

CHANGING POLICY & PROCEDURE

Wildlings Pte Ltd

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1. POLICY OVERVIEW

Children at Wildlings get wet, muddy and sandy. Providing for, and supporting children, when changing into dry clothes is therefore a routine and frequent part of our work. Because changing involves undressing, it is also one of the highest-risk moments in a Wildlings session from a child safeguarding point of view.

This policy sets out where children change, who supervises them, and what staff may and may not do. It applies across all Wildlings programmes and locations:

- Dempsey site and Core Collective,
- West Coast Park Eco Centre,
- external venues such as Swish Swimming, school premises where Wildlings runs its own programmes such as CCAs, and public parks, beaches and islands.

It is an integral component of the Wildlings Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and shares its supervision principles with the Toileting Policy and Procedure.

Our starting position is that children are capable, competent and strong, and that we support them to master their self-help skills. Helping a child is often faster, but children learn a great deal by practising. Children are never forced to change out of their clothes if they do not want to. Alongside that, children have a right to privacy and dignity while they change, and staff have a right to work in a way that protects them from misunderstanding or accusation. This policy is written to serve all three of those things at once.

It also has to work operationally. Wildlings holds only a small number of individual changing tents. They are fine for changing a few children here and there, but they cannot change a large group of three-and-a-half to five-year-olds quickly. Attempting to do so leaves children cold and wet, holds up the programme, and — most importantly — creates pressure on staff to step inside a zipped tent with a child. Supervised group changing in our open-sided shelters is both faster and safer than individual cubicles for our youngest children, and this policy says so explicitly.

Accompanied programmes are outside the scope of this policy and procedure. These are birthday parties, nature playtime, playgroups, and school excursions where the school's own staff accompany the children and retain care of them. In all of these the child's own adult changes them. This policy applies wherever children are in Wildlings' care without their own adult, including the CCAs and other programmes we run on school premises.

2. PURPOSE

This policy aims to:

- Protect the privacy and dignity of every child while they change.

- Protect children from being seen, photographed or approached by strangers or members of the public while changing.
- Ensure that no adult is ever alone with a child in an enclosed space — the single boundary that matters most.
- Protect staff, volunteers and collaborators from accusation by making safe practice the standard practice.
- Enable Wildlings to change large groups of young children quickly and safely, so that programmes run to time and children are not left cold, wet or distressed.
- Give staff a clear, unambiguous rule they can apply in the moment, without having to judge each situation from first principles.

3. THE FIVE GOLDEN RULES

These five rules apply everywhere, to every programme, every age group and every adult working with Wildlings. Everything else in this policy is detail. These are non-negotiable.

- **1. Never one adult alone** with one child in an enclosed space. No member of staff, volunteer, contractor, collaborator or parent helper enters a zipped changing tent, a shower cubicle or a toilet cubicle with a child, and no adult is ever alone with a single child in an enclosed changing space. Where a child needs help, that help is given in an open group changing area within sight of another adult, or with the tent flap or cubicle door fully open and a second adult present.
- **2. Maintain ratios when supervising changing.** Our shelters are open sided, therefore at least one adult is needed to supervise but other adults are around and can continue their work or support changing as needed.
- **3. No phones and no cameras.** Mobile phones and cameras are not used, held or visible in any changing area, by staff or by children, at any time and for any reason. A member of staff who needs to use a phone steps fully out of the changing area first. No photograph or video is taken in or of a changing area under any circumstances — see the Use of Photographs and Videos Policy.
- **4. Adults do not change with children.** Wildlings staff, volunteers, collaborators and parents never change, undress or shower in the same space as children. Adults change before or after the children in a separate space.
- **5. A child's request for privacy is always honoured.** Any child of any age who asks to change privately is given an individual tent or cubicle immediately, with no questions asked, no negotiation and no delay. A child who does not want to change at all is not made to.

4. AGE GROUPS AND CHANGING ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Thresholds

There is no single legal age in Singapore at which children must change separately. Wildlings has therefore benchmarked its thresholds against the guidance used by international schools and by national sports bodies, which is the standard our parent community will recognise:

- In England, school premises regulations require separate changing accommodation from age 11, and separate toilet facilities from age 8.

