

Newlands Girls' School

Courage Commitment Compassion

Headteacher: Miss J. Capon



01628 625068
office@newlandsgirls.co.uk
www.newlandsgirlsschool.co.uk
Farm Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 5JB

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Dear Parents and Carers

As I hope you are aware, I feel passionately about listening to the views of our school community and last week I spoke to Years 11, 12 and 13 in assembly about our Sixth Form uniform. We currently expect Sixth Form students to wear smart 'business wear'. However outside education, what people wear to work has changed significantly over time and I wanted to know if now is the time to revise our *own* expectations.

I explained that I was as interested in their comments, as their votes. I asked, if we got rid of the uniform **from September 2025**, what are the advantages and what might the disadvantages be? I provided two very clear options and asked each student to think carefully before making a choice:

Option 1:

Our uniform stays. If this is the case it needs to be worn consistently and correctly by all members of the Sixth Form. Black stretch skirts or trainers will not be permitted, and the wearing of the blazer, compulsory.

Option 2:

We have no uniform for the Sixth Form. In this case, the uniform would have minimal but simple rules: we would not permit: spaghetti straps, cropped/low cut tops or backless shoes (like flip flops, crocs or sliders, for health and safety reasons). Nor would we allow tiny stretch skirts or 'Nike Pro' style shorts. If they wore any of these, students would be sent home to change in the morning. Sixth Formers would still be able to wear badges on lanyards, and wearing the lanyard and identity card would be compulsory at all times.

The results are in! Never have I been more thrilled or indeed surprised by the student voice. We had 316 responses in total, and there was a significant majority vote in favour of retaining our uniform with 65% in favour. As you have read, I was as interested in the comments as the vote, and here is a flavour of the repeated threads which were expressed:

I think that the current school uniform works well. Wearing own clothes in the Sixth Form might look unsmart and be too relaxed for everyday school life. I also like having structure to what I wear every day as it makes it much easier.

Stick with the school uniform. It makes everyone at school feel equal and not discomforted.

I personally like having a uniform at Sixth Form as I feel smart and can easily distinguish home clothes from school clothes.

I believe the uniform inspires students to know when it is time to work. Whenever I put on my blazer and uniform I feel a key part of the school community.

Personally, I think we should keep the uniform as it keeps me in a school headspace and means I can easily decide what I wear each day.

1. People come to our school for the standards and the smart uniform is a key part of this for me. For

example, think of open evenings- someone presenting a speech in joggers and a hoodie gives a completely different perspective than someone in smart dress. 2. If people want no uniform, then college is the place to go, and I have spoken to like 20 people who have said the same. We are a school, not a college.

I think it will look scruffy and messy! And for people looking round the school or Ofsted it can look bad and unprofessional.

I feel like we can be viewed as better role models if we dress in uniform, not just to younger students but also for open evenings where we can show our standards/best self.

As a Sixth Form, our school has a great reputation for being sophisticated and professional. For prospective parents and students, it shows that our focus is on the education, and we, as students, have pride in showing that we attend our school/Sixth Form.

I am sure you will agree that the maturity, thought and detail in these responses is something to be truly proud of.

The results and the comments speak for themselves. I am delighted to inform you that The Sixth Form uniform is here to stay.

I now need to enlist your help and support in upholding the standards. If your daughter is currently in Year 11, please ensure that when you purchase her uniform in the summer, the skirt is not a stretchy lycra one. We will be providing further details including helpful images of what is acceptable later this year.

If your daughter is currently in Year 12 or 13, please help us by ensuring that the current uniform guidelines are followed. We are not expecting skirts to be on the knee or necessarily lined, but if they ride up when students walk around the school and become inappropriately short, this will be addressed.

Whilst the wearing of coats to and from buildings is permitted in the Sixth Form, it is a requirement that blazers are worn too, especially when moving around the site during the school day.

It is important to remember that the student voice has been powerful here. The vote to keep the uniform is a vote to ensure it is worn correctly, which I made very clear. I have explained this to the students and staff, and I expect this to be respected by everyone.

Thank you for your support and well done to our brilliant students for stating the case so powerfully!

Best wishes



Miss Jo Capon
Headteacher



We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

