

Mrs Bland's Infant and Nursery School

Jordan's Lane, Burghfield Common, Reading RG7 3LP
Tel: 0118 983 2332

Email : office@mrsblands.w-berks.sch.uk

Website: www.mrsblandsinfants.co.uk

Chair of Governing Board: Mr Christopher Rowlands

Headteacher: Mrs C Nisbet

Tuesday 19th July 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I'm sure you are all aware, the school recently made a change to the uniform policy. I have spoken to several parents over the last few weeks and have seen social media posts concerning the change both at Mrs Bland's and at Garland. The common theme I am hearing is that the 'why' hasn't been communicated effectively, and so I am writing to you to explain the reasoning behind the changes.

As a governing board we are focussed on the strategic, long-term direction of the school and how we can improve the learning experience of all children. One of our responsibilities is to set and review a uniform policy to ensure we are meeting government and DofE guidance (linked below). During a recent review it was observed that to fully meet the guidance we should ensure the uniform meets the requirements of the 2010 Equalities Act and the protected characteristics contained within. Having a single colour for boys and girls will enable us to achieve this, and so a decision was made to change boys' trousers and shorts from grey to navy blue, from September 2022.

In addition to this, there are a number of studies (also linked below) that compliment government guidance and show how a well-implemented uniform policy positively affects behaviour. We believe that good behaviour is essential to providing quality education and support the strict enforcement of the uniform policy. I hope you will agree that our top priorities should be the quality of the education provided by the school and the well-being of the children, and whilst I can sympathise with individual circumstances on how the changes will impact, we believe they are necessary in order to meet our goals. As recognition of the current economic climate, we are ensuring there is support available so please contact the school if you feel you need assistance of any kind.

You may also be aware that Mrs Bland's Infant School and Garland Junior School are working together on a number of policies, with the aim of strengthening our partnership and providing continuity for parents and children. This is a process that had to be reduced during the restrictions of the Covid pandemic, but one that also needed to be revitalised. We will continue on this path of cooperation for years ahead, however at this early stage there may be some differences in how changes are implemented, and I ask for your support and understanding in helping our schools achieve their long-term goals.

Finally, we are always open to feedback on the school, and we have just sent out a questionnaire which I would encourage you to return with your honest views. If you would like to contact me directly, I can be reached on crowlands@mrsblands.w-berks.sch.uk.

Many thanks,
Chris Rowlands
Chair of Governors

Links and references:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-uniform/school-uniforms>

<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJEM-09-2015-0118/full/html>

Baumann, C. and Krskova, H., 2016. School discipline, school uniforms and academic performance. *International Journal of Educational Management*.

Attitudes to school uniform survey:

https://www.trutexbtru2u.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Uniform-Research-Report-29_6_17.pdf

Useful summary of academic research for several aspects of school uniform policy.

<https://helpfulprofessor.com/school-uniform-statistics/>