

## Valley Christian Academy Change Room Use Policy

### Purpose:

The goal of this policy is to ensure that all students at Valley Christian Academy feel safe, respected, and comfortable while using changing rooms for Physical Education (PE) or other activities. The policy sets out best practices for supervision, privacy, and respectful behavior in the changing areas, ensuring that students' dignity and privacy are maintained at all times.

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### 1. Changing Area Design & Access

- **Sex-Specific Areas:** Where possible, changing areas should be designated for single-sex use. In the event that student numbers create inequitable changeroom or toilet access, designated spaces may be re-assigned to a different sex.
  - **Disability & Cultural Sensitivity:** Ensure that changing areas are accessible to students with disabilities, and any special considerations for students with diverse needs are made.
  - **Private Staff Facilities:** Adults must always use private facilities for changing and showering, separate from the students.
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### 2. Supervision Protocol

- **Staff Consideration:** Female staff should supervise girls, and male staff should supervise boys wherever possible. If supervision by an opposite-sex staff member is required, the staff member should remain outside the designated washroom or changing area.
- **Room Access:** Changing room doors should be left slightly open if appropriate, to allow for supervision. If a staff member needs to enter, they should announce their entry so students can cover up if desired.
- **Supervision Expectations:** Staff should supervise the changing rooms without being present in the room at all times. Proximity supervision (staff staying close by and visible) is recommended, with the understanding that staff may enter the room when needed.
- **Code of Conduct:** A clear code of behavior must be established for students regarding conduct while in changing areas. This should be communicated before

each session and reinforced regularly. At no point are cell phones or cameras to be used in designated changeroom or washroom areas,

- **Addressing Concerns:** Any concerns about the behavior of staff or other students should be taken seriously. Students will be encouraged to report concerns, and the school will investigate appropriately under the guidance of the head teacher or designated safeguarding lead.
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### 3. Assisting Students with Changing

- **Support for Students with Additional Needs:** For students who require assistance with changing due to disability or other needs, staff must follow the protocol outlined in the policy for students with additional needs.
  - **Independence Encouraged:** Staff should encourage students to be as independent as possible when changing, providing verbal help or encouragement before offering physical assistance.
  - **Physical Assistance Guidelines:** If physical assistance is needed, it should be provided openly and respectfully, ensuring the dignity of the student is upheld. Assistance with underclothes or swimming costumes should be done carefully and considerately.
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### 4. Off-Site Changing Areas

- **Supervision at External Facilities:** When visiting off-site changing facilities (e.g., for swimming or sporting events), staff should ensure that students are not sharing facilities with the general public unless a specific risk assessment has been carried out.
  - **Same-sex Supervision:** Staff members should supervise students of the same sex wherever possible.
  - **Cross-School Supervision:** If changing areas are shared with students from other schools, a risk assessment should be conducted, and staff from all involved schools should work together to ensure appropriate supervision and safety.
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## **5. Policy Review & Communication**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains in line with best practices and the needs of the students. It will be communicated clearly to staff, students, and parents to ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities and the standards expected in changing areas.