

Friday 2nd October 2026

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Dear Parents and Carers,

www.firvale.com

A Positive Start To The Year – Our Progress So Far

Before the summer, I wrote to you about the changes planned for September, including our new timetable, dedicated social spaces, uniform expectations and the introduction of United Pathways. Now that these changes are in place, I want to share how pleased we have been with the start to the year and reflect on what we have learnt so far. Thank you for your continued support and commitment to these improvements.

Our students have adapted very well to the changes. For the vast majority of students, their behaviour has been positive, the academy feels calm and purposeful, and students have taken to the new routines with maturity. The new lesson structure and arrangements for break and lunch have settled well, supporting an orderly day with a clear focus on learning.

Attendance is significantly higher than at the same point last year. This is an encouraging start and means more students are in school, accessing their lessons and benefiting from the support available. Whilst this is still an area for significant focus, thank you for the part you are playing in ensuring your children attend regularly and arrive ready to learn.

United Pathways is also an important part of this new chapter, providing additional support for students who need it while ensuring they remain fully part of our academy community.

There is still much to do, but we should recognise the positive way our students have approached this year. We have been really pleased with their response and proud of the contribution they are making to Fir Vale and our community.

Final Adjustments To Our Uniform Policy

Uniform has been an important area of reflection and discussion for our academy community. We are incredibly proud of how smart our students look in their new uniform. The changes have helped to create a strong sense of belonging and unity, with students wearing their uniform with pride and presenting themselves as a community that is ready to learn, achieve and succeed together.

Prior to introducing the changes, we consulted with our community and provided opportunities for feedback. While a number of families engaged during this process, we recognise that some concerns, particularly around modesty and faith, were raised once students had returned in September and the practical impact of the changes became clearer for some families.

Achievement Respect Opportunity Togetherness Kindness Determination

Principal: Mr Danny Bullock

We have listened carefully to the views shared by parents/carers and students and are grateful to everyone who engaged with us in a constructive and respectful manner. These conversations have helped us to better understand the perspectives of those affected and to consider how our uniform can continue to meet everyone's needs.

As a result, we have made adjustments that we believe maintain the high standards, consistency, and shared identity our uniform promotes, while ensuring all students can wear it with pride. We remain committed to ensuring that all students feel comfortable, included and proud to represent our academy and that it remains a welcoming, inclusive and ambitious community for all.

Following our discussions and dialogue, we have agreed on the following options to support students' modesty and comfort. Students may wear:

- Plain black trousers
- A black modesty skirt, to the knee, over plain black trousers.
- A full-length plain black skirt

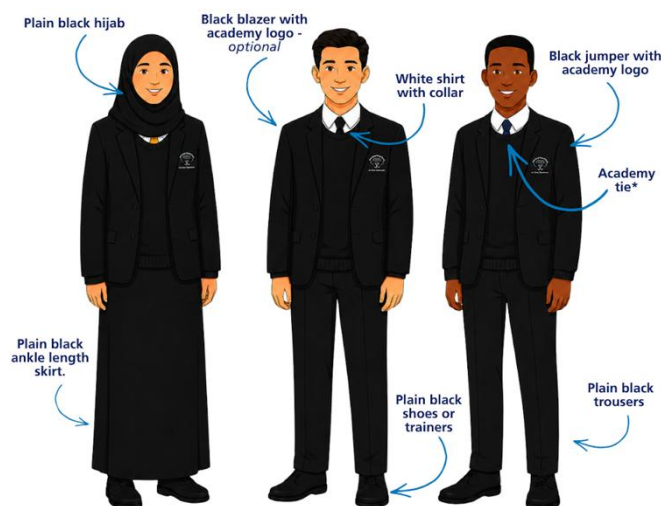
With any of these options, students must wear the academy tie (correct year group colour), academy jumper, white shirt and plain black shoes or trainers.

Building Stronger Partnerships

The dialogue about uniform over the past few weeks has also given rise to a number of misconceptions shared on social media and in the community. To be clear:

- The academy **will not** at any point remove the hijab
- The academy **will not** at any point remove halal food
- The academy **will** always respect a student's right to pray, especially around key religious times of the year

Our Academy Uniform



Remember -

- No leggings, combat style trousers or jeans.
- Shoes and trainers must have **no** patterns, logos or coloured soles/heels.
- Hijabs are welcome to support religious dress requirements; however, all other uniform items must comply with the standard uniform policy to ensure consistency.
- No jewellery is permitted except one pair of plain studs and a small plain ring.
- No face coverings (unless for medical reasons).

*Tie colour is determined by your year group.



Determination **Achievement** **Respect** **Opportunity** **Togetherness** **Kindness**

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We want our school community to have an ongoing voice in the academy's improvement journey. We are, therefore, looking to establish a new **Parent and Community Forum**.

The Parent and Community Forum will provide opportunities to share experiences, offer feedback and contribute ideas about academy life at regular points in the year.

If you would like to express an interest in joining either group, please sign up here: [Parent and Community Forum](#).

Thank you to everyone who has shared their views and worked with us since the new term commenced. From our engagements, it is clear that we share the same ambition: a school where every child feels known, valued and supported, and has the opportunity to succeed.

The start to this year gives us much to be positive about. With your continued support, we can build on that progress and strengthen the partnership between Fir Vale and its community.

Yours sincerely,



Danny Bullock
Principal

If you need a translator to understand this please call the school on 01142439391

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Te tumenge kampola interpretos hoj te rozuminen feder ta vicinen pre kada cislos 01142439391

Achievement Respect Opportunity Togetherness Kindness Determination

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