



St. Mary's Secondary School

Convent of Mercy, Newport, Co. Tipperary V94 RY18

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Registered Charity Number: 20148379



Changing Room Policy

St. Mary's Secondary School, Newport, is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of C.E.I ST. (Catholic Schools, An Irish Schools Trust). The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills, and is a co-educational school.

School Management: The Board of Management of St. Mary's Secondary School is a statutory Board, appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

Mission Statement:

St. Mary's Secondary School, Newport operates as a Catholic co-educational Secondary School, to provide teaching and learning of the highest quality for the benefit of the community which it serves.

In pursuing this mission we aim:

- To provide a quality educational experience that caters for the full range of academic aptitude and abilities.
- To foster the intellectual, physical, social, cultural, moral and religious development of our students.
- To enable pupils to achieve their full potential academically.
- To promote the Catholic ethos and faith.
- To cater for the needs of the local community in so far as ethos, resources and facilities permit.

Ethos: As a CEIST school, St. Mary's seeks to promote the five key elements of the CEIST charter.

Promoting Spiritual and Human Development.

Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning.

Showing Respect for Every Person.

Creating Community.

Being Just and Responsible.

Aims

It is the aim of this changing room policy to ensure the safety of students at all times, during their teaching and learning experience, within the Physical Education department.

We also aim to clarify the role of class teachers before, during and after their students have utilised the changing facilities. While it is not reasonably practicable that every student will be in a teacher's sight at all times during PE classes, the ongoing reviews and reflection on our approaches, mean that our teachers have a heightened awareness of the need to ensure that no student's health and safety is compromised.

Staff are also aware that for these procedures to be enforced to their maximum efficiency, team work and communication with fellow practitioners is vital. Procedures are regularly discussed and reinforced both informally, and at departmental meetings.

Allocation of changing facilities

Changing facilities will be allocated according to the timetable at the start of each academic year.

Where possible, only one class will use each changing room at any given time. As our classes are mixed, this will include separate male and female changing rooms.

Where possible, pupils using the facilities will share only with pupils from the same class group. When another class group is to use the same changing room, then the changing rooms will be split into two distinct areas.

Occasionally there are exceptional circumstances that require students to have alternative changing facilities. In this instance, parents can make a request to the principal in writing, and an alternative arrangement will be made, subject to resources available.

Students should use the changing facility allocated to their class by the teacher. Students are not allowed into any other changing area, unless directed to do so by their class teacher.

Changing room supervision

Prior to allowing the students in, the teacher must check the changing rooms, the hallway and the toilets to ensure that they are clean and safe to use. If there is an issue with any aspect of the facilities, it should be reported to the caretaker/principal for attention.

Teachers should stand at the door of the changing room to welcome their class.

Students are reminded to change promptly. This is also communicated to them at the beginning of the year.

Whilst students are changing, the teacher should check notes from students not able to partake fully in the class.

Teachers must ensure continued/adequate supervision throughout the time students are changing. However, teachers may be required to bring out, or put away, equipment prior to or following a lesson.

After a reasonable length time, teachers should re-enter the changing room and ensure that every student leaves for class.

At the end of each lesson the class teacher will check the facilities, making sure that the area is tidy, and has sustained no damage. If there is an issue, it will be documented and given to the appropriate Assistant Year Head/ Year Head/ Principal.

Security

Pupils are reminded not to leave valuables in the changing areas. This is also communicated to them at the beginning of each school year. Valuables include, among others, mobile phones, media players, devices, jewellery, and money. Students should leave these items in lockers, or at home, on days when they have Physical Education.

Please note that staff will not keep valuable items for safekeeping during Physical Education lessons.

Students will not be given access to changing facilities during lessons, with the exception of emergency circumstances.

During class, changing rooms are not locked, and therefore students are only permitted to re-enter with the permission of the teacher. Students deemed to have abused the facilities will be sanctioned, according to the school's code of behaviour.

Extra-curricular activities

During all extra-curricular activities, changing rooms will be used according to the rules set out above, and will be supervised by a member of the staff.

In the event of competitive fixtures, changing rooms should be allocated by the organiser. These should be identified by appropriate signage, and the PE department should be informed. The organisers must follow this policy in the same way as teaching staff and/or coaches.

Recording and monitoring

All incidents must be recorded, and passed on to the relevant person in charge.

Students deemed to have abused the facilities will be dealt with, under the school's code of behaviour.

Teachers/coaches must communicate to students clearly that all incidents of loss must be reported immediately to the class teacher/coach.

All incidents of loss will be investigated fully by the class teacher/coach and, when necessary, will be passed onto the relevant person in charge.

Covid 19 safety measures

All students must follow the new safety measures with regard to use of changing rooms.

Face coverings must be worn by all until instructed otherwise by a teacher.

There are hand sanitisers adjacent to the PE hall and changing area.

Students enter the sports hall by the main door only.

Everybody must sanitise hands upon entry, during the activity and upon leaving the changing room.

Physical guides, such as signs, posters and markings on floors are displayed to ensure that teachers and students are aware of social distancing requirements.

Wipes are placed outside each changing room. Students must take one before entering the changing room, wipe down their changing area before use, and keep the wipe at the side of the bench.

The area in which each student changes is indicated by the teacher, and should be adhered to.

No more than 8 - 12 students should be in any one changing room at the same time. Once changed, students immediately go to their designated position in the sports hall.

At the end of lesson, when the students have changed back into their school uniform, they wipe down the changing area once again, and dispose of the wipe in the appropriate bin, before leaving.

Students leave via the exit doors at the top of sports hall.

The changing rooms, toilet area, hallway and touch points are regularly disinfected to maintain appropriate hygiene standards.

Timetable for Review

The Changing room policy will be reviewed as the need arises, and/or every three years. The next review is scheduled to take place in 2024.

Policy development team: Ms. E. O'Meara, Ms. L. Coyle, Ms. E. Mullally, Mr. D. Harrington, Mr. D. Kennedy

Relevant dates for this policy

Initial policy review: 27th August

Policy amended by staff: September & October, 2021

Final consultation with P.E. Department: 19th November, 2021

Consultation with Senior Management: 22nd November, 2021

Consultation with staff: 23rd November, 2021

Consultation with Students Council: 24th November, 2021

Consultation with Parents Council: 24th November, 2021

Draft Policy presented to Board of Management: 1st December, 2021

Policy ratified by Board of Management:

Signed: 
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 1/12/2021

Signed: 
Principal, St. Mary's Secondary School

Date: 1/12/2021

