



22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Students

## QEGS Uniform and PE Changing Update

Further to our announcement regarding school uniform and PE kit in the bulletin dated 11.11.22, we wanted to further explain our decision, the rationale behind the change and plans to support students and families with this change.

Over the course of this term, we had requests from our staff about students returning to uniform and changing for PE/Dance/Drama. The staff who raised these concerns felt that there were several factors to consider:

- Health and hygiene
- Winter sports
- Use of lockers
- Peer pressure and fashion
- Attitudes and behaviour

We then consulted with our Heads of Department for PE, Dance and Drama who also felt that this was the right time for a change and a return to the well-established routine that we had prior to Covid. We then consulted with two secondary schools that we work closely with, Highfields (Matlock) and Lady Manners (Bakewell) who returned to uniform and PE changing in September 2022. We considered how they made this change and the support they put in place.

Based on the feedback from the other two secondary schools, we will now start our uniform change on **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023**. We feel that the start of a new term is a better starting point and gives families more time to prepare. This also gives us more time to prepare our students and staff, to talk with students about concerns and to support any individuals who may require additional support.

We appreciate that many of our students (Years 7-9) will not have experienced this routine in secondary school and this is something that we are conscious of and we want to support.

We also want to outline the support and provision around some queries that students and parents have raised:

- **Time from lessons** – we now have changeover time between lessons 1-2 and 3-4 which means that students now have more lesson time than they had previously. PE/Dance and Drama staff are confident that changing time will not impact negatively on teaching time.
- **Lost kit** – There is always the risk of students losing belongings. We currently have over 150 unused and empty lockers. Students simply require a padlock and should inform their Form Tutor which locker they have taken. PP students can claim a free padlock from the pastoral office. We also ask that parents do mark all uniform and belongings with their child's name. Lost property is always stored in the medical room.
- **Self-conscious students** – we will be talking to students to help build confidence. Many students already partake in other activities both in and out of school where changing is required but we appreciate there are some that do not. Private changing was provided and in place at QEGS prior to Covid and this will be in place again from 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023.
- **Gender** – similar to above, private changing will be available for those that identify with a different gender to their peers.

- **Safeguarding and behaviour** – as we would in any other area or circumstance in the school, we will not tolerate incidents of poor behaviour, these matters will be dealt with immediately by the class teacher and escalated to senior staff if required.
- **Cost of uniform or kit** – we currently provide school uniform and PE kit free of charge to all Pupil Premium families and we are also able to support other families who face financial hardship if the costs of replacing or purchasing additional items is a challenge regardless of this change. Please contact Mrs Starkie if you wish to discuss this in confidence [starkie@qegs.email](mailto:starkie@qegs.email)
- **Multiple lessons changes through the day** – there will be some students who have more than one lesson in the day where PE kit is required. If these lessons (PE/Dance/Drama) are consecutive (P1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 4-5) then students will remain in kit for these lessons.
- **AM and PM** - students must arrive to school in full school uniform and change for any P1 lessons where PE kit is required. Students will be allowed to travel home in PE kit after P5 lessons where they have been changed.

Thank you to the students and parents who have asked for further details on this. We hope that this letter answers some or all your questions. If you have any further queries, please contact your child's Progress Leader (Head of Year) and we will follow these up as quickly as possible.

Yours faithfully



Scott Garrity  
Headteacher



Laura Betty  
Deputy Headteacher