

# **Fairtrade Cotton School Uniforms**

## **INFORMATION TO GET YOU STARTED**

### **General school uniform clothing from High Street retailers**

Parents can buy general Fairtrade cotton uniform items from major retailers, usually ordered online, though some may be available in stores. 2011/12 ranges are:

\* Marks & Spencer: half of school wear range is Fairtrade cotton including polo shirts, sweat shirts, shirts, blouses, skirts, joggers, PE shorts, cycling shorts, cardigans, jumpers. Available in stores or can be ordered online.

[www.marksandspencer.com/Fairtrade-Uniform-School-Uniform/b/635788031#](http://www.marksandspencer.com/Fairtrade-Uniform-School-Uniform/b/635788031#)

\* Tesco: polo shirts, skirts, sweat shirts, trousers, shirts. ([www.clothingattesco.com](http://www.clothingattesco.com))

### **Polo shirts and sweat shirts embroidered or printed with school logos**

Schools can also support Fairtrade by choosing to make special uniform items from Fairtrade cotton. (See suppliers by product below) Polo shirts and sweat shirts are often embroidered with school logos. Typically the price difference for polo shirts is only 15-20%, (£10 compared to £8, including embroidery and VAT). An extra £2 on one or two items only means a minimal increase in parent's overall uniform costs.

### **Hoodies and T-shirts**

Many schools also sell bespoke hoodies or T-shirts for events, trips or for final year students. These items can all be sourced from

### **100% cotton or cotton/polyester mixes**

Polyester/cotton mixes can be Fairtrade certified, as long as the cotton content is 50% or more. Some schools, particularly primary schools, prefer 100% cotton garments as they may be considered more suitable for younger children's sensitive skin. Others choose poly/cotton for easier maintenance.

### **Designated retailers & existing suppliers**

Switching to Fairtrade does not mean disrupting relationships with the designated local shops that schools often use to stock their uniform items. Retailers gladly stock the garments schools choose from new suppliers, and often Fairtrade items can be available from an existing supplier. If not, schools can encourage their supplier to make the switch to Fairtrade and to an ethical trading policy that guarantees decent wages to the people who make their garments.

### **Providing parents with a 'Fairtrade option' -vs- supporting Fairtrade as a school**

Some schools or designated retailers stock two versions of polo shirts – introducing a Fairtrade alternative as well as an existing garment. While providing choice is a welcome step, it is nowhere near as effective in supporting Fairtrade as taking a collective decision to specify that all of a particular uniform item must be ethically sourced. In the case of offering a Fairtrade 'option,' assumed lower volumes make higher price differentials a self fulfilling prophecy, and experience shows that less than 10% of parents make that choice, especially in poor areas. Fully committing to Fairtrade means sales of several hundred garments every year and significantly reduces unit costs.

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## **SUPPLIERS BY FAIRTRADE COTTON PRODUCT**

'Standard' or 'stock' items can be supplied quickly from stock. Other colours and material mixes can be ordered but this usually requires a four month lead time and a minimum order level (for polo shirts around 500-600 garments). Some companies offer on-line ordering. Most can supply direct to schools as well as via designated retailers. Product details were correct as of September 2011 but it is advisable to check with companies as ranges can change.

### **Part 1: Polo Shirts and Sweat Shirts**

#### **Companies with 100% cotton garments as standard items**

##### **Cotton Roots (01908 290482 or 511395) [www.cottonroots.co.uk](http://www.cottonroots.co.uk)**

Products: polo shirts, sweat shirts. (100% cotton)

Standard colours for polo shirts– 3 blues (sky, navy, royal), red, white, yellow, black, burgundy. Contact company re bespoke colours and sweat shirts.

Logo embroidery is part of standard service and prices.

Contact: Helen Casey-Green. [sales@cottonroots.co.uk](mailto:sales@cottonroots.co.uk)

##### **David Luke Clothing (0113 272 0836) [www.davidluke.com/index.php](http://www.davidluke.com/index.php)**

Note. Unlike the above David Luke is a wholesaler that only sells to school specialist retailers rather than direct to schools (except in exceptional circumstances).

Products: polo shirts. 100% cotton. (Sweat shirts may be introduced)

Standard colour: white. Can provide others for bespoke orders.

Logo embroidery: can be done in-house or left to local retailers.

Contact: Kirsty Conroy. [sales@davidluke.com](mailto:sales@davidluke.com)

##### **Trutex (01200 421200) [www.trutex.com](http://www.trutex.com)**

Products: Polo shirts. 100% cotton. Contact company for current stock details.

### **Part 2: Polo Shirts and Sweat Shirts**

#### **Companies supplying polyester/cotton mixes as standard items**

##### **Kool Schools (023 8028 3223) [www.koolkools.co.uk](http://www.koolkools.co.uk)**

Products: polo shirts, sweat shirts, (both 50% cotton/50% polyester)

Standard colours - polo shirts: white. For sweat shirts: contact the company. They can provide other colours for bespoke orders.

