ST JOHN FEMALE CADET UNIFORM

The first Cadet divisions were officially formed in 1922. The outdoor uniform coat for nursing Cadets at this time was of grey cloth, double-breasted. There were small epaulettes on the shoulders. The hat was grey, probably felt and in the round ‘pudding basin’ shape. Shoes, stockings and gloves were black, the shoes having a small heel and being laced up over the instep.

The indoor overall dress was a version of the adult dress, in grey cotton, with buttons down the front of the bodice and a buttoned belt in the same material. There were two large pockets at the front and epaulettes on the shoulders. The sleeves were long, but the part below the elbow was a white detachable sleeve with a buttoned cuff. The collar was white in a rounded Peter Pan style. The white cambric (handkerchief-style) cap fitted closely round the head coming down over the forehead with a folded flap at the back. Shoes and stockings again were black. Unlike in the adult uniform, aprons were not worn.
This style remained basically the same until 1960s. The main variations were slight changes in the length of the dress. For example in 1939 length of the dress was to the knee under 16 years of age, and for those older it was 3" below the knee, while in 1944 sizes 4-10 the dress went to the knee and sizes 11-13 the dress was 1952 all sizes 2" below the knee. In 1949 sleeves became shorter, now elbow length with white 'frillies' worn over the cuff of the short sleeve. By 1952 a black beret had replaced the grey felt hat for outdoor uniform.

By the early 1960s the dress style had changed slightly. It was a full length coat dress with the front opening concealed under the hem. It had 2 deep pockets with openings in the side seams and a patched pocket each side of bodice front. The white rounded detachable collar remained. The handkerchief cap was still worn.

In 1968 new uniforms were introduced for all St John Ambulance Members. The Cadet dress was light grey and made of Terylene cotton. The centre front concealed a zip fastening to form a step in front opening. There was one slanting applied patch pocket on each side, with a small scissor pocket concealed in right hand pocket. The length was to be not shorter than one inch from top of knee-cap. It had full length sleeves, and either white cambric or organdie ‘American’ type cap, or a disposable paper cap. For outdoors a black beret was worn. There was a grey cape with a black collar.
By 1975 the optional special duty uniform (permitted on occasions when nursing Cadet dress was unsuitable) was a black proofed anorak, plain black trousers, and plain white polo-necked jumper with long sleeves. There was also an optional white scarf. Black shoes or boots and the beret were worn. A regulation armlet was to be worn when anorak was removed. By 1980 there was a plain white short sleeved T-shirt with a badge on the right breast for hot weather.

By 1992 the dress had been phased out. Female Cadets wore a wool or acrylic military type heavy black V-neck sweater with cotton shoulder and arm patches, with either a black skirt or trousers, the skirt polyester, length not shorter than 2.5 cm (1 inch) below knee. The shirt was plain white, and could be short or long sleeved, and was worn with a black bow tie. The cap remained the same American type in white polyester cotton or paper. The outdoor hat was black with a red quilted lining, although berets could still be worn. A white 2 inch wide belt could be worn over the black sweater.

The 2006 uniform remains similar, with some changes. Formal uniform now includes a black tie rather than a bow tie and the American hat has been phased out for either a beret, baseball cap or even a fleece ski style hat. Duty wear options are either a two piece green suit or a black fleece operational jacket and black trousers. High visibility jackets with ‘St John Cadet’ reflective badge on back and front are also often worn on duties.