



P&C Association

Vardys Road Public School

Uniform Sub-Committee

Uniform Change Rationale

The Vardys Road P&C Uniform Sub-Committee was established to assist the Uniform Shop by providing a forum to discuss operational and strategic activity within the shop, and its engagement with the greater Vardys Road Public School community and P&C Association.

Having a sub-committee relieves the Uniform Shop from having to operate without governance and oversight; meaning that significant decisions are not weighted on 1 or 2 people operating within the shop, but rather a more broader subset of the P&C Association members, who are volunteering to shoulder the work.

Over time, feedback has been received through the Uniform Shop, by P&C Executives and direct to the school regarding items within the current uniform range, and suggestions as to what could or should be changed. As these became more frequent, and an immediate discontinuation notice of one line of clothing was received, it was determined that the school Principal should be approached and the idea of a mini-review of certain clothing lines be actioned.

Being a significant piece of work, the P&C Uniform Sub-Committee has been assigned the task of managing this through to completion. This was actioned during a P&C General Meeting in Sept 2018, with members including the Vice President Uniforms Oversight, Uniform Shop Coordinator and other general members of the P&C being assigned to the Sub-Committee.

With changes to P&C Committee membership @ the AGM in March 2019, the Uniform Sub-Committee now consists of the following members:

- Stephanie Ernst – Vice President, Uniform Shop Oversight (Sub-Committee Chairperson)
- Ian Short – School Principal
- Lynne Henry – Uniform Shop Coordinator
- Bernie Ernst – P&C Member (Sub-Committee Secretary)
- Deanne McConnell – P&C Member
- Emma Legaspi – P&C Member
- Shirley Stephenson – P&C Member

For added transparency, the following is an overview of the process taken to establish a uniform change from request through to implementation.

As part of the process, a rationale (this document) is to be created to outline the overview of process and progressive updates / results.

At each stage, decisions are made to enable to the process to move forward and into the next phase. These decisions, made in the Sub-Committee, are presented to the school principle for approval during Sub-Committee meetings. There are times when the approval has to be taken further to the school Teachers and Executives.

We invite you to take the time and read this rationale to be effectively informed for the upcoming vote.

Stephanie Ernst
Vice President, Uniforms

Ian Short
Principal

The Process

Stage 1: Permission

- After accepting a request to change, a rationalisation and reasoning for the change(s) in uniform style is to take place during discussions within the sub-committee.
- The sub-committee will meet with the school Principal to discuss the proposed change to the uniform.
- The Principal will then consult with the school executive to gain permission for a change to happen, and return to the leader of the sub-committee the verdict to take to the next meeting.
- If a change request is approved, then we move into establishing the criteria from the school and detail expectations of the proposed change.

Stage 2: Establishing Uniform Design

- Ideas on style are collected, and a review of design options is undertaken. Consideration is given to (but not limited by)
 - Practical aspects of the design; what would work better than the current design?
 - Aesthetic aspects of the design; addressing current issues and collating solutions.
- Design Samples and features are sought by viewing other comparable school uniforms, engagement from existing and potential suppliers on current design concepts and practices, and feedback from the school community.
- Testing samples can be sourced and supplied by potential supply companies to assist with practical concept of how any design would work, and provide a more visual understanding of how the design “fits” with the current uniform range.
- Design options are to be narrowed down by engaging feedback from teachers, the school executive, sub-committee members and P&C Members to qualify a design and options for presentation to the greater school community for final acceptance.

Stage 3: Researching Supplier

- Establishing a set engagement practices for approaching manufacturers/companies to offer tender for the supply will create an equal and easily comparable report for selection purposes.
- Once an agreement of the basic approach is settled, members of the sub-committee have a foundation to engage any supplier with a request for tender. Company engagement details need to be advised to the project leader first so there are no duplicate engagements.
- A time frame for research is established, with members doing the investigation over approximately 6 weeks. Depending on the results during this timeframe, the timeline may be extended per standard project management practice.
- The end of the 6 weeks ALL information is given to the project leader. Then the leader can assist in it being analysed, and put into a readable format that can clearly show a comparison to present to the sub-committee for narrowing down the companies based on the criteria.
- The final design (samples and supporting information) are to be presented the school with two or three companies who can become possible suppliers.

