



# New School Uniform FAQs

**As we look to change the school uniform, we thought it would be useful to address some of the most frequent questions.**

## Transition Phase

Irrespective of whether your child is a current student or joining us new in September, if you already have a set of the current uniform and games kit (including hand-me-downs from elder siblings) **then you do not need to buy anything new for September.** The existing uniform may continue to be worn by the current Shell and Remove pupils right the way through to the end of their time in the Middle School (i.e. June 2025 and June 2026 respectively).

## Mix and Match

To make life even easier during this transition phase, **pupils of all ages may combine any items that are part of the existing uniform and games kit with any items in the new collection.** My advice is that you simply purchase the new items as and when your child grows out of their existing clothing, so that gradually they end up phasing into the new look. This includes Senior Prep School and Middle School girls who wish to wear trousers but do not want to wear a tie; under the new gender-neutral uniform rules (see the attached Uniform Guide), it is quite possible for them to combine trousers with a reverse collar shirt. I hope that this will be welcomed by many of our girls who perhaps have been put off the trouser option for fear of it being labelled as “the boys’ uniform”.

## Discounted Prices

The uniform shop is understandably keen to sell off their existing stock in order to make way for the new items to arrive. This means that there will be some significant discounts on offer to parents of current pupils (e.g. those in Shell or Remove) who intend to see their current uniform through to the end of the Middle School. If your child has grown over the summer and just needs one or two items that should carry them through to the Sixth Form, then there will be some good deals to be had. Do speak to the staff in the shop who can advise on stock levels and pricing.

## Bursarial Support

One of the great arguments of school uniform is that it is a leveller – a way of ensuring that all children, from all backgrounds, are able to fit in and belong to a community without fear of being singled out because their families are unable to afford fancy clothes. As part of the renegotiation of our contract with Stevensons, they have allocated a proportion of sales which will be ringfenced to allow us to provide low cost (in some cases free) items to those families who are in receipt of means-tested bursarial support. If this applies to you, please speak to the staff in the uniform shop; they are very discreet and will assist you in kitting out your child so that they are able to look the same as everyone else.

## **Alternative Suppliers**

There are a number of items which do not need to be purchased from the uniform shop if you prefer to source a cheaper alternative. We have worked with Stevensons to design items that we feel are very high quality and will meet our pupils' needs, but in two cases (the blue trousers and white shirts) they will end up significantly more than going to M&S, John Lewis etc. In the case of the trousers, our suppliers wanted to make a perfect fabric match with the blazer to give the impression of wearing a suit. However, it is a fairly standard navy blue so you may wish to opt for a cheaper alternative from a high street retailer – particularly if you have a boy in the Senior Prep School who enjoys tearing holes at the knees when playing football on the astro at breaktime! If you do opt for a generic version, I would suggest taking the blazer with you when you go shopping so that you can colour match.

The one request that I would make of parents of teenage girls is that you give real thought to the thickness of the material. The main driver behind the change in style of shirt (and hence the higher price) is to provide a thicker fabric that gives Shell, Remove and Fifth Form girls the confidence to wear a shirt without a jumper. You can probably buy a pack of five thin white cotton shirts for the same price as a twin pack of the cotton oxford shirts being sold in the shop, and still have money left over for a latte in the M&S café. However, we really do want to try to break the trend of girls stubbornly refusing to take off their jumpers in the height of summer, so please do ensure that your daughter's underwear isn't visible through whichever fabric you go for.

## **The Second Hand Uniform Shop**

The fantastic volunteers in our Second Hand Uniform Shop will continue to offer their services to current and existing parents. In the short term, it makes sense to use up as much of their stock as possible, particularly for those of you with older children who are coming to the end of their time in the Middle School. Any unsold items will be donated to charity as part of an initiative to ensure that there is zero landfill as a result of this change. It will, of course, take time to build up a stock of second hand items from the new range, but over the course of the year they will begin to acquire items from children who have quickly outgrown their clothes, and I would urge you to make full use of this excellent resource.

## **Sustainability**

Aside from cost, the other big question that parents have asked me is about the sustainable credentials of our uniform. I am therefore very pleased to confirm that these changes are a very positive step in the right direction. Our suppliers have guaranteed that 100% of the polyester used in the production of all our garments (uniform and Player Layer games kit) is recycled material. By phasing in the new items over a long period of time, and receiving donations of unwanted uniform and games kit to allow us to make a sizeable charitable donation to a partner school in another country, we hope that this approach will have a positive impact on the environment as well as on the wallets of Hurst parents. Sustainability is an area that we have been discussing in detail with our governing body for some time now, and I hope to be able to share further plans with you in due course.

**Dominic Mott**

Head of College

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