- NSPCC and Child Protection in Sport Unit guidance states that mixed-sex changing areas become progressively less appropriate as children get older, and notes that puberty can begin from age 8.
- International and UK school changing policies commonly separate boys and girls from Key Stage 2, and certainly by Years 5 and 6 — that is, from roughly age 8 to 9.
- Swim England and most pool operators move parents out of the changing rooms at age 7 to 8, on the basis that most children no longer need adult help to change by then.

Wildlings applies these thresholds through its own age groups, so that staff work from the group in front of them rather than from a birthday. Sprouts and Sunbirds change as a mixed group; Hornbills change separated by sex; Eagles change individually. This is deliberately more cautious than the statutory position and aligns with the point at which children themselves typically begin to want privacy. Where a programme is not organised into these groups, staff apply the group the child's age corresponds to — Sprouts and Sunbirds up to 6, Hornbills 6 to 8, Eagles 8 and over.

4.2 Summary of arrangements

Group	Approximate age	How they change	Supervision
Sprouts & Sunbirds	Approx. 3.5–6 (Playgroups are out of the scope of this policy and procedure as children remain in the care of their adult carer)	Supervised mixed group changing in an open-sided shelter or designated group changing space. Individual tent available on request. Children are encouraged to change in stages and never be full naked in the group environment and are supported verbally by staff to do so.	Wildlings staff inside the space, female staff wherever possible. Maintain ratios during changing.
Hornbills	Approx. 6–8	Group changing, separated by sex — curtain drawn down the middle of the shelter, or two separate changing areas. Individual tent offered every time, not only on request.	Two Wildlings staff, each of the same sex as the group they are with wherever staffing allows.
Eagles	Approx. 8–11	Individual changing only — an individual tent on site, or a cubicle at Core Collective or another venue. No group changing unless initiated by the children, i.e. a group of three female friends in one cubicle	One or more Wildlings staff supervising from outside the tent or cubicle, never inside. Same-sex supervision inside a communal changing room.
Any child	Any group	A child who asks to change privately is given an individual tent or cubicle straight away.	As above for that space. The request is never questioned.

Table: Wildlings changing arrangements by age group. Ages are indicative only — staff work from the group the child is in. Where a programme is not organised into groups, apply the group the child's age corresponds to.

4.3 Sprouts and Sunbirds — supervised group changing

- Children change together as a group in one of our open-sided shelters or a designated group changing space. If the space is enclosed the children must be supervised by at least two members of Wildlings staff.
- Boys and girls in Sprouts and Sunbirds may change in the same space. Where the group is large or the mix of ages makes it sensible, the curtain is drawn to create two areas.
- Female staff supervise this age group wherever staffing allows. Where a male member of staff is present, a female member of staff is also present.
- Staff help children who need help — with wet clothing, buttons, shoes, sunscreen and so on — openly, in the group space, in the sight of the other supervising adult. This is precisely why group changing is used for this age: help can be given without any adult ever being concealed with a child.
- Children are encouraged to do as much as they can themselves. Staff step in when the child asks, when the child is struggling, or when the child is cold, wet or distressed.
- Help is given verbally wherever possible. Helping a child physically is judged by the staff member of the individual child's age and needs.
- Any child who asks for privacy is given an individual tent, and changes inside it unaided with a member of staff waiting outside. If they need help, they come out of the tent to receive it.

4.4 Hornbills — sex-separated group changing

- Hornbills change in sex-separated groups. At Dempsey this is done by drawing the curtain down the middle of the Saga or Tamarind shelter to create a boys' side and a girls' side. In Tamarind, screens can be repositioned to create additional privacy.
- An individual changing tent is proactively offered as an alternative to every child in this age band every time, not only when they ask. Many seven-year-olds want privacy and will not ask for it.
- Each side of the curtain is supervised by a member of staff of the same sex as the children changing there, wherever staffing allows. Where it does not, a female member of staff may supervise a small group of boys of this age, but a male member of staff never supervises a group of girls changing.
- Staff give help only when asked, and only with the child standing clothed or partly clothed in the open group space — never inside a tent.
- Children are supported verbally and encouraged to change in stages to avoid being fully naked at one time.

