

# Viking Academy Trust



## Changing for PE & Sport Policy

The VIKING ACADEMY TRUST 'Changing for PE & Sport Policy' has been written following guidance from the DfE: specifically, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

**Approved by the Trust: Term 2 2017**

**Reviewed biennially: Term 2 2019**

**Last review date: Term 2 2024**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Roby', is written over a faint rectangular stamp.

**Signed:**

**Chair of Trustees**

# Changing for PE & Sport Policy

## The Viking Academy Trust

“Empower children through education: One Childhood One Chance”

Schools in the Viking Academy Trust (VAT)

Chilton Primary School  
Ramsgate Arts Primary School  
Upton Junior School

This ‘**Changing for PE & Sport Policy**’ is for the aforementioned schools.

### **Rationale:**

At the Viking Academy Trust we have a responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of all our pupils. The Trust’s ethos provides the basis for this policy. The promotion of our agreed values and beliefs ensures a pupil-centred approach. Teachers, non-teaching staff and other adults all are part of a team. This team ensures pupils are happy and secure when involved in school/sport activities. We have a commitment to guide and advise our pupils, equipping them with the skills needed to face the outside world.

All stakeholders are encouraged to approach the care of our children in a positive way and be mindful of the following:

- Being in a state of undress can cause some children to feel vulnerable, particularly those who have experienced abuse, or children that are going through puberty and bodily changes. This may result in causing some children to misunderstand or misinterpret the actions of an adult.
- Changing for PE can cause anxiety for some children, could influence their perception of the subject and determine whether it is an enjoyable and positive experience. The concern caused by changing can influence a child’s participation and lead to a variety of avoidance strategies.
- For staff there can be confusion and/or worry about supervision and how it accords with safer working practice. There can be tension between the need to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur and the risk of being accused of acting inappropriately or even being perceived as someone who might pose a risk to children.

### **Guidance**

- Adults will always change for PE privately, never in the same space as children.
- It is recommended practice that pupils should change out of their school uniform and in to a PE kit, particularly when the exertion rate will necessitate a change of clothing for reasons of hygiene.

- Adequate and sensitive arrangements for changing which will take into account the needs of pupils from different religious and cultural backgrounds will be made.
- All pupils will be treated fairly and with respect for their privacy and dignity.
- Parents and carers will be made aware of the arrangements for changing for PE/Sport (via School Parent Handbook / sharing of this policy). Any issues that arise from changing for PE or sports will be discussed with a parent/carer on an individual basis, by the child's class teacher in the first instance. If children continue to have problems with changing then this must be brought to the attention to the school's senior leadership team so that further support can be brought in if this is appropriate.
- Pupils who express concern about the behaviour of a member of staff will be listened to and appropriate enquiries will be conducted by the DSL.
- Allegations about any member of staff or any other adult on the school premises, from any source, must be reported promptly to the school's DSL, who will act in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding procedures. Allegations about one of the DSL's must be reported to one of the Trust Central Team Safeguarding Leaders.

### **Changing for PE/Sports:**

At the Viking Academy Trust, children from Reception to Year 4 will usually change together in their classrooms with the teacher / Sports Coach, whoever is responsible for the class at the time to be within the class to help with any issues or problems. The staff member is to follow the Department for Education guidance at all times.

(Keeping Children Safe in education & Working Together To Safeguard Children).

Wherever possible, we will designate a single sex area for the children in upper KS2 (Years 5 & 6) to use to change. There are occasions where children opt to change in the toilets.

If a parent requests changes to usual practice, a phone call/meeting with the class teacher and or member of the school's senior leadership team is advised to listen to concerns, discuss health & safety issues and ensure a pathway forward is agreed.

### **Supervision of children changing**

- A judgement will be based on the age and developmental needs of the pupils but there will **not** be an assumption that adults need to remain in the room in order to maintain good behaviour in KS2. This can be achieved by staff being in close proximity and pupils being made aware of this. Pupils will also know that adults will enter the room if necessary, in response to any disturbance or needs that may arise.
- It will usually be possible to leave the door of any designated changing area slightly ajar. This will mean that it is unlikely that occupants can be seen but help can be called upon quickly if required.
- If adults need to enter the room, they will alert pupils by announcing this loudly, giving the children the opportunity to cover up.

- All adults, but particularly those of the opposite sex, will avoid standing watching in the areas designated for changing, or repeatedly going in and out without good reason. A code of behaviour will be established with all pupils so they are clear about expectations for their conduct and the conduct of any adults.
- Pupils will always show respect for one another when changing. The pupils will change quickly and quietly.
- There are occasions when a member of staff may have concerns over bruising or other body marks that are seen during changing. Any concerns must be discussed with the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead), or in their absence a Deputy Designated Lead.

### **Children who may need assistance with getting changed**

- Staff will refer to the guidance set out in the Trust's Intimate Care Policy for assisting children who are disabled or require additional help, e.g. younger children.
- Pupils of all ages will be encouraged to be as independent as possible. Adults will prompt and give verbal encouragement/ instructions before they consider offering assistance.
- Any assistance will take place openly, not out of sight of other members of staff. This will always be undertaken to meet the needs of the children and not the adults.

### **Off-site changing rooms (e.g. public swimming pools)**

The children in our Viking schools participate in swimming session across the primary phase. For RAPS pupils, the local leisure centre facilities are used. For Upton and Chilton, the on-site Upton pool is used. Guidelines are shared with staff prior to the commencement of a block of swimming and will be personalised for the age/needs of the cohort. Usual practice will see children supervised while changing in separate rooms due to the changing rooms.

