

Service Update

I wanted to write to you following recent news reports of a petition that has been started by local parents about Monkhouse's provision of school uniforms.

Some local parents are rightly concerned that we have not been able to deliver some school uniform items in a timely manner, and this is clearly a concern we share with them and are deeply sorry for the frustration this causes.

Although we have been keeping you abreast for several months now of the pandemic-related international shipping delays that are affecting a portion of our stock, we wanted to provide you with all the information again about what is causing these uniform delays and what we are doing to resolve the situation.

We ordered stock earlier than ever for the 2021/22 school year in anticipation of complications that may be caused by the pandemic on our supply chain. And while 93% of the stock for Bristol schools has arrived, a proportion of this arrived very late and we are still waiting for the final 7% of stock. We are working double shifts seven days a week in our distribution centre and all our Bristol stores are open seven days per week to help fast track the delayed stock as quickly as possible and do everything in our power to get it to parents before schools return.

This means the vast majority of students will be returning to school in September with their uniforms, however there will be a number of students who are still waiting to receive some of their items. We wanted to ensure again that this would not come as a surprise to any of your staff, so appropriate flexibility and support can be given to those students who are affected by these shipping delays.

We are of course in constant contact with our suppliers to monitor the progress of this final stock. However, due to the unreliability of shipping delivery dates our suppliers are struggling to provide us with firm arrival dates at this stage.

We also wanted to thank you for your support in promoting our new 1:1 personal appointment system this year with your families. So far, we have conducted over 8,800 appointments with families across our Bristol stores, allowing us to give them personalised attention, while keeping staff and customers safe during the pandemic. Whilst we acknowledge challenges caused by shipping delays and staff isolating due to the pandemic, customers who have used our 1:1 appointment system in our Bristol stores have given us an average customer satisfaction rate of 88%.

We remain committed to our responsibility to provide families in Bristol with affordable and good quality uniforms. We continue to heavily invest in our stores to improve their facilities and our services. Any feedback you have that will help us continue to improve our services – to you and your families – would always be welcome.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Monkhouse
Managing Director
F.R.Monkhouse Ltd