Stage 4: Finalising Details

- An engagement of the school community can be completed through the release of a Rationale (with time to view samples and allow design changes to be absorbed).
- A vote should be released to the community to accept or decline the final changes and proceed to implementation.
- Eligible community:
 - Families / Carers of children currently attending Vardys Road Public School.
 - 1 "Family Vote" per child attending school.
 - Teachers at Vardys Rd Public School (25% weighting per vote only)
- Criteria for vote:
 - Questions to be worded in the affirmative toward proposed change.
 - Vote Sample to be minimum 20% of eligible community.
 - A carried vote will require a clear majority (>55%) return.
- Format of vote:
 - Signed and Completed (all questions) paper copy only.
 - Each form printed with student name.
- All correspondence for release should be finalised 4 weeks prior to release for school vetting process.

Stage 5: Voting and Collation

- Once vetting is complete, release of documentation and subsequent voting to community can proceed.
- Timelines:
 - Notice of rationale release date and voting dates to be placed in the preceding school newsletter.
 - Rationale to be released within 2 weeks (t_0).
 - Voting Form to be released (t_0) + 4 weeks.
 - Voting to be closed (t_0) + 6 weeks.
 - Final advice of results to be released no later than (t_0) + 7 weeks.
- Voting Forms are to be returned to the voting box in the school office.
- Counting will occur in a subsequent Sub-Committee meeting (within 1 week form voting closure).

Stage 6: Implementation

- Upon a successful vote to implement the uniform change(s), the sub-committee will choose and finalise supplier engagements, and begin the process of sourcing the new uniforms through the Uniform Shop.
- The Uniform Shop will need to accommodate the new uniform(s), including new entries to POS systems and display stock.
- Existing / remaining stock of "old" design will be valid as part of the school for an additional "full season", but will not be restocked during this time. Once any "old" stock is depleted, it will no longer be available for sale.
- There will no exchange program replacing "old for new" uniform items, except for where there are valid grounds to replace a piece of uniform (manufacturing fault etc), and no "old" stock is available.

The Engagement

Scope of Request

As at Sept 2018 (when the Sub-Committee was convened), the following items were added into the mini-review:

- **Girls Winter Pants**
 - Advice received from Manufacturer that these were no longer available.
- **Girls Summer Dress**
 - Feedback regarding Suitability of Design.
 - Feedback regarding Quality of Fabric.
 - Feedback regarding Outdated Design.
 - Feedback recognising few girls wore past year 3.
- **Girls Winter Dress**
 - Feedback regarding Suitability of Design.
 - Feedback regarding alignment of design with (any new) summer dress.

Because of risk of delay and timelines around implementation, the scope was locked at this stage and only new items complimentary to the current scope would be included (ie: design concepts).

Other Considerations

When conducting the mini-review, the following items were also scoped in to consideration:

- Vardys Road Public School Rebranding Strategy.
 - Compliance with the spirit of the rebranding.
 - Maintain “feel” of colour theme and image represented.
- Availability of suitable uniform options for all students.
 - Not locking all students to a single rigid compliance, allowing for individual circumstances.
 - Accommodating body shape and maturing individuals.
- Cost to parent / carers of a change.
 - Intent is to provide a service, not a burden.
- Long-term wear and tear.
 - Tying back to cost; a new uniform needs to be viable economically.
 - Recognising uniform wear not just in class, but at play and outside school.
- School community feedback (progressive).
 - Maintaining a positive direction in the process.
 - Teachers are an invaluable source of feedback based on in-class experience with students.

Girls Winter Pants

The Request

The girl's winter pants were raised as an issue by the VP Uniforms due to a few returns to the uniform shop, and a review of existing stock, showing a trend in quality control issues.

Upon contact with the supplier discussing the issues raised, it was identified that the supplier was discontinuing the range due to intermittent quality issues, and they agreed to accept back all current stock and returned items for credit.

The supplier had no immediate replacement available for this clothing line, so the Uniform Shop immediately removed it from the range until a replacement could be found.

