



Rugby Free

Primary School

Headteacher: Miss R Butters

Friday 6th March 2026

Dear parents and carers

Over a year ago, I wrote to you to discuss the possibility of changing our school uniform to make it more affordable and comfortable/practical for the children and we also conducted a poll. The results of the poll were inconclusive as there was a fairly even split between parents wanting to keep the current uniform and parents also wanting a change to make it less formal and less expensive. Since then, the government (Department for Education - DFE), have published statutory guidance for schools on school uniforms regarding what can and cannot be mandatory. They have stipulated quite clearly that uniforms should be affordable and should not prevent any pupils from joining the school due to cost. They have also said that schools should ask for no more than three branded items and that these MUST offer parents value for money. We have also seen a rise in parents not sending their children in the correct uniform which has caused some challenges.

In addition to the changes to government policy, our current uniform provider is not able to provide us with the value for money, length of wait times or service that we require. The price of a school blazer is close to £50 and has a 6 month lead time on them and the same for jumpers. This is partly because they are made abroad and not locally. This also means that we have to carry a huge amount of stock because of these long lead times. This is not affordable or sustainable for us as a school with a limited budget. We also want to spend the money we do have, on the children's learning rather than on uniform stock.

We have thought long and hard about the changes and as a senior leadership team have discussed this at length with the local governing body (Local Accountability Board - LAB) and a representative from the Trust. The current uniform was decided upon in 2014, 12 years ago and the world has moved on since then, people generally don't wear suits and ties to work, and uniforms have become less formal in schools, especially with the rise in sensory needs.

Therefore, we have made the decision to have a branded sweatshirt or cardigan and a polo shirt or shirt as options. Ties can still be purchased and worn if wanted to, but this is not mandatory. Blazers can still be worn but we won't be buying any more stock (see below).

From September 2026, our new uniform will be:

- **Red branded sweatshirt or branded cardigan** (old type or new type)*.
- **White polo shirt** or white shirt
- Grey trousers, shorts, dress, skirt or white and red checked dress (in summer term)
- Grey or white socks and/or red or grey tights
- Black school shoes/ankle boots

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- Red branded rucksack - infant or junior size
- Tie (optional with the white shirt)
- Blazer (optional with the white shirt but no more blazers will be ordered other than the stock we hold**)

***We will not insist on a branded jumper or cardigan (old or new style) until September 2027 to give parents 18 months notice. But after September 2027, we will expect all pupils to be wearing these. We believe that having a logo on the uniform creates a sense of belonging and also looks smart.**

**We will not be buying any more blazers, but pupils are welcome to wear them still and we will be selling any blazers and old style RFPS jumpers at half price from after May Half term and will also be selling the new branded sweatshirts and cardigans from after May Half term. These can all be purchased via MCAS.

The PE uniform will be exactly the same which is: Plain black joggers (or shorts in summer) and plain black hoodie, white polo shirt and black or white trainers. Items are to have NO branding on them please.

The new uniform provider for the sweatshirts, cardigans, ties and rucksacks is called Cat Ballou, a local Coventry based company. We sell them through school so that parents don't have to pay for any postage and so that it is more convenient for parents.

I know there will be mixed feelings about this and if you prefer the more formal option then your child can still carry on wearing the current uniform for as long as you want your child to. No-one is changing this. However, if you want to have a more informal uniform with a polo-shirt, no tie and a sweatshirt or cardigan, then that is also an option.

All of our decisions are made in the best interest of all children and their families, taking in to account different sensory needs, different levels of affordability, whilst also thinking about comfort and practicality issues.

These changes will come in from September 2026. However, any new sweatshirts and/or cardigans can be worn from May 2026 onwards.

Thank you for your support. It is always appreciated.

Kindest regards

Rebecca Butters