Logo embroidery is part of standard service and prices.

Contact: [info@koolkools.co.uk](mailto:info@koolkools.co.uk)

# **Fairtrade Cotton School Uniforms**

## **Makara (EMJ) (023 9243 4650) [www.makara.org.uk](http://www.makara.org.uk)**

Products: polo shirts and sweat shirts (both 60% cotton/40% polyester).

Standard colours for polo shirts: red, white and blue. Others available for bespoke orders.

Standard colours for sweat shirts: royal and navy blue, bottle green, maroon, grey and black.

Logo embroidery is part of standard service and prices.

Contact: Steve Linn. [Steve.linn@emjlt.com](mailto:Steve.linn@emjlt.com)

## **Part 3: Polo Shirts by special order**

### **Epona (020 7095 1226) [www.eponaclothing.com](http://www.eponaclothing.com)**

Products: Polo shirts. 100% cotton. Colours: Contact company.

Can provide poly/cotton mixes for special orders. Minimum order 1,000.

Does not stock all children's sizes as standard items but may be able to order them.

Similarly, bespoke embroidery may be possible with minimum order levels.

Contact: Sales Team: 020 7095 1226. [sales@eponaclothing.com](mailto:sales@eponaclothing.com)

## **Part 4: T-shirts (can be printed, contacts in part 1)**

### **Cotton Roots (01908 290482 or 511395) [www.cottonroots.co.uk](http://www.cottonroots.co.uk)**

100% cotton. Organic, double stitched 180gsm. Different styles. Bespoke colours.

Standard colours: white, red, navy & royal blue, black. Printing & embroidery by order.

### **Epona (020 7095 1226) [www.eponaclothing.com](http://www.eponaclothing.com)**

100% cotton. Colours: several. Contact company.

### **Revolver world (01902 345 345) <http://revolverworld.com/products/>**

100% cotton. Standard colours: red, light blue, black and ecru (natural cotton/off white).

Other colours to order. Contact : Paul Birch : [paul.birch@revolverworld.com](mailto:paul.birch@revolverworld.com)

## **Part 5: Hoodies**

### **Cotton Roots (01908 290482 or 511395) [www.cottonroots.co.uk](http://www.cottonroots.co.uk)**

100% cotton. Organic: several styles. Colours, printing & embroidery by order.

### **Epona (020 7095 1226) [www.eponaclothing.com](http://www.eponaclothing.com)**

100% cotton. Wide standard colour range. Contact company.

### **Kool Schools (023 8028 3223) [www.koolskools.co.uk](http://www.koolskools.co.uk)**

50% cotton/50% polyester. Contact company re colours etc.

### **Revolver world (01902 345 345) <http://revolverworld.com/products/>**

100% cotton. Standard colours: navy, grey and black. Contact company for details.

Contact : Paul Birch : [paul.birch@revolverworld.com](mailto:paul.birch@revolverworld.com)

# **Fairtrade Cotton School Uniforms**

## **Part 6: Fairtrade fashion shows**

Students in many schools have put on Fairtrade fashion shows, where uniform and non-uniform clothing have been creatively adapted. If your school would like to organise one then the companies above may be relevant, as well as those below.

**People Tree 020 7042 8900.** [www.peopletree.co.uk](http://www.peopletree.co.uk)

A wide range of fashion items. Also T shirts and shirts. Email [people@peopletree.co.uk](mailto:people@peopletree.co.uk)

## **Part 7: Other cotton products relevant to schools**

**Bishopston Trading 0117 924 5598** [mail@bishopstontrading.co.uk](mailto:mail@bishopstontrading.co.uk)

Varied products include: catering uniforms for canteen staff; fabrics for dressmaking/craft lessons; pencil cases; mp3 cases; purses; bags; tea towels; including fundraising tea towels and children's aprons. Also general clothing, socks, scarves etc.

Email: [mail@bishopstontrading.co.uk](mailto:mail@bishopstontrading.co.uk), [wholesale@bishopstontrading.co.uk](mailto:wholesale@bishopstontrading.co.uk)

### **Cotton bags**

Epona Clothing and Bishopston Trading. (Contacts above)

**Tarameen Ltd : 0161 438 2004.** [www.tarameen.com](http://www.tarameen.com)

Can also manufacture several Fairtrade products to order. [tarameen@marfani.com](mailto:tarameen@marfani.com)

### **Aprons**

Co-operative Clothing and Cotton Roots. (Contacts above)

**Gossypium 0870 850 9952/3** [www.gossypium.co.uk](http://www.gossypium.co.uk)

Products: tea towels, plain hoodies for men, women and children. They are also able to sell a men's polo shirt.

*This list was collated by Fairtrade London [www.fairtradelondon.org.uk](http://www.fairtradelondon.org.uk)*