The Review

The Sub-Committee spent a period of time viewing different styles of girl's pants including "off the shelf" and "custom made" varieties from multiple suppliers. Sample pants were sourced and tried on children of different heights and builds.

This activity was carried out over the fourth term of 2018, taking into account previous investigations with the executive before the forming of the Sub-Committee.

The Results

After reviewing the styles, prices, and options (both for off the shelf and custom made), and taking into consideration that the NSW Department of Education requirements on pants encourages a move toward becoming more unisex in styling, the current double-knee pants supplied by LW Reid are deemed suitable for both boys and girls within the school for the winter uniform months.

It should also be noted that the pants are not marked for a specific gender, and are also considered a unisex-style of pants from the suppliers themselves.

It is the recommendation of the Uniform Sub-Committee that we continue with the double-knee design only, and NOT replace the pants that have been removed.

Girls Summer Dress

The Request

The Uniform Shop, P&C Executives and Vardys Road Public School have all directly received commentary around changes to the current summer uniform dress for some time.

Concerns were raised around the suitability of the design (specifically around “modesty” when young girls were sitting), and the quality of material that was being used. This was also noted as a heavy influencer in the popularity of the dress tending to fall off through stage 2, when the young girls start maturing.

Styling of the dress was also mentioned as being “outdated”, and it is estimated that the current summer dress design dates back to the early 80’s.

The current fabric pattern and colour has been highlighted as not sitting well with the rebranding that the school is currently undergoing. Its light colouring also tends to allow more transparency, especially with bright back-lighting.

The Review

The styling was the first obvious item that needed to be addressed. The current “shift dress” style (simple fall, hanging from the shoulders) has a clean hem line offering no gathering of material to sit appropriately when girls are in a cross-legged position. This often happens with the girls during play and group seated settings in the class. Numerous styles of pleating were considered, before the suggested “box-pleat” style at the front was determined the most appropriate.

The material pattern and colour was requested to be aligned with the current school rebranding strategy, and a Royal Blue check with fine yellow strip was considered the best fit. Other patterns (including straight lines like the current, and heavier check) were also reviewed, but on sample viewing did not present the image that was being sought. The fabric choice is still a cool poly/cotton material, light weight, but the darker pattern reduces transparency.

Changing the collar was also suggested, and a number of style options looked at. At the end of reviewing, the current simple white collar maintained the integrity of the school’s history, and was chosen as the best fit overall.

A few trim options were also considered, and after concept samples were circulated through the school staff and P&C General Meetings, these were narrowed to 2 suitable choices.

The Results

The final design to be presented addresses all the concerns first raised, aligns the dress with the school rebranding strategy, and brings the styling up to date.

The trim options (a simple “tab tie” or “button panel”) are being left to the school community to decide on during the voting phase.

An outline of the design can be viewed in Appendix A of this document.

It is the recommendation of the Uniform Sub-Committee that we change the current Summer Dress Uniform to the design outlined in Appendix A.

Girls Winter Dress

The Request

When forming the scope of the mini-review, it was highlighted that some of the concerns raised on the Summer Uniform Dress were reflected on the current Winter Uniform Dress.

It was determined appropriate to add the Winter Uniform Dress into the mini-review, and expand on its individual scope if required.

The Review

The review of the Winter Uniform Dress was fairly straight forward.

The current fabric was well weighted to carry pleating, and the pattern aligned well with the schools rebranding strategy.

A “box-pleat” styled front panel aligned with the new Summer Uniform Dress proposal.

As a minor practical tweak, a slight V-neck shaping option on the collar is proposed to allow the dress to better sit with a polo shirt (either long or short sleeve) underneath.

The Results

The proposed design change addresses the same primary concerns raised on the Summer Uniform Dress design, and brings the Winter Uniform Dress design in line with the proposed Summer Uniform Dress changes.

The neck-line options are being left to the school community to decide upon, but the Sub-Committee does recommend changing to the V-neck styling is the best option.

An outline of the design can be viewed in Appendix B of this document.

It is the recommendation of the Uniform Sub-Committee that we change the current Summer Dress Uniform to the design outlined in Appendix B.

Appendix A: Girls Summer Dress

Comparison of existing fabric look to proposed fabric, with design options.

