



ASHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Getting changed for PE and other sporting activities

Additional safeguarding actions to support staff / pupils
and reinforce dignity and ethical practices

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Supporting Documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Safeguarding Policy
- Safer Recruitment
- Child Protection in Sport 'Good Practice' June 2016
- Equal Opportunities Policy

Further guidance on safer practice in PE and sport:

- NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/cpsu_wda57648.html

- Association for Physical Education

www.afpe.org.uk

Mr P Seargent

Policy Created November 2016

To be reviewed with the Physical Education Policy every 3 Years

1.Rationale

It is recommended practice that pupils should change for PE and other sporting activities, particularly when the activity will necessitate high levels of physical exertion or where school clothing may become dirty or damaged. Clothing may be specific to activities and school clothing unsuitable for purpose.

Changing for PE also promotes positive attitudes towards personal hygiene and encourages independence.

Supervision of children changing for activities is important as it assists children in routines and practices, as well as ensuring good conduct and discipline. Failure to ensure adequate supervision would be a failure of the school in its duties to children.

2. Considerations

1. Being in a state of undress can cause some children to feel vulnerable, particularly those who have experienced abuse, and cause them to misunderstand or misinterpret the actions of an adult.
2. Changing for PE can also cause anxiety for some pupils, can influence their perception of the subject and determine whether it is an enjoyable and positive experience. The concern caused by changing can influence a pupil's participation and lead to a variety of avoidance strategies.
3. Specific to older children, the onset of puberty can cause increased levels of anxiety and embarrassment, although it should be recognised that puberty can occur at very early stages of pupil development.
4. For staff there can be confusion and/or worry about supervision and how it accords with safer working practice. There can be a tension between the need to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur and the risk of being accused of acting inappropriately.
5. Individual perceptions of appropriateness of gender roles vary greatly. There is no requirement that 'same gender' staff supervise children at any time in primary school, be they male or female. However, best practice is to accommodate this where it is possible and realistic under the umbrella of 'good practice', although with a workforce in primary schools that remains predominantly female, this is a challenge for all schools.

3. Safer Practice Steps

1. All pupils should be treated fairly and with respect for their privacy and dignity and the school will do all that is reasonable and practical to meet this aim.
2. Children in Early Years through to, and including Year 4, change as a whole group and are not separated based on their gender.

3. Where pupils within this age range are identified as pubescent, or particularly body conscious, alternative arrangements for changing can often be made, including space away from other pupils or in a separate area altogether.
4. Although not a requirement until Year 7, Year 5 & 6 boys and girls do change in separate areas or rooms. Common practice is that parallel classes will change for PE at the same time in order to facilitate this. Where this is not possible, a single staff member may be required to oversee both groups by periodically 'checking' between them.
5. When Year 5 and 6 children change in different areas, and where staffing arrangements allow, female staff will oversee girls changing and male staff will oversee boys. This is done on a common sense basis and not on the assumption that it is inappropriate to work otherwise.
6. The overseeing of children whilst getting changed is to be remote and low-profile. The level of supervision will be dependent on the age range and maturity of the children.
7. Staff will be aware that blinds may need to be drawn if the window is visible from passers by or adjacent buildings.
8. Adequate and sensitive arrangements will be made for specific children taking into account the needs of different religions, beliefs and cultural backgrounds. It is however acknowledged that, as a non faith affiliated school, such specific beliefs and wishes are not to be unduly forced upon others who are not of that faith or culture.
9. Consideration will also be given, and alternative arrangements made where practical, for the requirements of individuals with needs relating to sexuality or sexual orientation. This may include pupils who are transgender or for whom other gender specific needs are evident.
10. Adults must always change privately; never in the same space as children.

4. Qualifications of staff overseeing and supervising pupils

1. All staff who supervise children getting changed must have an Enhanced DBS check and clearance to work with children.
2. Any volunteers, including parents who do not hold DBS Enhanced clearances, are not to oversee pupils changing.

5. Appropriateness of staff remaining in the room

1. This judgement will be based on the age and developmental needs of the pupils but there should not be an assumption that adults need to remain in the room in order to maintain good behaviour.
2. Younger children in particular may require first hand adult supervision when changing in order to organise clothing, tie laces, place on equipment such as shin pads or generally manage the changing process.
3. Common practice is that children up to and including Year 4 will have a staff member present in the room, however, this is not a fixed

expectation. The decision lies with the staff member working with the children and their knowledge of the capacities of the children.

4. Appropriate supervision can also be achieved by being in close proximity and pupils being aware of it. They should also know that adults will enter the room if necessary - in response to a disturbance or specific need.
5. It is often possible to leave the door of rooms slightly ajar; their layout makes it unlikely that the occupants can be seen in this way but can still be monitored.
6. In all cases, staff are to ensure that expectations are made clear to reduce the need for supervision

6. Gender Specific Supervision

1. Whilst there is no requirement for primary schools to provide gender specific supervision arrangements, it is 'good practice' to do so where reasonable and practical.
2. As stated, same gender provision is common practice; however, it is not always possible, realistic or practical to provide all male, or all female supervision for specific genders.
3. As an Equal Opportunities provider, all staff at the school are expected to support all children, regardless of age, gender, ability faith or any other such factors.
4. The school seeks to ensure that unsuitable and inappropriate stereotyping of staff according to their gender is not reinforced.
5. Where staff oversee pupils of the opposite sex (mixed groups or otherwise), consideration must be given as to the location this takes place, ensuring that it is overseen by or in the vicinity of other staff members. All adults, but particularly those of the opposite sex, should avoid simply standing in the changing room watching pupils, or repeatedly going in and out without good reason.

7. Special Educational Needs, Disability and Pupils with Specific Care Plan

1. Refer to the Intimate Care Plan for assisting children who are disabled or require additional support.
2. Adults should be especially vigilant when helping children with underclothes, tights and swimming costumes.
3. Assistance should take place as openly as possible but consider the dignity of those being assisted.
4. It should be undertaken to meet the pupil's needs, only and should encourage as much independence as possible.

8. Swimming

The principles detailed in all other sections apply, but additional considerations and expectations are appropriate:

1. It is not appropriate for school swimmers to share changing facilities with members of the public (unless this is part of a special school programme of community integration which has been carefully risk assessed). If school sessions precede or are followed by public sessions, enough time should be booked either side of the swimming session to allow pupils to get showered and changed.
2. As far as possible, members of staff should supervise or assist pupils of the same sex. If this is not possible within the staffing available, additional staff support should be arranged to oversee changing through the facilitators/venue. Any such individuals must be enhanced DBS checked.
3. If changing areas are shared with pupils from another school, particularly those who are older/younger, adults from both/all schools should take this into consideration and properly risk assess together.
4. Only where specifically stated in a Personal/Intimate care Plan or similar should staff support children assist children with changing undergarments such as pants or swimming costumes

Review

This policy will be reviewed alongside the Physical Education Policy every 3 years unless there is a requirement to make alterations prior to that date.