



Oaklands School

"The best for all, the best from all"

Montgomery Way, Winsford
Cheshire, CW7 1NU
Telephone: 01606 551048

Head Teacher: Neil Oxley

27th February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

School uniform changes

I am writing to let you know about some changes that we will be making to our school uniform on a trial basis.

As explained at the Parent/Carer Coffee morning yesterday, we will shortly implement a trial period of uniform change, during which, wearing the school tie and blazer will be optional. If you and your child decide not to wear the school blazer during the trial period, then this can be replaced by wearing an Oaklands Black V neck jumper which can be ordered through the normal process in the School Trends link below:

<https://www.schooltrends.co.uk/uniform/OaklandsSchoolCW71NU>

Many of the children already wear this jumper alongside their blazer, so this change will be minimal. If your child would prefer to continue to wear the blazer and/or tie, then this is fine, as the change is optional as explained above.

To help you understand the changes, the following images will provide an illustration of what the optional changes would look like.

Current requirement:



An OFSTED Outstanding School 2013/2014, 2014/2015, 2019/2020 and 2024/2025

www.oaklandsschool.org



Optional change (including blazer with no tie as an option):



Current requirement:



Optional change (including blazer with no tie as option):



Why are we having this trial period change to uniform?

As a secondary special needs school, our priority is making sure students feel comfortable, regulated and ready to learn.

Over time, we have had increasing feedback from parents and carers that some students struggle with the sensory aspects of the blazer and tie. It has been reported that the blazer can feel restrictive, and the collar and tie can be uncomfortable for some young people. We understand that if a student feels uncomfortable all day, it can affect their learning and wellbeing.

We're also seeing more students finding the clip-on tie difficult to manage. Ties are often removed during the day (for example, in practical lessons or at lunch clubs), and some students struggle to take them off and put them back on independently. This can lead to frustration, damaged ties, or students wearing them incorrectly.

We are also very aware of the cost of the uniform. Ties can be expensive to replace if they are lost or broken, and the blazer costs more than the jumper. Making these items optional can reduce costs for families.

We do understand that blazers and ties can help students look smart and feel part of the school community. Even though these items will now be optional, we will still have clear expectations about what students can and cannot wear (as displayed in the previous images). We expect all students to wear the agreed uniform properly and to take pride in being part of our school. **With this in mind, the uniform policy does not allow students to wear leggings. Jewellery, other than stud earrings (smaller than 5mm), is not permitted.**

Blazers will still be available, and families are very welcome to continue using them.

Is a consultation required?

The DfE guidance states that a uniform consultation should be implemented when there will be a significant change to school uniform requirements (i.e. a significant change in policy). Therefore, we believe that making the blazer and tie non-compulsory items doesn't constitute a significant change.

Although we believe that a formal consultation is not required for this trial period, I welcome a discussion with any parent/carers to explore these changes in more detail and the rationale behind the decision.

As you would expect I have explained these changes to the governing board. The board understand the reasons for implementing the changes and agrees to implement the trial period. They are supportive of ensuring that the students feel comfortable and ready to learn.

Next steps

Along with discussing these changes at yesterday's Parent/Carer Coffee morning, I have obtained feedback from staff who are positive about implementing the trial period. I will discuss this process and changes with the students during next week's assemblies, and will start the trial period the following week on Monday 9th March. I will review the impact of the changes for the next few weeks and write to you again during the week beginning 30th March with details of how we intend to move forward.

As always, thank you for your continued support. As stated earlier, if you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N Oxley', written in a cursive style.

Mr N Oxley
Headteacher