Current Fabric:



New Fabric:



Tab Tie Option



Button Option



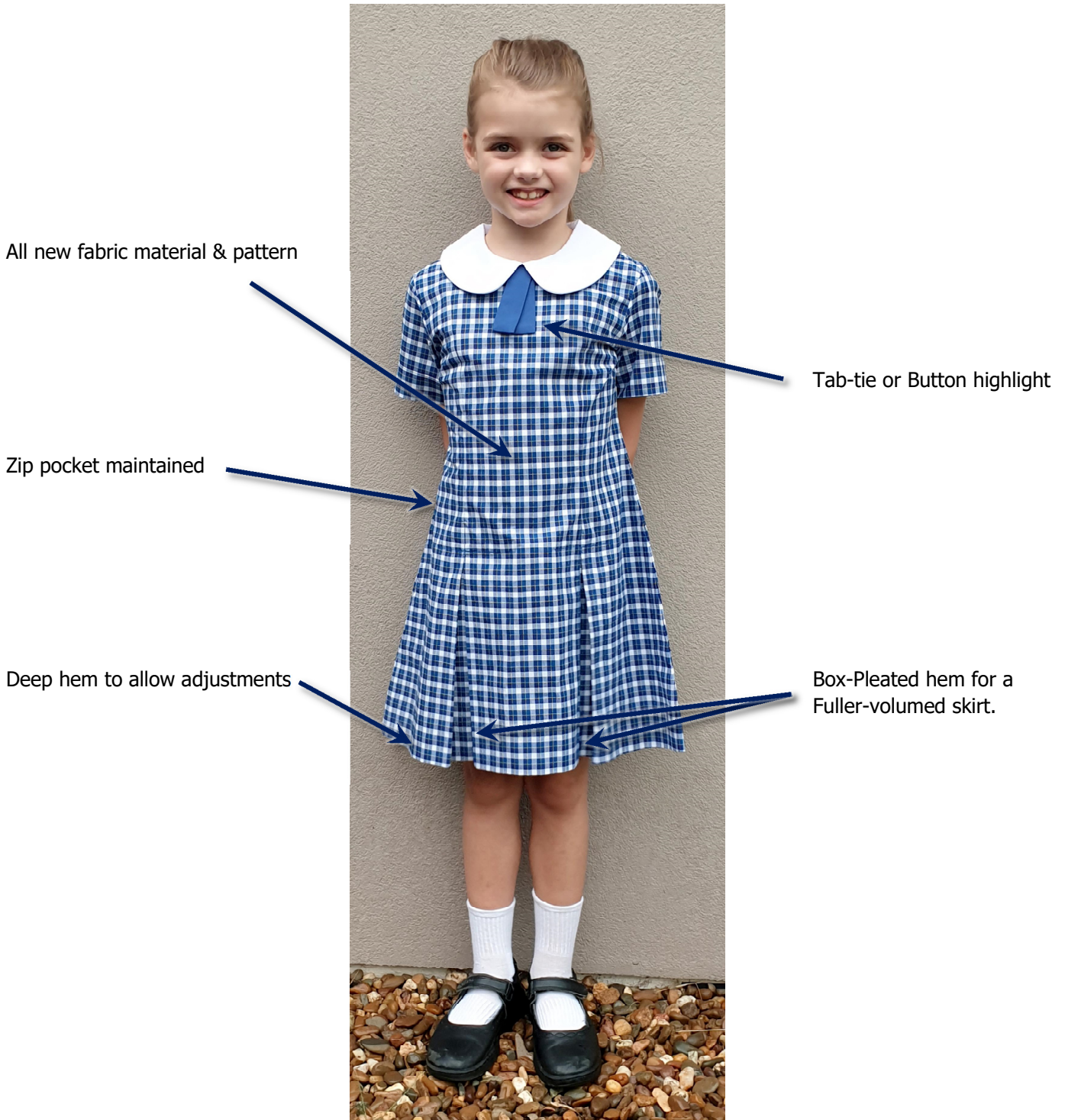
Current and Proposed Styles side by side

Important Note: Colour Shift occurs when taking photos, printing and/or viewing on screen.
Sample Uniforms will be on display leading up to and during the voting period.