4.5 Eagles — individual changing

- Eagles children change individually. They use an individual changing tent on site, a cubicle at Core Collective, or a cubicle at whichever venue the programme is running from.
- Group changing is not used for this age group, including for large-volume changes before swimming or water play. Where volume is the problem, the answer is Core Collective's cubicles or a staggered change, not group changing. The only exception is where the children themselves ask to share a cubicle with same-sex friends.

- Staff never enter a tent or cubicle with a child of this age. Supervision is from outside, within earshot.
- Children of this age change with the tent zipped or the cubicle door closed. Staff announce themselves before approaching and do not stand watching the changing area.
- If a child of this age needs physical help — for example because of an injury, an accident or an additional need — two adults are present and the parent is informed the same day. See section 6.4.

5. CHANGING LOCATIONS AND PROCEDURES

5.1 Dempsey — Saga and Tamarind shelters

- Both shelters are open on all four sides and sit inside our fenced private site, surrounded by secondary rainforest. There is no public access, no through-traffic and no line of sight into either shelter from outside the site boundary.
- The open sides are what make group changing here safe. Supervising staff are visible to each other and to other adults on site at all times, so no adult can be concealed with a child. A shelter must not be enclosed, fully screened or curtained off on its outer sides during changing.
- The curtain down the middle of each shelter is used to create two separate changing areas where sex separation is required, or where a large group is being changed in batches.
- Only one activity happens in a shelter at a time. A shelter in use for changing is closed to other children and adults, staff are alerted through walkie talkie communication that changing is taking place and not to use the area.
- Changing is completed and the shelter handed back before food, activity or rest use resumes.

5.2 Individual changing tents (Dempsey only)

- Wildlings holds a small number of pop-up individual changing tents. They are used for occasional changing of small numbers, for Eagles, and for any child in any group who asks for privacy.
- They are not used to change a large group of young children. Staff must not attempt a large-volume change through the tents — it leaves children wet, waiting and creates pressure to step inside a tent with a child. Use the shelters instead.
- Tents are pitched in the open sports area at Dempsey, never hidden or obscured — never behind a structure, vehicle or vegetation, and never against the site boundary fence. There are no changing tents at West Coast Park; see section 5.4 for the arrangements there.
- A member of staff should regularly check on the progress of the changing process. For Sprouts & Sunbirds age staff should remain outside the tents within earshot.
- If a child inside a tent needs help, the staff member unzips the tent and asks the child to come to the door for support. The staff member remains outside, helps the child, then re-zips the tent once the child has gone back inside. A member of staff does not enter a zipped tent with a child under any circumstances.
- Tents are checked before use and left open and empty afterwards.

5.3 Core Collective changing rooms (Dempsey)

Core Collective's changing rooms are public facilities, shared with gym members who may be fully undressed. They are used by Wildlings only for Eagles, and only where the volume of children to be changed makes on-site changing impractical.

- **Cubicle changing only.** Children change inside a shower cubicle or a toilet cubicle. The Wildlings member of staff remains inside the changing room but outside the cubicle, and does not enter a cubicle with a child.
- **Leave capacity for the public.** Wildlings takes no more than three of the four shower cubicles and no more than one of the two toilet cubicles, leaving at least one shower and one toilet free for other users at all times.
- **Girls.** A female member of Wildlings staff takes the girls into the female changing room and remains inside the changing room throughout.
- **Boys.** A male member of Wildlings staff checks the male changing room first — before any child enters — to confirm that no adult is undressed or showering and that there is nothing else of concern. He then accompanies the boys inside and remains in the changing room, outside the cubicles, while they change.
- **Never a single child.** No child is ever taken into a Core Collective changing room alone with a single member of staff. If only one child needs to change, they use an individual changing tent on site instead.
- **Members of the public present.** If an adult member of the public is undressed or showering, Wildlings waits outside until they have finished, or changes the children on site instead. Children are not taken past an undressed adult.
- **Headcount.** A headcount is taken on entering and on leaving the changing room, and the group returns to Wildlings together. Children do not leave the changing room individually.
- **Getting there.** The walk to and from Core Collective is supervised as set out in the Toileting Policy and Procedure.

