

SHOULD SCHOOLS HAVE ACTIVE UNIFORMS?



Traditional school uniforms are often used as a debate topic in classrooms for young people to reflect on the pros and cons of having a set of school-identifying attire. A less-discussed aspect of the debate is what a uniform should comprise of; common choices include ties, blazers, smart trousers and knee-length skirts. Is this an outdated and impractical system? In their VotesforSchools lessons, we asked our voters to consider the introduction of an “active uniform”, where clothes would prioritise movement, breathability and comfort. Meanwhile, 16+ & College students considered their previous experience of wearing a school uniform and how far they believe it helped to prepare them for entering adulthood and the world of work. Close to 60,000 young people responded to the vote, with many more discussing the topic in classrooms across the UK.

Melanie
Data Manager



59,556

TOTAL VOTES

12,455

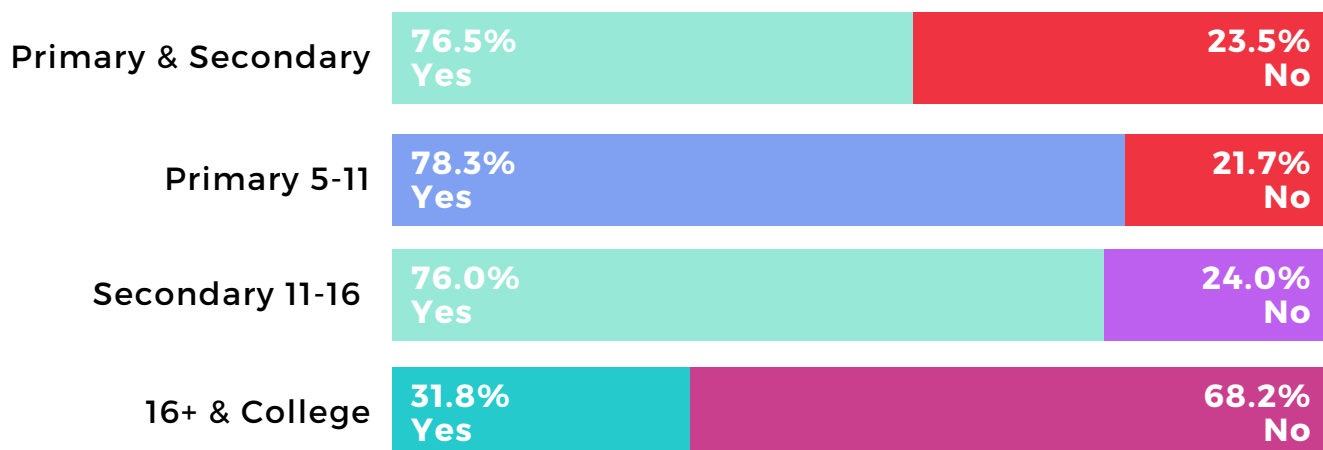
VOTES AGE 5-11

47,101

VOTES AGE 11-16+

The VoteTopic questions, discussed amongst the different age groups were:

Primary 5-11 & Secondary 11-16: “Should schools have active uniforms?”
16+ & College: “Has a school uniform prepared you for your future?”





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Primary pupils had the greatest 'Yes' majority, with over 3 out of 4 pupils arguing that schools should move to an active uniform system. However, there was a much greater mix of opinion in classroom discussions, with many Primary pupils advocating for a smarter, more traditional uniform. The reasons varied from keeping warm, looking like part of a school "family" and psychologically helping children into the mindset of working.

However, the majority argued that moving to an "active" alternative was a good idea, as it would make exercise and play more practical throughout the day and would also ensure comfort during lessons.

Secondary students felt similarly, with many stressing that comfortable clothing would help them to focus on learning, particularly given the length of time each day that they are expected to be wearing them. For this age group, the main criticism was against any uniform at all, rather than an "active" uniform specifically.

Whilst the majority of 16+ & College students voted that uniforms didn't help prepare them for the future, many shared reasons why they are still beneficial.

Some said that they help to prevent bullying, while others said they provide structure. One College student wrote, "uniforms do make it easier to know what to wear, but they should be more comfortable, cheaper, and more durable than existing uniforms. Particularly in hotter weather."

The class were very keen to change to an active school uniform. They will be bringing this subject up in the next school council meeting.

They are too cosy and make me too sleepy to learn. They feel like pyjamas.

*How many people do you see going to work in a suit?
Not many. We should be able to dress for our future.*

Students don't learn any better in uniform. We are more likely to learn if we are comfortable. We should be allowed to wear our own clothes, but without branding to [prevent] bullying.