

Boughton Monchelsea Primary School



Updating our School Uniform

Rationale

In our drive to make Boughton Monchelsea Primary School an excellent place to learn, we have based our school improvement priorities around our core values of excellence, responsibility, respect and determination. These are articulated in our school vision and have guided the work of staff and governors over the past two years, resulting in significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning; outcomes for pupils and behaviour. We expect pupils to take pride in their behaviour, their appearance, their work and their surroundings (as recognised with one class per week receiving the Boughton Pride trophy). This approach has led to better quality of work in books, more respectful behaviour to others and a more organised, learning-focused learning environment. Our children are now respecting the existing uniform expectations more consistently, leading to greater pride in their appearance. However, as a school, we have felt that the current school uniform does not fit in with the ethic of excellence that we wish to set as our school standard.

The current school uniform has been in place for more than 15 years. The blue polo sweatshirts and polo necks are not the best quality, and, as they have been available from more than one supplier, the colour and fabric have been inconsistent. The colours fade over time and sweatshirts become shapeless and frayed so that the children often find it difficult to look smart in their uniform. We have seen other local primary schools moving to shirts and ties with jumpers, and have noticed that these look smarter than sweatshirts and polo shirts. Feedback from colleagues in these schools has been very positive and has encouraged us to make a similar move. We feel that changing our uniform to shirts and ties with knitted jumpers or cardigans would encourage children to take greater pride in their appearance and would be more closely aligned to the school's current position and aspirations.

We have followed guidance in the 2013 Department for Education document "School Uniform: guidance for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities" which states the following;

"It is for the governing body of a school to decide whether there should be a school uniform policy and if so what that should be. This flows from the duties placed upon all governing bodies by statute to ensure that school policies promote good behaviour and discipline amongst the pupil body. It is also for the governing body to decide how the uniform should be sourced."

The process

Consideration of cost for parents and securing value for money have been key priorities during the change process. We invited three suppliers to tender for the contract, and their quotes (October 2017) are presented below.

PMG

- The current uniform supplier
- Online ordering with free delivery over £35

Item	Material	Cost
Cardigan	100% acrylic (Rowlinson Courtelle)	£14.99 - £17.99
Jumper	100% acrylic (Rowlinson Courtelle)	£14.99 - £17.99
Elasticated Tie		£3.50
39" tie		£3.99

Simmonds

- Shop in Tunbridge Wells with depot in Paddock Wood which parents can visit
- Supplies primary schools, large secondaries and independent schools
- All orders are with free delivery
- Pop-up events held periodically at school

Item	Material	Cost
Cardigan	100% acrylic (Rowlinson Courtelle)	£14.95 - £16.95
Jumper	100% acrylic (Rowlinson Courtelle)	£14.95 - £16.95
Elasticated Tie		£3.95
39" tie		£3.95

Pages

- Shop in Maidstone.
- £6.95 delivery or free delivery to school

Item	Material	Cost
Cardigan	100% acrylic (Innovation)	£16.50
Jumper	100% acrylic (Innovation)	£15.50
Cardigan	50% cotton, 50% acrylic	£18.95
Jumper	50% cotton, 50% acrylic	£17.95
Clip on tie		£5 - £5.50

Timeline

September 2017

Staff and governors identify school development priorities for 2017-18 which inform School Improvement Plan. Reviewing current school uniform is agreed as an action.

October 2017

Three local uniform suppliers are invited to tender for the contract. Discussions held between company reps and school leaders.

November 2017

School Council consulted on proposed changes.
Proposal letter sent out to parents/ carers and responses invited.
Staff and Governing Body consulted

December 2017

Feedback from all stakeholders considered and decision to proceed made by Senior Leadership Team and approved by FGB.
Existing stock of old uniform purchased from PMG to sell at reduced prices to parents for use in this school year. Notice to terminate contract given to Tesco and PMG.

January 2018

Logo developed with Simmonds and launch date agreed. PTA approached to support with funding discount vouchers.
Parents informed of changes, with vouchers offered to parents of Pupil Premium children, those with three or more children at the school (2018-19) and children in Year 6 from September 2018, in response to parent comments.

March 2018

New uniform launched. March to July - transition phase when both old and new uniform acceptable for all children.

September 2018

All pupils expected to wear new uniform, with the exception of pupils entering Year 6 in September 2018 are permitted to wear old-style sweatshirts/ cardigans with white shirt and new tie.

Responses from Stakeholders

Governors	Unanimously approved at FGB on 23 rd November 2017
Staff	Unanimously approved at meeting on 7 th November 2017
Pupils	Unanimously approved at School Council meeting on 1 st November 2017
Parents (162 families)	Proposal letter sent out 1 st November 2017 Emails received from 18 families. 15 responses against the proposal 3 in favour

Responses from Parents

We currently have 162 families at the school who were informed on 1st November that the school was considering moving to a uniform with shirts, ties and knitwear and responses invited.

We received correspondence (all by email) from 18 families. 15 of these were against the proposal and 3 were in favour.

Individual comments from parents' emails are broken down in the following table. Please note that each family may have mentioned several different points in their email and that parents in favour were more likely to offer general support for the proposal, rather than articulate their reasons.

We have also included the school's response to each point.