We encourage you to take a look first hand.

Appendix A (cont.): Girls Summer Dress

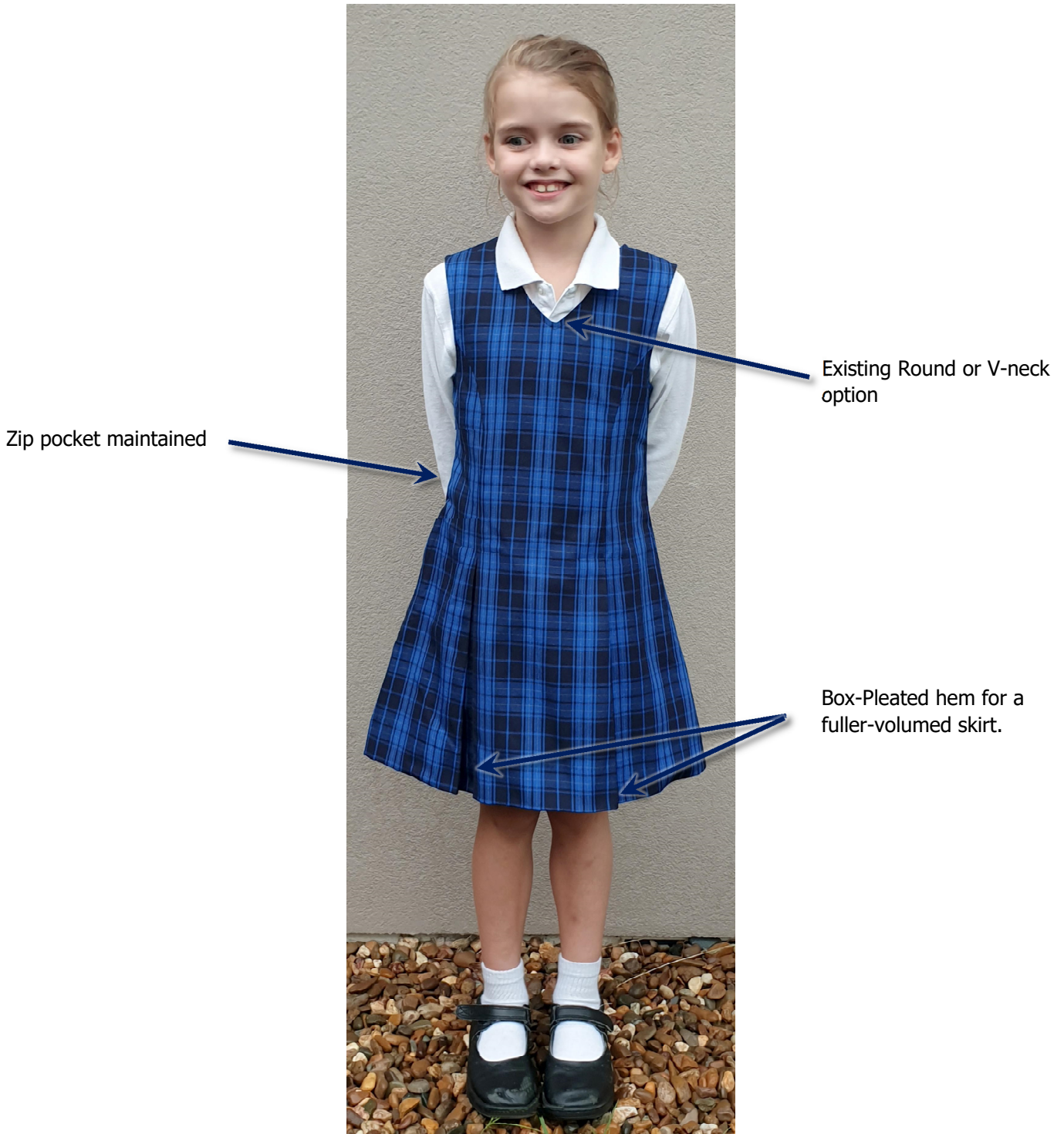
Proposed Design Highlights.



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Appendix B: Girls Winter Dress

Proposed Design Highlights.



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We encourage you to take a look first hand.