



Summer 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we approach the new academic year, it is timely to write with some general reminders about Directors' expectations regarding uniform and personal appearance. It is important that we are not distracted by any 'misunderstandings' regarding uniform or appearances. **In the final analysis, decisions regarding whether a student's appearance complies with Directors' requirements, are a matter of judgement for Heads of Year and Senior Staff.**

Outlined below are our expectations on uniform and appearance.

- **Skirts** - 'Extreme skirt lengths are not allowed' and skirts should be 'mid grey' & of a 'smart plain' style. In other words, skirts that are too long or too short are not allowed. The acceptable length ranges from **just above the knee** to just below the knee. Furthermore, in the interests of health & safety, skirts should be **neither too tight** or too loose fitting. **Skirts made of 'jersey' or stretchy material are not allowed.** Jumpers must not be tucked into skirts. Furthermore, the new, popular kilt-style skirt is compulsory for all the new Year 7 and Year 8, and is now available to buy in the city centre from Steady School Wear at 16 Savile Street for all students in all year groups. Any student who has 5 uniform sanctions for wearing their grey school skirt incorrectly will be required to wear the navy blue tartan skirt or grey trousers.
- **Trousers** – Tight or tapered fashion trousers or especially loose-fitting or flared trousers are not allowed. To be clear, **trousers should not be black or of a 'skinny' or a cropped/short design.** Ankles should not be on show. In addition, pockets on the thighs or the lower part of the trouser leg are not allowed. **Trousers made of 'jersey' material are not allowed.** Jumpers must not be tucked into trousers. **Belts** – must be a black or grey colour with a modest buckle and should not be a brand.
- **Shorts** – students have asked for the opportunity to wear shorts. We have listened to students and since Easter, Steady School Wear has been selling our St Mary's College grey, knee-length shorts which are unisex for both girls and boys. The school badge is embroidered onto the shorts, meaning that these are the only shorts that students will be permitted to wear and therefore they must be purchased from the school shop. If a student chooses to wear the school shorts the normal sock colour and shoes rules apply.
- **Hair styles** - Our policy details that 'extreme hair styles' are not allowed. As a general guide, examples of "extreme" hairstyles might include hair that is dyed an artificial colour; any 'two-tone' colouring/bleaching for example the effect resulting from hair being 'dip dyed'; excessive use of a hair product to encourage hair to stand up; hair that is combed into any sort of Mohican style; hair that has **any sort of pattern or 'parting' shaved** into it or a 'skinhead' look. **This includes 'mullet' hairstyles, regardless of their length. Please note that students can have a 'short back and sides' haircut. Please note that undercuts – where the lower half of the head is shaved / much shorter with hair on the top of the head tied up / braided is not permitted.** For Health and Safety reasons hair that covers the face in particular the eyes is not allowed. **In addition, hair accessories and adornments are not allowed.** Scrunchies in school colours are acceptable but must only be worn in hair. In the final analysis, each haircut will be dealt with on an individual basis should staff feel it is not in line with our uniform and appearance policy.

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Mrs M Stead

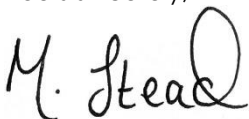


- **Jewellery** – School uniform policy is clear that **only** a wristwatch, and a discreet crucifix are allowed. Smart watches should not be worn. Clear, transparent studs / piercing retainers are not allowed.
- **Make up** – **Make up and fake tan are not allowed at St Mary's College.** This includes any form of false or insert eyelashes or procedure to lift the lashes, as well as any modifications or enhancements to eyebrows.
- **Nails** – In addition to coloured nail varnish not being allowed, false nails or any other nail enhancement are not acceptable.
- **Shoes** – Sensible, full, black low-heeled shoes (and **not anything in a 'boot' style**) should be worn for school. Sandals, plimsolls and high heels constitute a health and safety risk and are therefore not allowed. In addition, shoes should be plain in style and without any metallic decoration or **a different coloured sole** or different to black coloured stitching etc. No brand name labels should be on shoes e.g. Kickers. **Leather-look trainers cannot be worn.**
- **Socks** – must be white, black or grey in colour and an appropriate length i.e. not ankle socks or socks that are so short that they reveal the ankle or lower leg. Socks should not have brands on show, but should be plain.
- **Mobile phones\* etc** – Mobile electronic communication devices are not allowed to be seen or used in school. **Phones must be turned off and in the pupils' bags.**  
*\*This also includes any electronic communication devices such as smart watches, iPads, tablets, Fitbits or any device that connects to the internet.*
- **Bags** – School bags should be plain, practical and suitable for carrying textbooks/exercise books of A4 size & basic equipment for the curriculum. **Fashion bags or handbags are not allowed.** Rucksack-style bags are encouraged.
- **Lanyards** – all students must wear a lanyard throughout the school day. Lanyard colours are specific to each year group. Lanyards must be worn complete with a card holder, and the student card. Loss or damage of lanyards will mean a new one must be purchased.
- **Scarves / hats / gloves** – items of winter clothing should be **either blue, black or grey**, and of a plain design. Fashion scarves and hats are not permitted.

Failure to conform to the above school rules can result in pupils being withdrawn from normal lessons until the matter can be resolved. Lesson attendance is clearly essential if students are to make expected progress. I am sure that we would all like to avoid unnecessary confrontation and focus on learning in order to build upon the high levels of attainment already achieved by our students. Indeed, feedback from parents suggests that our relentless and consistent focus on discipline, including enforcing Directors' requirements in relation to uniform, appearance and the use of mobile phones, is a key factor in ensuring high quality learning and ultimately examination results.

If you have any enquiries regarding these matters, please do not hesitate to contact your son's/daughter's Head of Year or Miss Wiles (Senior Assistant Vice Principal) or Miss Flanagan (Vice Principal).

Yours sincerely,



Mrs M Stead - **Head of School**