

21st January 2022

Dear Varndean Families

At Varndean School I want *all* students to feel a sense of belonging to our school community. This starts with students wearing our full school uniform. I want our students to develop a sense of pride in being part of our community and being fully organised and prepared for a day at school without the worries of fitting in. I strongly believe, and have observed over time, that arriving in a consistent uniform sets a mindset for the rest of the school day in being organised and prepared to learn. It is no coincidence that a uniform helps students develop a respect for their role in school as learners and, therefore, support them in achieving their full potential. When speaking with students, the majority of students like that they wear our school uniform and feel proud wearing it.

Over the last 9 months, I have reflected on our school uniform and observed what I believe makes our uniform smart and reflective of our World Class ambition.

From Monday, we will be talking to students about the ‘Varndean Smart Six’. These are the six expectations that we have for our uniform. We are launching this with students, staff and families so that there is a clear understanding of what our uniform is so that all future conversations are directed to student wellbeing, learning and progress. We know that frustrations can occur when things are not communicated well or when students feel different expectations are being adhered to.

Varndean Smart Six

- ★ Blazer (this needs to worn in the school building) More information to follow regarding summer months
- ★ Tie worn with the knot at the top
- ★ Black school skirt/trousers/tailored shorts
- ★ White shirt - no coloured tops to be visible
- ★ Black/white socks or smart black tights
- ★ Plain black shoes/trainers

You will notice that I have made a decision to reintroduce white socks as an option for students to wear, which has been decided after speaking with our senior student leadership team and listening to their views.

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Students will be asked to be in full uniform as they enter tutor time at 8.40am. Students who are not in correct uniform will be asked to address this and families may be called so that we can open a dialogue to support the removal of any barriers your child and/or family have in providing a full uniform.

School bases will be very much working with students and families over the course of the next two weeks to help any families who might need financial support with uniform. Please contact your child's school base if you would like to have a conversation about uniform.

In the next half-term we will be working with our school community to address the points raised in [School uniforms: guidance for schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-uniforms-guidance-for-schools) so you can expect more information to follow in future newsletters once we have carried out this work.

Kind regards

Shelley Baker
Headteacher

