

# The Federation of St John's and St Paul's Whitechapel CE Primary Schools

## CHANGING FOR PE POLICY

### Introduction

Although there is no legislation in respect of changing for Physical Exercise (PE) lessons, the NSPCC advise that schools should have clear guidelines 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.

Department for Education (DfE) guidance states that 'supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment'.

### Principles

It is recommended practice that pupils should change for PE, particularly when the exertion rate will necessitate a change of clothing for reasons of hygiene.

Our schools will treat all pupils fairly and with respect for their privacy and dignity.

Pupils from Nursery to Year 4 should change together in their classrooms with the teacher. Staff should be sensitive to those who physically mature at an earlier or later age than their peers.

Girls and boys in Year 5 & 6 should get changed separately. Giving children a time limit will help children to change quickly.

Where boys and girls are getting changed in the same room furniture or screens may be used to provide separate spaces.

### Staff supervision

Adults should not need to remain in the room where older children are changing; in order to maintain good behaviour, being in close proximity with pupils aware of this, should suffice. They should know that adults will enter the room if necessary, e.g. in response to a disturbance. 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 & 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 need assistance with getting changed

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

- 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;
- 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 tights and swimming costumes etc.;
- offer assistance, if it is necessary, openly and in sight of others.

### Using off-site changing rooms

It is not appropriate for children who are swimming to share changing facilities with members of the public. 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 or younger, adults from both schools should take this into consideration.

### Useful links

The Underwear Rule – resources for schools and teachers (NSPCC).

Stages of puberty: what happens to boys and girls (NHS).

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