



St Benedict's

Catholic College

JSA/TCR

22nd January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to clarify some early information that appeared on our website regarding an update to the college uniform **for the new year 7 intake from September 2026**, and to offer reassurance.

In summary:

- **No immediate changes and a phased approach**
- **Focus on affordability and simplicity**
- **Branded skirt and gradual transition**

The information was shared prematurely and does not reflect finalised arrangements, which will be clarified as usual in our helpful 'Dressing for Excellence' booklet in due course. I would like to reassure families that no immediate or sudden changes are being introduced, and that any adjustments to uniform expectations will be small, carefully planned and phased in over time, with clear communication well in advance.

The updates are part of routine policy review and have been developed in line with government guidance, which asks schools to limit the number of branded items and to keep uniforms affordable and accessible. Our focus throughout has been on simplicity, value for money and practicality, whilst maintaining a smart and inclusive appearance. This is consistent with our existing approach, including our policy on avoiding expensive designer coats or bags.

Based on current prices, the changes would result in a modest overall reduction in cost:

- For smaller sizes, the total uniform cost would reduce from **£69 to £67**
- For larger sizes, the total cost would reduce from **£82.25 to £76**

In addition, the revised policy removes the requirement for approximately £40 of branded PE kit items, giving families greater flexibility to buy suitable alternatives from a range of retailers and to make use of hand-me-downs.

One small addition within the update is the introduction of a branded skirt, intended to provide a consistent, smart and practical option for students who choose to wear a skirt. It is important to stress that wearing a skirt will remain entirely optional. Smart, tailored trousers will continue to be an equally acceptable part of the uniform, and no current student will be expected to change the uniform items they have until a new item is needed.

To support families during the transition, an initial branded skirt will be provided free of charge to our current students in years 7 to 10 who would like one. This ensures there is no immediate cost associated with this option.

All these changes are planned for the new year 7 intake in **September 2026**, giving families plenty of time to prepare. Any transition will be gradual, and existing uniform and PE kit items will remain acceptable for a period of time. Clear guidance will be shared well in advance so families can plan with confidence. As has always been the case, we will continue to make sensible and reasonable adjustments to uniform expectations during periods of extreme weather. This may include allowing students to wear a plain black V-neck jumper in particularly cold conditions or permitting the removal of ties and blazers during periods of

excessive heat, to ensure students remain comfortable and able to learn effectively.

We recognise the financial pressures many families face and do not make changes lightly. Our intention is simply to streamline requirements, reduce reliance on branded items and ensure fairness and affordability, whilst maintaining the standards our community expects.

Further detailed information will be shared via our updated 'Dressing for Excellence' booklet in due course. I apologise for any confusion caused by the early circulation of information, and I thank you for your trust, patience and understanding as we take a measured and thoughtful approach to these updates.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J E Santinelli
Principal