Any child with mobility issues will be given support and ample space to get changed. Risk assessments will be completed.

- The details outlined above will still apply.
- It is not appropriate for school swimmers to share changing facilities with members of the public. If school sessions precede or are followed by public sessions, enough time must be booked either side of the swimming session to allow pupils to get showered in their swimwear and get changed privately. Staff must be by the entrance and exit of swimming changing rooms to ensure no members of the public mix with the children.
- If staff are present in the swimming changing area, they will be staff of the same sex as the children. In this case, children will change privately behind curtains, or in cubicles, or in more open changing rooms, staff will turn their backs, unless support is requested by a pupil.
- If changing areas are shared with pupils from another school, particularly those who are older/younger, adults from both/all schools will take this into consideration and properly risk assess together.

## **Guidance on supervising pupils in changing rooms – Department guidance**

The DfE published guidance on safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in education settings.

Advice from the DfE states... *It is up to schools to decide on appropriate arrangements for how or where pupils should get changed. You should be sensitive to pupils' need for privacy, particularly where there are religious or cultural issues to consider.*

There are occasions where there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people and/or satisfy health and safety considerations.

This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

### **This means that adults should:**

- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- Announce their intention of entering changing rooms

### **This means that adults should not:**

- Change in the same place as children
- Shower or bathe with children
- Assist with any personal care task which a child or young person which can undertake by themselves

### **Safeguarding:**

The Viking Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Please refer to the following additional policies to supplement this policy: Safeguarding policy, Behaviour policy, Inclusion and Special Needs policy, Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

DfE Documents: Keeping Children Safe In Education, Working together to safeguard children.

The Trust used NSPCC guidance (see appendix 1) to formulate this policy.

### **Dress for PE/Sport:**

**Children's PE Kit:** Please see Viking school website for uniform and details of uniform providers.

**Staff:** Refer to VAT Dress & Presentation policy details the Trust's expectations on appropriate attire.



# Factsheet for schools: best practice for PE changing rooms

March 2018

There is no current legislation around safe PE changing practices in primary schools; it is up to individual schools to write their own guidelines.

Clear guidelines are recommended because:

- getting changed can make some children feel vulnerable
- getting changed can cause anxiety for some children
- staff can feel unsure about PE changing supervision and how to ensure that both children and adults are safe.

## Changing areas

Schools need to consider the following things when organising changing facilities for children:

- Where possible, **use designated single-gender changing rooms or areas**. If this is not possible and boys and girls change together, think about using furniture or screens to provide separate areas.
- Mixed gender changing areas are less appropriate as children get older and staff need to be sensitive to those who physically mature at a much earlier or later age than their peers. **Boys and girls should change separately after they reach Year 2.**
- Schools need to treat all pupils fairly and with respect for their privacy and dignity.
- Schools should make adequate and sensitive arrangements for changing which take into account the needs of pupils with disabilities and children from different religions, beliefs and cultural backgrounds or gender identity.
- Adults must always change or shower privately; never in the same space as children.

## **Staff supervision**

Schools will need to make a judgement about supervision based on the age and developmental needs of the pupils. It should not be necessary for adults to remain in the room in order to maintain good behaviour; being in close proximity and pupils being aware of this should be enough.

Pupils should know that adults will enter the room if necessary - in response to a disturbance, for example.

Staff should also consider the following:

- It is often possible to leave the door of designated changing rooms slightly open.
- If there is a need for an adult to enter the room, it is recommended they should alert pupils to this by announcing it to give pupils the opportunity to cover up if they want to.
- Where possible, female staff should supervise girls and male staff should supervise boys.
- All adults, but particularly those of the opposite gender, should avoid just standing in the changing room watching pupils, or repeatedly going in and out without good reason.
- Establish a code of behaviour with pupils so they are clear about expectations about their conduct whilst they are unsupervised.
- Pupils who express concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or other pupils should be listened to, and appropriate enquiries should be conducted by the head teacher or designated safeguarding lead.

## **Pupils who need assistance with getting changed**

When organising changing areas for children with additional needs, schools should:

- Refer to the school's Intimate Care Policy for assisting children who are disabled or require additional support.
- Ensure all staff are aware of any intimate care issues for individual pupils. It is best practice to involve pupils and parents in making decisions which involve intimate care.
- Have a written policy and review these arrangements regularly.
- Encourage pupils of all ages to be as independent as possible; consider prompting and giving verbal help/encouragement before offering physical assistance.
- Be especially careful when helping children with underclothes, tights and swimming costumes.
- If necessary, offer assistance openly and not out of sight of others.

## **Using off-site changing rooms**

Schools will need to think about what safeguards need to be put in place to protect children when visiting other sites and consider the following:

- It is not appropriate for school swimmers (for example) to share changing facilities with members of the public (unless this 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 before the public are allowed in.
- As far as possible, members of staff should only supervise or assist pupils of the same gender.
- 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.

### Useful links

[The Underwear Rule – resources for schools and teachers](#)

#### Online training for schools

- [Child protection in schools](#)
- [Safer recruitment in education](#)
- [Managing sexualised behaviour in primary schools](#)
- [Keeping children safe online](#)
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Contact the NSPCC's Knowledge and Information Service with any questions about child protection or related topics: Tel: 0808 800 5000 | Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) | Twitter: [@NSPCCpro](#)  
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