Parent Comments against the Proposal

General comment	Specific Comment	Number of comments	School Response
Cost	Too expensive	8	<p>We recognise that the new jumpers and cardigans will be more expensive than the old sweatshirts, which is why we have offered support for families who meet certain criteria.</p> <p>The knitted products are of better quality than sweatshirts and will be more durable, representing good value for money in our opinion. The fabric is Courtelle by Rowlinson, which is designed for outstanding performance, comfort and ease of care.</p> <p>Grey trousers, shorts, skirts and pinafores and white shirts are not school-branded and can be purchased inexpensively from chain stores.</p>
Ease of product care (washing and ironing)	Polo shirts and sweatshirts are easy to wash and dry; no ironing needed	4	Non-iron collared shirts are widely available at low cost (e.g. Asda - £4 for two shirts). The acrylic knitwear dries easily when hung out and does not need to be ironed.
Comfort	Polo shirts and sweatshirts are comfortable for children to wear	2	Some children may find the shirts and ties a little uncomfortable at first. However, colleagues in other schools and staff whose children wear shirts and ties report that this is not an ongoing concern.
	Constrictions of shirt and tie	3	Elasticated tie for Infants is not constricting and can be adjusted to the appropriate length. KS2 can be adjusted for a comfortable fit.
	Loss of curriculum time spent on getting children dressed	4	Again, colleagues with experience of shirts and ties report that this is not an issue once children get used to buttons and ties.
Health and Safety	Concerns about tie-pulling	4	We expect our children to behave respectfully to one another and behaviour at this school is extremely good. If tie-pulling becomes a concern, we would consider making clip-on ties available. Again, colleagues with experience of shirts and ties report that this is not an issue in their schools.
No need to change	Current uniform is smart enough	10	See rationale above.
Fabric	Some children are sensitive to certain fabrics	1	The acrylic knitwear is very soft and has been proven as suitable for use in children's clothing. We would be happy to work with parents if their child has a particular skin condition which could be exacerbated by the shirts or jumpers.
2018-19 Year 6	Unnecessary expense for one year	3	<p>We take this point on board, which is why we have offered at £5 discount to parents of children going into Y6.</p> <p>In addition, in 2018-19 Y6 pupils are permitted to wear either the old-style sweatshirt/ cardigan or new knitwear with the white shirt and school tie.</p>

Parent Comments in Favour of the Proposal

Comment	Number of comments
Shirt, tie and jumper will be more durable	1
Sweatshirts and polo shirts look scruffy	2
Children will be proud to wear shirt and tie	1
Prepares children for secondary school	1

Decision

Having received feedback from all stakeholders, the school leadership with the support of the governing body reached the decision in December 2017 to proceed with the change to a new uniform.

We felt that Simmonds offered the best balance of value for money, quality and customer service. They were able to offer us preferential prices if they were chosen as the sole supplier. As sole supplier, the prices are kept lower, the process of purchasing is clearer for parents and the consistency of the product is guaranteed. They were the only supplier that could offer free postage and packing of items to parents' homes. In addition they have been highly recommended by other local schools and have been extremely professional in all our dealings with them.

Launch events

We will be holding a launch event on Wednesday 28th March, at 2.45pm in the Clarke Hall. There will be an opportunity to see samples of the new jumpers, cardigans and ties, along with other optional school-branded products, and to make purchases. A representative from Simmonds will be on hand to answer specific queries about product care or sizes. Orders can be placed in advance through the school office.

Simmonds will also provide a pop-up shop for parents of new Year R pupils at their induction meeting in June.

The Uniform



Boys

- White collared school shirt
- School tie (elasticated for Years R, 1 & 2)
- School knitted jumper with embroidered logo
- Mid grey trousers or shorts
- Grey or black socks
- Black school shoes

Girls

- White collared school shirt
- School tie (elasticated for Years R, 1 & 2)
- School knitted jumper or cardigan with embroidered logo
- Mid grey skirt, pinafore or trousers
- Knee-length white or grey socks, grey or black tights with skirts
- Grey or black socks with trousers.
- Optional light blue and white checked dress in summer
- Black school shoes

All

- Neatly combed hair
- Long hair tied back
- Plain mid-blue, brown or black hair ties
- No jewellery except small studs for pierced ears and plain watches (KS2)

Securing Value for Money

In response to parental feedback, we have decided to offer a £5 voucher which can be redeemed at the launch event on 28th March and at the pop-up shop for new Year R parents in June for the following groups;

- Families with three or more children at the school from September 2018
- Families in receipt of the Pupil Premium
- Families with a child going into Year 6 in September 2018

More than one voucher will be available per family, if more than one of the criteria is met, and orders can be placed in advance if you are unable to attend the launch.

We have also been working closely with Simmonds to negotiate the following offers

- 10% discount on all purchases made at launch event on 28th March (or pre-ordered) and at pop-up event for new Year R parents in June
- 2017 prices maintained for all of 2018.

These introductory offers represent significant savings for parents. They can be used in conjunction with the £5 voucher mentioned above.

The only compulsory branded items are the school jumper/ cardigan and school tie.

Price List

Code	Description	Size	Price
31957	Boughton Monchelsea PE Bag	.	£6.95
31958	Boughton Monchelsea Backpack	.	£12.95
31959	Boughton Monchelsea Book Bag	.	£6.95
36997	Boughton Monchelsea Jumper	24 - 26	£14.95
36997	Boughton Monchelsea Jumper	28 - 32	£16.95
36997	Boughton Monchelsea Jumper	34 - 36	£16.95
42943	Boughton Monchelsea T-Shirt	3/4 - 11-12	£4.95
42943	Boughton Monchelsea T-Shirt	XSML - SML	£5.95
45412	Boughton Monchelsea Tie	ELASTIC	£3.65
45412	Boughton Monchelsea Tie	39	£3.95
68915	Boughton Monchelsea Cardigan	24 - 26	£14.95
68915	Boughton Monchelsea Cardigan	28 - 32	£16.95
68915	Boughton Monchelsea Cardigan	34 - 36	£16.95