

Five Islands Academy
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Equity, Excellence, Evolution

*The Five Islands Academy is an all-age, multi-site, Church of England Academy,
serving the island communities of Bryher, St Agnes, St Martin's, St Mary's and Tresco.
It is part of the Leading Edge Academies Partnership.*

Wednesday 14th January 2026

Uniform Consultation

Dear Parents, Carers and School Community

We are enjoying the buzz at school today as children of all ages on all bases are talking about what they think our Five Islands Academy uniform should look and feel like. From the evidence of our eyes on 'Your Dream Uniform' day, there is a wide range of opinion; it's a lot of fun seeing the individual outfits children have worn to school today!

But on a more serious note, we are using today to launch a consultation with children, staff, parents and governors to decide whether our current uniform needs any adjustments or even whole scale changes. Please click on the link below to share your feedback.

[Five Islands Academy Uniform Questionnaire](#)

Possible Options

We are considering a range of options and want your views:

Option A: Keep current uniform policy unchanged

Option B: Change or simplify parts of the uniform to improve comfort / reduce costs (e.g. fewer branded items)

Option C: Replace the uniform with a more simple dress code

Option D: Remove uniform requirements entirely

We have put together a few notes here if you'd like to find out more about the uniform debate in the UK today, and why we are consulting you about possible changes.

All aboard! Navigating together

www.fiveislands.scilly.sch.uk

Why We Are Consulting

In our Parent View survey earlier this year, some parents raised questions or concerns about our current uniform. We want to understand more about your views and experiences before making any decisions about future policy.

Furthermore, the Department for Education has recently updated its guidance on school uniform, with a particular emphasis on limiting the number of items that require a school logo. The guidance aims to ensure that school uniform remains affordable for families, inclusive for all pupils, and easily available from a range of suppliers.

As part of this guidance, schools are expected to review their uniform policies and, where changes may be considered, to consult with parents and pupils. This helps ensure that any decisions reflect the views of our community and continue to support our pupils' sense of belonging while also keeping costs as low as possible.

This document presents some of the research and perspectives on school uniform to help inform your response. We welcome all views.

What Does the Research Say?

Research on school uniform presents a mixed picture. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), the UK's leading education evidence body, notes:

"There is little robust evidence that introducing a school uniform will, by itself, improve academic performance, behaviour, or attendance... Wearing a uniform is not, on its own, likely to improve learning, but can be successfully incorporated into a broader school improvement process."

Arguments For Uniform

- Can contribute to a sense of school identity and community
- May reduce visible differences between pupils from different backgrounds
- Removes pressure to wear fashionable or branded clothing
- Simplifies decisions about what to wear each day
- Some parents and staff believe it supports a positive learning environment

Arguments Against Uniform

- Cost can be a significant burden for families (average £337-£442 per child per year)
- Research has not established a clear link between uniform and improved outcomes
- May restrict physical activity, particularly for girls
- Can create difficulties for some pupils (e.g. sensory needs, gender identity, religious requirements), in some cases creating more visible differences
- Uniform-related issues can affect attendance and cause family stress

Summary of Evidence

Claimed Benefit	What Research Shows
Improves behaviour	Limited evidence; may be part of broader school culture

Improves attendance	Mixed findings; cost issues may negatively affect some families
Improves academic results	No clear evidence of direct impact
Creates school belonging	Some support this view; research findings are inconclusive
Reduces bullying	Mixed evidence; may reduce clothing-based issues but not overall bullying
Promotes equality	May reduce visible differences but cost burden falls unevenly on families, and can make differences more obvious

Uniform Costs

Recent research on uniform costs in the UK has found:

- Average secondary uniform cost: £337-£442 per child per year
- Average primary uniform cost: £315-£343 per child per year
- Some families report cutting back on essentials due to uniform costs
- Government guidance now requires schools to consider affordability

Sources: *Children's Society (2020), Gov.uk (2025), University of York*

What Happens Next?

We will analyse the results of these surveys closely in order to decide whether to propose changes to our uniform for approval by our Trust and Local Academy Committee. Before final changes are agreed, we will seek further student and parent voice on any new proposed designs.

If changes are to be made, we will follow DfE guidance that schools should:

- Avoid sudden changes
- Allow sufficient lead-in time (often 12 months or more for major changes)
- Permit old and new uniform to be worn during a transition period

This will help to manage cost and avoid unnecessary replacement of usable clothing.

We look forward to your responses.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Lewin and Maddy Hicks

Interim Headteacher and Deputy Head: Head of Primary