn outside of PE lessons / approved sporting activities without express permission from the College. Students are expected to wear their Day Uniform to PE lessons, change into PE uniform at the start and into Day Uniform at the end of, each session.
- School is sensitive to the needs of pupils who may have concerns about body image, and a degree of flexibility is permitted in this case e.g. wearing approved track suit bottoms or leggings instead of shorts. Please contact the College with any concerns.

Non-compliance with the school uniform policy.

Where a pupil is not adhering to the school uniform policy, enquiries as to why this is the case will be made in the first instance as there may be a valid reason e.g. it may be lost, stolen or damaged.

The student will be given an opportunity to address the issue and where necessary parents will be contacted for their support and cooperation, for example,

- A lost/stolen or damaged item – a reasonable time will be given for the item to be replaced.
- Inappropriate clothing e.g. a non-regulation hoodie – pupils will be asked to remove it and refrain from wearing it again. The item may be confiscated until the end of the school day.
- Inappropriate jewellery – pupils will be asked to remove it and will be advised against wearing it again.
- Inappropriate hair colour – this will be addressed with the pupil and parents contacted regarding returning it to an acceptable standard. Hair extensions, beads, braids and additions will be assessed in the light of health and safety grounds.
- Excessive make-up/nail varnish/nail extensions/nail attachments– pupils will be given an opportunity to adjust or remove it.
- Tattoos which are visible must be covered.

At all times the support and cooperation of parents in maintaining high standards of uniform and appearance, on the way to school, in school, on the way home from school and on school-based activities, is essential.

Students who fail to comply with school regards uniform and appearance will be subject the full range of disciplinary options open to the school.

In addition, students who are not in line with the College uniform policy (without prior agreement) may not be permitted to represent the College at:

- Sporting fixtures.
- Trips.
- Photographic publicity / posts.
- Any other public facing event.

The decision of the Principal and Governors is final in all matters of uniform policy.

(See appendix 4 for further guidance)

The Recent Uniform Bill has put in place several directives. Our response to these areas can be found in Appendix 6.

Appendix 1

SCHOOL UNIFORM

ENSURE ALL ITEMS ARE CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME AND FORM

COLLEGE DAY UNIFORM (From August 2025)

UNIFORM LIST:

<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
Navy Blazer with College crest on breast pocket.	Navy Blazer with College crest on breast pocket.
White long-sleeved blouse (Blue and white checked blouse optional in Term 3 and September)	White long-sleeved shirt (Short-sleeved optional in Term 3 and September) (White T-shirt or vest may be worn under shirt)
SIXTH FORM: Blue long-sleeved blouse	SIXTH FORM: Blue long-sleeved shirt.
* Navy knee-length skirt with kick pleats, or **Black school trousers	**Black school trousers
*** Navy tie with crest	***Navy tie with crest
Navy v-neck jumper (can be worn all year around)	Navy v-neck jumper (can be worn all year around)
Black tights (Regulation navy and green socks optional in Term 3 and September)	Grey / black socks
Plain black flat leather shoes (see guide below) (No boots, trainers, high-heels, platforms, canvas shoes, fabric pumps or ballet type shoes).	Plain black leather shoes (see guide below) (No trainers, boots or canvas shoes)
College scarf (optional, not permitted to be worn in school buildings)	College scarf (optional, not permitted to be worn in school buildings)
Optional- Regulation crested ¼ zip- (not to be worn inside building Easter- October ½ term. Must be worn with shirt, tie and blazer. Must be unzipped when worn in building)	Optional- Regulation crested ¼ zip- (not to be worn inside building Easter- October ½ term. Must be worn with shirt, tie and blazer. Must be unzipped when worn in building)
<i>Individual consideration will be given to alternate uniform requests submitted to Governors.</i>	

* Skirts **must** be worn at knee length throughout the year. To allow for growth, they should be bought just below knee-length. Skirts will be checked regularly, any not in line with this requirement will need to be adjusted or replaced by Parents/Guardians.

**School trousers should be black school type with front and rear creases. (Denim, leggings, cargo, flairs, lycra/lycra-type and other fashion trousers are not permitted.)

