

Cambridgeshire School Uniform Survey: Examples of school initiatives or good practice offered by schools in the survey responses (January 2025)

Examples given by primary schools:

- *Regular uniform 'swaps'.*
- *Railing of good quality second hand clothing available to parents daily.*
- *We have a second-hand uniform shop that can be ordered from, but we also have open afternoons to come and browse too.*
- *We have expanded our swap shop to include a Christmas jumper / outfit swap shop around the festive season to reduce cost to families and to raise funds for the PTA and to reduce clothes waste.*
- *Uniform, Christmas clothing, and clothing for sports day colours 'swish' events can be exchanged for other pre-loved items.*
- *Our PTA work hard to collect and recycle uniform.*
- *Parent volunteers do school uniform sales in the playground for a voluntary donation/free if needed. All clothing is donated by parents and is washed and hung on rails to look as presentable as possible.*
- *We provide opportunities to access pre-loved uniform throughout the year and parents are asked to give what they can as a donation. This was advised by a charity who noted that this gave a sense of worth for the parent/carer - they weren't just being given things.*
- *Pre-loved uniform is very popular, and we only ask for a voluntary contribution that families can afford for as many pieces of uniform as they need.*
- *We have plenty of items on clothes rails and have them out on the playground every Wednesday. For working parents this can be more difficult to access although we do ask people to let us know if there's something they're needing, and we can send it home for them to look at. We've tried using a site with items listed but this is time-consuming to keep updated and is another thing for parents to have to go to.*
- *We ask for all uniform deliveries to the school to reduce the postage costs.*
- *A 'New to You' stand has free items of uniform parents/carers can take from our school reception area. There are also food items and toys for families there as well.*
- *We are planning to have a stock of PE uniform in each year group so that children who wear football shirts, inappropriate t-shirts for PE can change at school.*
- *Pre-loved uniform selection always available in school foyer, with items priced at 50p or £1, any money raised goes to the PTA.*
- *For any new starters arriving mid-year we always offer free tops (polo and sweatshirt) from our second-hand uniform to allow them time to settle in and then think about uniform.*
- *Our PTA set up their nearly new stall at the new Reception intake parents meeting in July so they have access to this before they are told where they can buy new uniform - this means it becomes the norm for parents to do.*
- *We are trialling a free uniform shop in the local library so that parents don't feel embarrassed asking at school.*
- *We sell pre-loved uniform at various events across the year; we offer PP families one free piece of branded uniform every two years; we offer families who are struggling pre-loved uniform*
- *All parents know about our community shed. Local businesses donate food, toiletries etc and many parents donate clothing, including uniform children have outgrown. We wash all clothing in school so what is available is clean, pressed and ready to wear. Parents can take what they need. We also purchase via the PTA packs of uniform clothing from supermarkets, so we have plenty of offer parents.*
- *Local Methodist Church also stocks pre-loved uniform for us.*
- *Our local Rotary Club provided us with coat vouchers for some of our children which we have been able to distribute.*
- *We allow children to attend school in PE kit on PE days. Therefore, parents are only required to provide 3 normal uniforms and 2 PE kits if their children have a full change each day to keep the cost down.*

- We are currently looking into having a permanent pre-loved 'shed' or using our school bus (library) to house the pre-loved uniform. That way it can always be open, before and after school and parents can just help themselves. It would also be a place for people to drop off unwanted uniform. Some families feel embarrassment coming to the office to ask so this would ease that if they were able to pick up things anonymously. Our PTA are happy to keep it tidy.
- PTFA subsidise the PE kit top for all new parents and Reception in-take
- We have a close link with the local second-hand charity shop Branching Out, who often collect uniform for us then donate the pieces to school and our families, free of charge.
- We have a weekly uniform swap as part of our Fairshare food parcel session. Our free uniform is advertised in the prospectus, website, newsletters etc. Parents can also come to the school office if they can't attend the Fairshare session.
- We don't expect families to all buy the branded uniform - but many do. When children transfer to us in Year 3, if they are still wearing the infant school sweatshirt because it still fits, we don't mind.
- I wash and iron the preloved clothes, so they are readily available to everyone. The barrier could be embarrassment, but this is overcome as the clothes are at the back of the school entrance and we encourage parents/carers to come and have a look through our weekly newsletter.
- For any new starters arriving mid-year we always offer free tops (polo and sweatshirt) from our second-hand uniform to allow them time to settle in and then think about uniform.
- Tesco recently donated lots of unsold school uniform items. We intend to package them up and give to families who may need them.
- We operate a Community Fridge which stocks pre-loved uniform from our local schools.
- Pre-loved shop run like a boutique in the URC church.

Examples given by secondary schools:

- I highly recommend the website [Uniformd](#) for selling second-hand uniform items that have been donated. We also have a loan shop whereby some items are loaned permanently.
- We run an online second-hand uniform request scheme - parents/carers can request items via an online form on the website. Admin staff fulfil the requests and distribute the items. Payment is entirely optional (there is a suggested donation amount) via the school's cashless payment system. We find this easier to staff and administer than second-hand uniform sales, and parents can request items at any time of the year.
- We have managed to negotiate a discounted rate for our disadvantaged families, which allows them to use a one-off code on the supplier's website when ordering. Additional codes are available to families though.
- A discount is given for purchases over £100 bought/ordered at the uniform 'try-on' session.
- We have a very active 'Friends' group who provide excellent support for families.
- We offer a swap shop for our year 10 students going into year 11. Year 11 students wear black sweatshirts and if students bring in a green sweatshirt we swap this for a black

Examples given by special schools:

- Free pre-loved uniform swap shop with pupil enterprise linked to pupil accreditation and learning. Low cost sew-on badge available at £1.40 to sew on sweatshirts.