



The Priory School, Hitchin

Educating Students for Success in Life

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Headteacher: Mr M. Blayney MEd (Cantab)

2nd October 2025
MB/ES

Dear Parent/Carer

Ref: Changes to the school uniform

Firstly, may I take this opportunity to thank you for your support over the past few weeks. The numbers of parents who attended our welcome evenings and parent forums has been incredibly high and we are very grateful to you as parents for your continued support.

I am writing to make you aware of some changes to our uniform policy in readiness for next academic year, with one change that we will be introducing **after half-term this academic year**. I hope that we can rely on your support in implementing these changes and enabling our students to make the best possible educational progress whilst feeling proud of their uniform and their school.

PE kits on PE days – Changes from Monday 3rd November 2025

From September 2025, we made changes to our policy on students wearing PE kit on PE days in Years 10 and 11. Since making these changes, teachers have reported much greater levels of student focus and progress in classes where children are wearing full school uniform. Teachers have also reported that some students are no longer wearing PE kit five days per week (against school rules) which was a growing issue within these year groups.

As a result of these positive observations, from **Monday 3rd November 2025**, we will be extending this change to Years 7, 8, and 9 and will be asking **all students to wear full school uniform every day**. If a student has PE on any particular day, they will need to carry this with them in their school bag and get changed in the PE changing rooms. In essence, we will be reverting to our pre-covid pandemic expectations.

As a parent myself, I fully appreciate that many children find it easier and more comfortable wearing their PE kit, however, this decision has been made with your child's best interests at heart. In making this decision we have considered hygiene, parity and fairness, sense of community, and quality of education. I hope that we can rely on your support and by informing you now, it is our hope that you can purchase a PE kit bag if required (these are by no means compulsory!) and support your child with this transition.

We also appreciate that some children may be nervous about changing in a changing room, some having never done this before in their lives. Our PE staff are highly experienced and will support children to make this transition. We also appreciate that some children with diagnoses that have a sensory impact may find this transition difficult. If your child falls into this category, please contact our Learning Support department or your child's Head of Year to discuss.

Changes from September 2026 onwards

Since arriving at The Priory School in September, I have had the chance to speak with a large number of students in order to hear their views. A significant proportion of students have raised a number of considerations for me regarding our school uniform. Some parents have also raised concerns regarding the requirement to purchase two sets of uniform during their child's time at this school – one for Key Stage 3 and one for Key Stage 4. In a cost-of-living crisis, these pressures can often feel even more acute.

In response to student and parental feedback, we will be making some changes to our uniform from September 2026 onwards. Most notably, we will be phasing out the existing 'pencil' style skirt and replacing this option with a pleated skirt in The Priory School colours that provides greater levels of comfort. These skirts remain optional alongside black tailored trousers or black tailored shorts.

We will also be phasing-in a blazer for all year groups but will not be asking most current parents to buy this until they would have ordinarily purchased a school blazer. If parents wish to purchase a blazer or pleated skirt before this point, they are most welcome to do so.

We have worked closely with our uniform supplier and from September 2026, our uniform requirements will be as follows:

A: Compulsory	B. Optional	C: Choice of shirt or blouse	D: Choice of trousers or kilt
Blazer Plain black with The Priory School badge and year group colour bar (year group colours will be confirmed at a later date). Smart black shoes Low heeled and sensibly styled in the interests of safety - leather or leather effect (heels no higher than 4cm) No trainers School tie (compulsory if buttoned up shirt is worn)	Key Stage 3 The Priory School red V neck jumper. Key Stage 4 The Priory School grey V neck jumper.	Buttoned up white shirt with collar, with long or short sleeves, tucked into trousers or The Priory School pleated skirt and school tie knotted closely to the collar. OR White fitted, reverse necked blouse with ¾ or full-length sleeves. This style of blouse does not require a tie. Polo shirts are not allowed. All shirts/blouses are to be tucked into trousers, shorts, or Priory School pleated skirt.	Black Trousers tailored and of suiting material, not tight fitting, stretchy or denim fabric. OR Pleated skirt in The Priory School colours worn on the knee with plain black socks (knee length, ankle, or normal length) or black tights. No other colour of socks or tights are permitted. OR Black shorts tailored and of suiting material, not tight fitting, stretchy or denim fabric.' For children in Years 8 to 11: the 'pencil' style skirt is permitted until September 2027.

To support household finances, we will be phasing out old uniform over the course of a year to ease the potential burden on families. The new pleated skirt in The Priory School colours will also be available at a discounted price during the first year of implementation to support this transition.

Phase-out of 'pencil' style skirt option timeline:

The 'pencil' style skirt will remain an option for students in current Year 7 to 11 (2025) until September 2027.

The new pleated skirt in The Priory School colours will be the only skirt option available for the new Year 7 intake from September 2026 onwards and Year 10 from September 2026 onwards. All other year groups will be expected to wear the new pleated style skirt option from September 2027.

Phase-in of blazer for all year groups timeline:

Blazers will be compulsory for all year groups by September 2027.

From September 2026, blazers will be compulsory for Year 7, Year 10, and Year 11. If parents in other year groups wish to purchase a blazer for their child, this is permitted but not compulsory.

If your family is in receipt of certain benefits and your child receives free school meals, our existing commitment to support towards the cost of school uniform remains in place. Our extensive second-hand uniform shop will also remain fully stocked with all existing items including blazers. Over time we will build a stock of second-hand pleated skirts in The Priory School colours.

Second-hand uniform sales will be publicised later this academic year. Further changes based upon student feedback such as our rules on earrings will be discussed and decided upon at a later day.

Thanks again for your continued support and if you have any concerns, please do reach out to us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Blayney', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matt Blayney
Headteacher