



## Consultation on Strathearn School Uniform Policy

The School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Act (Northern Ireland) 2026 (the Act) received Royal Assent on 19 February 2026 and is now law. The accompanying School Uniforms Guidelines (the Guidelines) issued by the Department of Education are now statutory and apply to school uniform policies for the 2026/2027 school year onwards.

Guideline 4 sets out that schools must consult parents, pupils and any other group they consider relevant when devising or reviewing their uniform policies. Schools must ensure that the views of parents and pupils are sought about the uniform policy.

In December 2025, Strathearn School sought the views of parents and pupils on its School Uniform via online surveys – the findings of which were considered by the Board of Governors when devising the Strathearn School Uniform Policy, in accordance with the Guidelines.

This resulted in a number of updates to the *Official Standard School Uniform* (to be worn by all pupils by the end of the Transition Period), including a box-pleat skirt for all pupils; a white blouse/shirt for all pupils; and the move to a polyester blazer for all pupils.

A summary of the parent and pupil surveys is as follows:

### Parent Survey

- 289 responses received
- Over half (54%) of parents believed that the Strathearn woollen blazer is not affordable.
- Four in five (80%) parents were in favour of a white shirt for all pupils.
- Two thirds (67%) parents were in favour of a pleated skirt for all pupils.
- 11.1% of parents requested trousers as an alternative option to skirts.
- Repeated comments about the cost of our current uniform included “very expensive”, “unaffordable”, “far above other schools”, and “a financial burden”.
- Blazers and skirts, in particular, were repeatedly singled out as excessively priced.
- Parents repeatedly highlighted issues with our woollen blazer – saying that it becomes “bally” or “shabby” quickly, that it is expensive to maintain since it is dry-clean only and that girls “overheat” in summer.
- Parents requested a cheaper, washable and more durable alternative for the blazer.
- Over 100 parent comments were received regarding the Strathearn A-line skirt for Forms 1-3 centred, with the majority centred around it being restrictive and hard to walk in, prone to ripping at the seams, and a resulting in a lack of inclusivity (with feedback relating to body types, neurodiverse pupils and taller pupils).
- The Strathearn box-pleat skirt (worn by girls in Form 4 upwards prior to August 2026) was generally preferred for reasons relating to movement and inclusivity.
- 35% of parents reported having purchased pre-loved uniform items from Barnardo's.



## Pupil Survey

- 397 responses received
- Four in five (79.6%) pupils were in favour of a white shirt for all pupils.
- 61% of pupils were in favour of moving to a pleated skirt for all.
- 34 pupils requested trousers as an alternative option to skirts.
- 151 pupils cited similar difficulties to parents in relation to the A-line skirt.
- 36% of pupils reported having purchased pre-loved uniform items from Barnardo's.