5.4 West Coast Park

West Coast Park has no open-sided shelter equivalent to Saga or Tamarind, so group changing there uses one of the following, chosen by the session lead on the day according to the number and age of children:

- **The office.** Suitable for changing small groups. The door is left ajar or the space is otherwise open to view, and two members of staff are present.
- **The community hall screened area.** The hall has a discreet space around a corner with a screen. This is the preferred option for changing a larger group of younger children. Maintain staffing ratios whilst changing.
- **The accessible bathroom.** Large enough for a small group of younger children to change inside, with staff present outside. For Eagles it is treated as a single cubicle for one child at a time unless requested by a small group of same-sex friends who wish to change together.
- **The public bathrooms.** These are small and quiet, with two cubicles each in the ladies' and the men's. Where a group change is needed, a bathroom may be temporarily closed to the public for Wildlings' sole use, with a member of staff on the door. Where it is not closed, the same rules apply as at Core Collective — cubicle changing only, staff outside the cubicle, and capacity left for other users. At

West Coast, if fully utilizing the bathrooms you must leave the accessible bathroom for public use.

Closing a public bathroom for Wildlings' use is done only for as long as the change takes, and a member of staff stands at the entrance throughout to explain and to prevent anyone walking in. It is not used as a routine arrangement where a smaller change would do.

5.5 Swimming at Swish Swimming and other external venues

- The session lead confirms the venue's changing arrangements before the first visit of any programme, and records what was agreed. This includes which changing spaces Wildlings may use, whether they are shared with the public, and whether a private or family changing space is available.
- Where the venue offers a private, family or group changing space, Wildlings uses it in preference to a shared communal space.
- Children change in cubicles wherever cubicles exist. Where only a communal space is available, the age thresholds in section 4 apply exactly as they do on site, using screens or a separated area to divide by sex.
- All five Golden Rules apply in full at every external venue. Venue convenience never overrides them.
- Wildlings staff supervise their own children throughout. Supervision is never delegated to venue staff, coaches or instructors.
- Travel to and from an external venue follows the Travel Policy and Procedure, including headcounts on departure and arrival.
- Children are changed into swimwear before travelling wherever this is practical, so that the change at the venue is the shorter and simpler one.

5.6 School premises, public parks and beaches

- On school premises where Wildlings runs its own programme — a CCA or similar, where the children are in our care without their own adult — Wildlings uses the school's changing facilities and follows the school's changing procedures, with Wildlings staff supervising throughout and using separate adult facilities themselves. Where a school visits us with its own staff, the school retains care of the children and this policy does not apply.
- At public parks, beaches and islands, changing takes place in individual changing tents brought by Wildlings, or in venue facilities where suitable ones exist.
- In public settings staff position themselves so that the changing area is screened from public view and from any approach, and are alert to members of the public with phones or cameras.
- Where no safe changing arrangement can be made at a public site, children do not change there. They travel back damp — which is acceptable — rather than change in an unsafe space.

6. SUPERVISION AND STAFFING

6.1 Staffing a change

- Individual tent or cubicle changing may be supervised by one member of staff from outside.
- At our own sites a single member of staff may supervise a single child changing in a tent or cubicle, because other Wildlings staff are always working within sight and earshot. At Core Collective, at the West Coast Park public bathrooms and at any external venue, a single member of staff never takes a single child to change — a second adult goes too, or the child changes on site instead.
- Normal programme staff-to-child ratios apply throughout a change and are not relaxed to get the change done faster.
- Changes are planned into the session timetable, not squeezed in. Rushing a change is the most common cause of a rule being broken.
- Where staffing on the day does not allow a change to be run within these rules, the change does not happen. The session lead escalates to management rather than proceeding.