*** Available from College (Sixth Form have specific Sixth Form tie)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM:

<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
Navy crested sports t-shirt	Navy crested sports t-shirt
Navy crested sports shorts	Navy crested sports shorts
Navy football socks	Navy football socks
Sports Trainers (Not Leisure Trainers)	Sports Trainers (Not Leisure Trainers)
Football boots (optional – extra-curricular activities)	Football boots
Pair of shin guards for football & hockey (STRONGLY RECOMMENDED)	Pair of shin-guards for football & hockey (STRONGLY RECOMMENDED)
Regulation crested ¼ zip (Optional)	Regulation crested ¼ zip (Optional)
Mouth guard for Hockey & Gaelic (STRONGLY RECOMMENDED)	Mouth guard for Rugby, Hockey & Gaelic (STRONGLY RECOMMENDED)
Navy track bottoms or leggings with College crest (Optional)	Navy, non-crested, track bottoms (Optional)
	Navy/white long sleeve jersey with the College crest (Optional)
Base layer in winter (Optional)	Base layer in winter (Optional)
Towel	Towel
<i>Individual consideration will be given to alternate uniform requests submitted to Governors.</i>	

N.B. Financial assistance is available through the Education Authority's Uniform Grant for certain categories of families. The eligibility criteria are the same as used for free school meals. Applications are made online through the Education Authority website.

Uniform and sportswear can be obtained from Warnocks and McCalls. (20% discount usually available during June/July)

Appendix 2

A guide for day uniform footwear

A Guide for Acceptable/Unacceptable footwear to be worn with uniform is below:

Fort Hill Integrated College - Acceptable Footwear

Shoes are acceptable if they are plain black in colour, polishable leather and not overly decorative. Essentially, they need to be shoes that can be described as plain, black, flat, sensible, smart school shoes. (the images typify the type of acceptable shoe, but is not an exhaustive list)



Fort Hill Integrated College - Unacceptable Footwear

Footwear is deemed to be unacceptable if it is any colour other than plain black, overly decorative or without flat heels. Trainers, boots, pumps/ballet type shoes and canvas shoes are not permitted. All sport brands, with or without a logo, are not permitted. (the images typify the type of unacceptable shoe, but is not an exhaustive list)



If there is any doubt regards the acceptability of footwear you are considering buying, please **email an image to the college for approval before purchase.**

Appendix 3: Code of Conduct

FORT HILL INTEGRATED COLLEGE **CODE OF CONDUCT**

As a pupil at Fort Hill Integrated College, I agree to follow the Code of Conduct set out below and in so doing, uphold the core values of:

Respect-Responsible-Ready-Safe

I agree to:

1. Comply with the school **Positive Behaviour Policy**.
2. Comply with the school **Anti-Bullying Policy**.
3. Comply with the school **Uniform Policy**.
4. Comply with the school **Mobile Phone Policy**.
5. Comply with the school **Drinks Policy**.
6. Not leave the school grounds at break (all pupils) and lunchtime (Years 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12).
7. Not smoke or vape in school uniform or on school site, bring cigarettes/e-cigs/associated paraphernalia, matches/lighters onto the premises.
8. Not bring in, partake of, or be under the influence of alcohol or any other illegal substance.
9. Not bring in laser pens, knives, aerosols, fireworks or other items which may cause harm to self or others.
10. Respect school property and equipment, including keeping the grounds litter free. (I may be required to pay for damages).
11. Avoid the use of inappropriate or offensive language.

