

## OUR LADY OF LOURDES PRIMARY SCHOOL



### SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

The wearing of a school uniform is not governed by legislation but falls to schools to determine. The day-to-day management of schools, including school uniform policy, is a matter for school Principals, subject to any directions that might be given by the Board of Governors. Most schools have a school uniform, and the Department of Education (DE) provides guidance for schools on school uniform policy. Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School has considered this advice when drafting its uniform policy.

School uniform can play a valuable role by: setting an appropriate tone; instilling pride; supporting positive behaviour and discipline; encouraging identity with, and support for, the school ethos; ensuring children of all races and backgrounds feel welcome; protecting children from social pressures to dress in a particular way; and nurturing cohesion and promoting good relations between different groups of children. At Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, we also believe that our school uniform supports effective teaching and learning.

Our school ensures that the school uniform policy is fair and reasonable, in practical and financial terms, and has regard to its duties under relevant equality and other legislation. We give high priority to cost considerations of the various items and have ensured that our uniform is widely available in high street shops and other retail outlets and internet suppliers. Most of our uniform items are readily available 'off the peg' from several retail outlets.

Financial assistance can be available through the Education Authority's Clothing Allowance scheme for certain children attending primary school. Families who are on benefits or on low income, could be entitled to clothing grants. The eligibility criteria are similar to those used for free school meals. Information for parents on school uniforms and how to apply for a clothing grant can be found on NI Direct.

All children are expected to wear the school uniform to, in and from school. It is the responsibility of the Principal for making sure children follow the uniform-wearing rules. Where a child is not adhering to the school uniform policy, the school will make discreet enquiries as to why this is the case as there may be several valid reasons. Where financial circumstances are preventing children from wearing the correct uniform the school will be sensitive to the situation and allow parents sufficient time to purchase the required items.

In no circumstances would a child be sent home for not adhering to the school uniform policy unless there was a health and safety risk to not do so.

Details of the school uniform are given below.

#### Everyday Uniform:

Black footwear

Grey socks or grey/black tights

Dark grey trousers (long or short), skirt or pinafore

White shirt or blouse

Grey school pullover or school cardigan with appropriate collar and/or trim  
School tie  
School summer dress (optional for summer term).

PE Uniform:

On PE days children should wear a white polo shirt and black shorts or tracksuit bottoms (no logos).  
The school jumper or cardigan can be worn on top. There is no need to wear a tie on these days.

We strongly advise parents to put their child's name on each item of clothing.

Any items of lost property (i.e. items that have no names on them and where the owner cannot be identified) will be kept for one week after the end of each term. After this time the items will be donated to charity.

Jewellery and Piercings

We have a duty of care to ensure children can participate actively without unnecessarily endangering themselves or those working around them. For reasons of Health and Safety, it is the policy of the school that no item of jewellery other than a watch and stud earrings will be permitted and children will have to remove any items that do not conform to the policy.

If the school declares a non-uniform day the element of the policy relating to jewellery and piercings will not be suspended and will continue to be adhered to.

Safe Practice in Physical Education Lessons

All jewellery must be removed for P.E. The Association for Physical Education (afPE) strongly recommends the practice of removing all personal effects at the commencement of every P.E. lesson to establish a safe working environment. This applies to all ear, nose and body piercings, including retainer and expander earrings.

The school does not advocate a policy of taping to enable participation and staff will not remove or tape up earrings for children. Taping over ear and body piercings may offer a measure of protection in some physical activity, situations. However, the amounts of tape used would need to be sufficient to prevent the piercing penetrating, for example, the bone behind the ear should an unintentional blow be received from someone or something, such as a ball. Teachers supervising a lesson will not accept the legal responsibility to ensure taping is fit for purpose. For this reason, taping will be considered unsatisfactory to permit safe participation in a lesson.

A child who fails to remove jewellery can contribute to group planning, designing and tactical discussions but will have different tasks assigned to them during practical elements of the lesson.

Exclusion from P.E. lessons should be avoided at all times if a child doesn't remove jewellery but the contribution to the lesson will differ from others taking part in the practical elements.

Staff will give verbal reminders to children and where necessary, visually monitor the class. Particular vigilance will be required when dealing with body jewellery.

The decision as to whether it is safe or possible to wear glasses or hearing aids will be determined by the nature of the activity. During activities involving physical contact and full game situations it would not be appropriate to wear such sensory aids.

Long hair should always be tied back with a suitably soft item to prevent entanglement in apparatus and to prevent vision being obscured.

Nails need to be sufficiently short to prevent injury to self or others.

### Overcoats

The school has no policy on overcoats children wear to and from school. However, we would encourage parents to consider the seasonable suitability and dress their children appropriately for the weather. The safety of children travelling to and from school is paramount and when it is quite dark making it difficult for children to be seen by drivers and others parents are encouraged to provide reflective or high visibility over garments. This is an important consideration in relation to the issue of road safety.

### Exceptions

Any request for an exception, either temporary or permanent, to be made for any individual child on the grounds of religion, race or a medical condition will be carefully considered before a decision is taken by the Principal.

This policy has been drafted with regard to the following statutory acts:

- Equality Legislation
- The Human Rights Act 1998
  - The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 as amended
  - The Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 as amended
  - Disability Discrimination Code of Practice
  - Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO)
  - The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Governors every two years or sooner following additional guidance from the DE, recommendations from afPE or legislation from the Northern Ireland Executive.

Before making changes to the school uniform the school will consult with parents and children and it will make an economic assessment of cost to parents.