

'Learning at the heart of the community'



School Uniform Policy

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FIVEMILETOWN COLLEGE – SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY (NI DE COMPLIANT)

1. Policy Statement

Fivemiletown College is committed to implementing a school uniform policy that fully complies with the 'Department of Education (NI) statutory School Uniform Guidelines (2026).'

The school recognises that uniform policies must:

- *Place affordability and value for money at the centre of decision-making*
- *Be inclusive and non-discriminatory*
- *Ensure comfort, practicality, and suitability for learning*
- *Be transparent, evidence-based, and shaped through consultation*

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with statutory guidance.

2. Legislative and Policy Framework

This policy is informed by:

- School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Act (NI) 2026
- DE School Uniform Guidelines (Feb 2026)
- Equality and human rights legislation

The Act requires that policies explicitly address:

- Unfair cost burdens
- Affordability and accessibility (including uniform banks)
- Comfort and practicality of clothing
- Consultation with parents and pupils

3. Core Principles

3.1 Affordability and Accessibility

Fivemiletown College will ensure that uniform costs do not act as a barrier to education or participation.

To comply with DE guidance, the school will:

- Minimise compulsory branded items
- Provide generic alternatives (e.g. plain trousers, skirts, shirts) purchasable from supermarkets/high-street retailers
- Avoid single-supplier arrangements where possible to encourage competition and value
- Ensure PE kit prioritises generic options rather than expensive branded items
- Consider Free School Meals eligibility as a benchmark when assessing affordability

Support measures include:

- A pre-loved uniform scheme / uniform bank
- Signposting to School Clothing Allowances available through NI Direct
- Discreet support through pastoral systems

No pupil will be penalized or excluded from activities due to inability to afford uniform items

3.2 Equality and Inclusion

The College is committed to a rights-based and inclusive approach consistent with Section 75 duties and DE guidance.

The school will:

- Ensure the policy does not directly or indirectly discriminate
- Make reasonable adjustments for:
 - Disability or Special Educational Needs (SEND)

- Medical or sensory needs
- Respect cultural and religious dress, subject to health and safety
- Ensure all pupils can access uniform requirements regardless of background or identity

3.3 Comfort and Practicality

Uniform must support learning, wellbeing, and participation in all aspects of school life.

Fivemiletown College will ensure:

- Clothing is comfortable, durable, and easy to maintain
- Items are suitable for year-round wear and Northern Ireland weather conditions
- Uniform supports:
 - Classroom learning
 - Outdoor activities
 - Physical education

Additional commitments:

- Avoid unnecessary seasonal uniforms (e.g. separate summer/winter requirements) where possible
- Allow adjustments in extreme weather
- Ensure footwear and PE kit are safe and practical

3.4 Transparency and Consultation

The College will ensure that the uniform policy is clear, transparent, and developed collaboratively.

In line with statutory guidance, the school will

- Consult regularly with Parents/carers, Pupils before introducing or amending uniform requirements
- Publish:
 - A full uniform list
 - Approved suppliers and purchasing options

- Clearly explain:
 - The rationale for each compulsory item
 - How affordability has been considered

4. Uniform Requirements

Compulsory Items

- School blazer (crested)
- School tie
- Plain white shirt/blouse
- Plain grey trousers or skirt
- Black, smart shoes

Optional / Flexible Items

- School jumper

PE Kit

Compulsory items

- School ¼ zip top
- School t-shirt
- Plain black shorts/tracksuit bottoms/leggings
- School games socks (boys only)
- Trainers suitable for sport

Optional items

- School Games shirt (Boys)
- School Netball shirt (Girls)
- School skort (Girls)
- School skinnies/leggings

5. Implementation

- Staff will apply the policy fairly, consistently, and sensitively
- Pupils will not miss learning due to uniform issues
- Any concerns around affordability will be addressed supportively and confidentially

6. Monitoring, Review and Complaints

- This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years or sooner if required by DE guidance
- Regular feedback will be gathered from pupils and parents
- Complaints regarding uniform policy will follow the school's formal complaints procedure, with escalation in line with DE processes if required

7. Equality Impact Statement

The Board of Governors will:

- Monitor the policy to ensure it does not create inequality or disadvantage
- Review affordability, accessibility, and inclusion outcomes
- Ensure alignment with human rights and equality obligations

Summary

This policy ensures that Fivemiletown College:

- Meets legal requirements under the 2026 Act
- Places affordability at the forefront
- Promotes inclusive, practical, and comfortable uniform choices
- Operates with full transparency and stakeholder involve

Bibliography

- Department of Education (NI) School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Act 2026 and statutory guidance (effective 2026/27).

Appendix

This School Uniform Policy for Fivemiletown College is explicitly aligned with the Department of Education (NI) School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Act 2026 and statutory guidance (effective 2026/27). It embeds the required legal principles: *affordability, accessibility, equality, comfort, practicality, transparency, and consultation.*