Appendix 4

SCHOOL UNIFORM

- School skirts **throughout the year** must be worn at knee length - **please allow for growth**. Please do not be encouraged by your child to have the skirt taken up or in or allow them to wear skirts rolled up.
- Pupils are recommended to wear a waterproof and warm coat to and from school over the top of their school blazer. Any coats or non-regulation clothing should be removed on entering the school buildings.
- School regulation navy, green and white scarf only to be worn. This should be removed on entering the building.
- For reasons of Health and Safety the following are **not permitted**:
 - Footwear with steel toes, trainers, boots or shoes with high block heels.
 - Canvas pumps and soft ballet type shoes.
 - No facial piercings. Any ear piercings should be studs only.
 - a. No bars, hoops, spacers, or dangling earrings.
 - b. All piercings must be removed before engaging in any activity where they, as deemed by staff, present a health and safety risk.
 - c. Plastic fillers / Blankers will only be acceptable for an agreed timeline while a piercing heals. However, they will be treated as standard piercings for health and safety considerations.
- Please emphasise to your child that excessive make-up and nail varnish (involving attachments or extensions) should **not** be worn to school. (It would also be appropriate if students did not bring make-up to school).
- Hair worn in school must be a natural colour. Hair extensions, beads, braids and other additions will be assessed in the light of health and safety grounds. **If in doubt, please speak to Pastoral Leader first.**
- Pupils should wear full school uniform at all times - travelling to school, in school and travelling home from school.

Please consult the school uniform list before buying any items of uniform and do not hesitate to contact school at any time if you require clarification on any of the above. **Students who are in constant breach of the School Uniform Policy leave us with no other option than to invoke disciplinary procedures.** The decision of the Principal and Governors is final in all matters of uniform policy.

Removal of Piercings

- **Any member of staff** may ask a pupil to remove a piercing which is not permitted, including any facial piercing (e.g. clear studs/fillers/blankers), or ear piercings (e.g. fillers, bars, hoops, and dangling earrings). Form Tutors will contact parents to establish a timeline for removal of the item.
- If a pupil refuses to remove the piercing for any reason the staff member will refer to the respective **Pastoral Leader (PL)**. The PL will contact the parents and establish a timeline for removal. If time is given to remove the piercing the PL is to provide a dated note in the student's planner identifying the agreed "removal period". A clear filler / blanker stud may be deemed acceptable for the agreed fixed term, in line with health and safety considerations.
- If a pupil refuses to remove the piercing within this set time, then their **parent is to be further contacted by the PL** to discuss the removal of the piercing.
- Any parent challenging the removal will be referred to the respective **Head of School** who will engage with the parent to ensure the piercing is removed.
- Failure to remove the piercing for the Head of School will result in referral to the **Pastoral VP** and then, if required, the **Principal**.
- Sanctions ranging from behaviour points through to fixed term exclusions will be considered at all referral levels.

In subjects with a practical element, E.g. PE, HE, Science & Technology:

- If the department / teacher considers any item of clothing, jewellery or body modification to be inappropriate, or a health and safety or hygiene risk - for the given activity;
 - The pupil will be asked to remove the item/s
 - If item/s is not removed the pupil will be excluded from the activity at the discretion of the staff member.

Appendix 5

Religious Dress

- **Any student** whose faith requires the covering of the head or body part, may wear the appropriate head covering (i.e. Shayla or Hijab). However, that head covering must be in one of the school colours: white, black, navy or dark green. Arms may be covered during PE by wearing an “*Under Armour*”-style long-sleeved top underneath the school PE uniform. This top should be in one of the school colours: white, black, navy or dark green.
- **All head coverings** must be ‘**tightly secured**’ to allow students full access to the curriculum allowing for health and safety limitations. Due to health and safety, all head coverings must be made from natural, non-flammable materials (i.e. cotton, silk, linen etc.).
- If a member staff perceives the head dress / covering to represent a risk to Health and Safety, the student will be unable to engage in that activity.
- **Any member of staff** may ask a pupil to remove a head covering which is not permitted (any head covering that is worn for non-religious reasons) when worn inside school premises.
- If a pupil refuses to remove the non-religious head covering, then their **parent is to be contacted by the PL** to discuss the removal. Any parent challenging the removal will be referred to the respective **Head of School** who will engage with the parent to ensure the head covering is removed.
- Failure to remove the head covering for the Head of School will result in referral to the **Pastoral VP** and then, if required, the **Principal**.

Appendix 6: Uniform Bill.

Rational for Uniform

The Board of Governors view uniform as an essential element of college life. Uniform has several purposes and benefits.

