

Toilets, changing rooms, PE and trips: a checklist

For heads of PE, trip leaders and educational visits coordinators, site and business managers, and school leaders in England. Based on *Keeping children safe in education 2026* (KCSIE). Numbers in brackets are KCSIE paragraphs. Decisions on a child's request for support are for the school, with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) involved.

MUST the law requires it **SHOULD** follow it unless there is good reason not to **STATED** what KCSIE says, without “must” or “should”

1 Before you start

- ☐ These rules apply to schools, colleges in the further education sector and 16–19 academies. Other colleges should take independent legal advice. **SHOULD** [97, 107, 114, 199]
- ☐ Colleges covered by these sections should take the same approach to toilets and changing rooms as schools. **SHOULD** [110, 116]
- ☐ If a pupil asks to change how they use facilities, take part in PE or sleep on a trip, don't agree it yourself: it goes through the school's process for requests for support, and staff should not adopt changes before a decision has been made with parents or carers involved. **SHOULD** [100, 203, 260]
- ☐ State-funded schools and colleges must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty: when significant decisions are made or policies developed, their equality implications must be specifically considered. **MUST** [101, 102]

2 Toilets

- ☐ Do not allow children into toilets designated for the opposite biological sex, including where the school is supporting any degree of social transition. **MUST** [108]
- ☐ Provide separate toilets for boys and girls aged 8 and over (except individual toilets in a room lockable from the inside, for one pupil at a time). **MUST** [109]
- ☐ If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, consider whether an alternative, such as a self-contained individual toilet, can be provided without compromising single-sex facilities or the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of any child. **SHOULD** [111]
- ☐ Where mixed-sex toilets are provided in addition to single-sex toilets, assess the safeguarding risks and plan accordingly: for example, individual lockable rooms opening directly onto a public area such as a corridor. **SHOULD** [113]

3 Changing rooms and showers

- ☐ Do not allow a child aged 11 or older at the start of the school year to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex. **MUST** [115]
- ☐ When supporting any degree of social transition, do not allow a child access to changing rooms designated for the opposite sex. **MUST** [115]
- ☐ If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the changing rooms and showers designated for their sex, consider whether an alternative can be provided without compromising single-sex facilities: for example a fully enclosed room for one child at a time, lockable from the inside, or access at a different time. **SHOULD** [117]

4 PE and sport

- ☐ Where a sport needs to be played in single-sex groups from a certain age for safety, there must be no exceptions. **MUST** [99, 276]
- ☐ The Equality Act 2010 lets schools separate children by biological sex in sport where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage against the average boy, or the other way round. **STATED** [98]
- ☐ Some schools have single-sex sport for reasons of fairness. Where there are no safety concerns and a child asks about how they take part, the request is considered through the school's process: whether support is in the child's best interests, the impact on other children, and safe and fair PE for all. **STATED** [99, 100]

5 Trips and overnight stays

- ☐ Do not allow a child to share overnight accommodation with a child of the opposite biological sex. **MUST** [200]
- ☐ Supporting any degree of social transition must not include access to boarding or residential accommodation designated for the opposite sex. **MUST** [200]
- ☐ When allocating dormitories, tents or shared rooms on trips, have regard to Equality Act duties, safeguarding obligations and the relevant regulations and standards. **MUST** [201]
- ☐ If a child does not want to share a room with another child of the same biological sex, seek alternative arrangements where possible, such as a suitable separate room, without compromising any child's safety, comfort, privacy or dignity. **SHOULD** [202]
- ☐ Where the child's concern reflects a request for support with social transition, consider it through the school's process for requests before making any decision. **SHOULD** [203]
- ☐ Have regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools, residential special schools or further education residential accommodation, as appropriate. **SHOULD** [204]

6 Records, explanation and respect

- ☐ Keep a clear record of any alternative arrangements, make sure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly. **STATED** [112, 118]
- ☐ Explain the limits to the child sensitively: support will not include access to toilets, changing rooms or boarding or residential accommodation designated for the opposite sex, or opposite-sex PE classes where single-sex PE is for safety. **SHOULD** [278]
- ☐ Take a strong, proactive stand against all forms of bullying. **MUST** [259]
- ☐ Remember that some pupils are more at risk of certain kinds of bullying, including transphobic bullying. **STATED** [103]
- ☐ Make sure relevant staff are aware of the child's biological sex, and keep information confidential and stored securely. **SHOULD** [282, 74]

Some colleges do not have a designated safeguarding lead. “Data protection laws” means the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 [104]. This checklist summarises statutory guidance for England. It is not legal advice and does not replace KCSIE 2026 or the school's own policies.