- The uniform helps to promote a sense of community and belonging for all students
- Allow students to represent the college with a distinct identity.
- Maintains a link with the tradition and history of our college crest.
- It allows staff to easily identify individuals who are not part of the student body.
- Enhanced safety when on trips.
- Encourages positive behaviour when students are in public spaces.
- Removes social pressure to have the latest trends or fashions, saving parents money.

The Governors also strongly believe that a well-designed and affordable uniform can act as a social equaliser. Meaning that no matter what socio-economic background a student is from, the clothes they wear cannot be used to stigmatise.

The Governors acknowledge that the initial cost of uniform can be significant. However, we work to keep costs as low as possible while maintaining the quality and longevity of each item.

Rational for Uniform Items

In this section, Uniform supplier refers to McCall's of Lisburn and Warnock's of Belfast. Alternative retailers broadly represent the supermarkets and other clothing retailers.

BLAZER

The blazer is one of our crested items that helps support community belonging and identity. It is manufactured from a material that hard wearing, a standard colour, can be machine washed and does not require dry cleaning. Our blazers are available from uniform suppliers.

TIE

Our college tie is also crested, however as we purchase it directly from the manufacturer. Its cost is equitable with non-crested ties from a uniform supplier. It again plays a role in identifying pupils as being part of our community when they are not wearing their blazer.

TROUSERS

Trousers are a generic item that can be purchased either from a uniform supplier or one of many alternative retailers.

SKIRT

Our plain navy pleated skirt compliments the rest of the girls' uniform and has a price that is equitable with trousers purchased from the uniform suppliers. Our skirts are available from uniform suppliers. We are looking to identify a generic alternative.

SHIRT

The white shirts and blouses worn by students are generic items that can be purchased from a uniform supplier or alternative retailers.

Quarter ZIP

The crested quarter zip is an optional item that students particularly like, it offers a warm and comfortable option in the colder months. Our 1/4 zips are available from uniform suppliers.

V NECK JUMPER

The V-neck jumper offers a very high-quality option to students who want to wear a warmer item all year around. It is also significantly cheaper than the crested quarter zip. The jumper has no unusual colours or creasing. They are generic items that can be purchased from a uniform supplier or alternative retailers.

TIGHTS / SOCKS

Generic items that could be found in a range of uniform suppliers and alternative retailers. We use standard colours and materials.

SHOES

Black leather school shoes are mandated within the uniform policy for several reasons. They look neat and smart when compared with alternatives. High quality school leather shoes will last longer than alternatives. The approved footwear also offers a significant benefit, over most non-approved footwear, in terms of health and safety.

PE Kit

The college PE kit has been specifically designed to support active movement while maintaining comfort. The items have also been designed to actively resist wear and tear, increasing longevity. The cresting present promotes a sense of community and belonging.

As outlined in feedback to consultation, the Governors will look to reduce the number of crested items in this area and identify suitable generic alternatives.

Pricing

At the time of policy review, the price ranges of each required and optional item of uniform were as detailed below. Where available, the price range includes generic items that are available from alternative suppliers such as supermarkets. To make the prices comparable, if items are available in multipacks the average price per item is used.

It should be noted that once uniform items are above a certain size the government starts charging VAT on these items. Even though, these items will nearly always be worn by children whose clothes are normally VAT free. Often, the actual base cost of the item has not changed, just the application of VAT.

Price ranges for required and optional Uniform Items.

BOYS				
	ITEM	Maximum Cost £	Minimum Cost £	Optional / Required
DAY UNIFORM	BLAZER	£59.99	£35.95	Required
	SHIRT	£9.50	£3.25	Required
	TROUSERS	£24.99	£7.00	Required
	TIE	£7.00	£7.00	Required
	SCARF	£15.99	£15.99	Optional
	1/4 ZIP	£35.99	£29.99	Optional
	JUMPER	£17.99	£7.50	Optional
	SOCKS	£2.00	£1.33	Required
	SHOES	£60.00	£20.00	Required
PE KIT	T SHIRT	£21.99	£19.99	Required
	SHORTS	£23.99	£19.99	Required
	SOCKS	£4.99	£4.99	Required
	BOTTOMS	£39.99	£12.00	Optional
	LONG SLEEVE	£33.99	£29.99	Optional
	BASE LAYER	*	£10.00	Optional

*Range too variable

Depending on supplier and sizes, the cost of required day uniform

ranges from £91.40 to £173.98 for girls, and £73.20 to 161.48 for boys.

GIRLS				
		Maximum Cost £	Minimum Cost £	Optional / Required
DAY UNIFORM	BLAZER	£59.99	£35.95	Required
	SKIRT	£32.99	£22.95	Required
	TIE	£7.00	£7.00	Required
	JUMPER	£17.99	£7.50	Optional
	TIGHTS	£4.50	£2.50	Required
	SCARF	£15.99	£15.99	Optional
	1/4 ZIP	£35.99	£29.99	Optional
	SHIRT	£9.50	£3.00	Required
	SHOES	£60.00	£20.00	Required
	SUMMER SHIRT	£16.00	£16.00	Optional
	SOCKS	£8.99	£8.50	Optional
PE KIT	T SHIRT	£21.99	£19.99	Required
	SHORTS	£23.99	£19.99	Required
	SOCKS	£4.99	£4.99	Required
	BOTTOMS	£39.99	£12.00	Optional
	LEGGINGS	£34.99	£29.99	Optional
	BASE LAYER	*	£10.00	Optional

*Range too variable

Depending on supplier and sizes, the cost of required PE uniform ranges from £44.97 to £50.97 for both girls and boys.

The college is currently exploring the possibility of a deposit-based lending scheme. For a small deposit, a PE Uniform item could be lent to an individual for a prolonged period. The College may also introduce a return or purchase option as part of the scheme. Consultation will follow on this possibility.

Response to stakeholder consultation.

As part of our review of the College Uniform policy we have consulted with all parents and students. The vast majority of parents were positive about most aspects of the school uniform. However, there were some areas of concern raised by several respondents, parents and students. These areas and our response are outlined below.

Cost of uniform; Some parents were concerned that the cost of uniform was excessively expensive. I can assure you that we work continuously to drive down the price of uniform to ensure it represents as good value as possible. However, in response to these concerns and to further reduce costs we will be:

- Reducing the number of crested items in the PE uniform. Over the next year we will remove the college crest from the shorts and leggings. This will reduce the cost of these items. We will also identify generic alternatives for both items.
- We will attempt to broaden the range of suppliers selling our crested uniform items. Competition should help maintain competitive pricing.
- Shirts / blouses, trousers, tights and the V-neck jumper are already generic items, sold by a wide range of suppliers. We will look to identify a generic version of the girls' skirt as soon as possible.
- We will consult on the possibility of replacing the crested quarter zip with the generic V-neck jumper.
- We will continue to sell the school tie in house as it is approximately 50% cheaper than if the item was stocked by a uniform supplier.

Comfort of uniforms in extreme weather: There were several responses from parents and students concerned about the comfort of uniforms in extremely hot and cold weather.

- We will review the uniform policy and look to put extreme weather adjustments in place. E.g. remove the requirement to wear a blazer in very hot weather.
- We will look at the possibility of a summer uniform option for the boys.
- Following student consultation, we have replaced the optional summer shirt for girls as the previous version has been discontinued by the manufacturer. This new version is currently available in McCall's Lisburn.
- We will review the use of the crested quarter zip by date range.
- We will consult with students regarding this area.

A small number of parents raised concerns about the quality and /or longevity of uniform / PE items. We will consult with suppliers to ensure that items are always of the best possible quality, maximize durability and offer best value.

We would like to remind all students and parents that the option of girls wearing school trousers, as opposed to the skirt, has been in place for a number of years. The trousers should be in line with the uniform policy, available on our website.

Financial assistance is available from the Education Authority in the form of a uniform grant that is associated with free school meal entitlement. This can be applied for via the EA website:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/pupil-applications-and-grants/free-school-meals-uniform-grants>

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the College community for taking the time to provide feedback during the consultation process. We will, of course, continue to consult with stakeholders over the next year regarding the above concerns, modifications to uniforms and updates to relevant policies.