6.2 Who supervises whom

- Female staff supervise children in Sprouts and Sunbirds wherever staffing allows. Where a male member of staff is present with this age group, a female member of staff is present too.
- For Hornbills staff supervise children of the same sex wherever staffing allows.
- A male member of staff never supervises Hornbills or Eagles girls while they are changing, in any location, in any circumstances.
- A female member of staff may supervise boys of any age where no male member of staff is available, provided the arrangement is within the Golden Rules and Eagles boys are changing in cubicles or tents.
- Staff do not stand watching a changing area, and do not go in and out of it repeatedly without reason. Staff announce themselves before entering a space where children are changing.

6.3 Helping a child to change

- Help is offered, not imposed. Staff ask the child before helping and tell the child what they are about to do.
- Help is given in an open space, in the sight of another adult. It is never given inside a zipped tent or a closed cubicle.
- Staff help with outer and wet clothing, footwear, buttons, zips and towels. Children are encouraged and supported to manage underwear themselves at every age.
- Where a child physically cannot manage and help with underwear is unavoidable, two adults are present, the help is given in an open space, and the session lead is told the same day.

6.4 Soiling, accidents and children with additional needs

- A child who has soiled or wet themselves is dealt with calmly, quickly and without fuss, and never in front of the other children.

- Two adults are present for any intimate care, and the child's dignity and consent lead the interaction throughout.
- The parent is informed the same day, and the incident is recorded where the Toileting Policy and Procedure requires it.
- Where a child has a known additional need that requires physical help with changing, the arrangement is agreed with the parent in advance and written down, and remains within the capabilities of what Wildlings can deliver safely within its resourcing.

7. PRIVACY, PHONES AND PHOTOGRAPHY

- No phone or camera is used, held or visible in any changing area by any adult or child, at any time, for any reason. This includes staff phones used for timers, walkie-talkie apps, registers or messaging.
- Where a member of staff needs a phone during a change they step fully out of the changing area first.
- No photograph or video is ever taken in, of, or towards a changing area. This is an absolute prohibition and sits alongside the Use of Photographs and Videos Policy and applied to children bringing their own devices to Wildlings.
- Staff are alert to members of the public holding phones or cameras near a changing area at any shared or public venue. Any such concern is acted on immediately — the change is stopped or moved, and the incident is reported under section 9.
- Changing areas are positioned so they cannot be overlooked, and the session lead checks sightlines before a change begins at any venue that is new or has changed.

8. VOLUNTEERS, CONTRACTORS, COLLABORATORS AND PARENT HELPERS

- Volunteers, collaborators and parent helpers do not supervise changing and do not help children to change. This mirrors the position in the Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure on toileting.
- They are not present in a changing area while children are changing, and are redirected to other duties for the duration of a change.
- A parent helper may change their own child in a cubicle.
- Where a third party runs an activity that requires changing — for example a swim provider — Wildlings staff carry out the change and the supervision, not the provider.

9. COMMUNICATION

- Parents are asked to send children in clothing they can manage themselves, and to pack a full change of clothes for every session. See Clothing in the Outdoors.
- Children are told at the start of any new programme where they will change, who will be there, and that they can ask for a private space at any time.
- Any parent request for a different arrangement for their child is passed to the session lead and, where it goes beyond what this policy provides for, to a Child Safeguarding Lead.

10. REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE

- **Incident reporting.** Any incident or deviation from this policy is reported immediately to Wildlings management and recorded under the Accident and Incident Reporting Procedure. Serious concerns are escalated to a Child Safeguarding Lead without delay and graded using the Child Safeguarding Policy severity scale.
- **Breach of a Golden Rule.** A breach of any of the five Golden Rules in section 3 is treated as a minimum of Level 3 (Moderate) on the Child Safeguarding severity scale, and is reported to a Safeguarding Lead the same day. An adult found alone with a child in an enclosed changing space is a Level 4 or Level 5 concern.
- **Suspected photography** or a member of the public behaving suspiciously near a changing area is reported to a Child Safeguarding Lead immediately, and the change is stopped or moved at once.
- **Staff negligence.** Incidents of staff negligence are recorded in the Company's Incident Reporting Log for serious incidents.
- **Compliance.** Adherence to this policy is mandatory for all staff and is monitored through regular reviews and updates. Management is responsible for maintaining this policy and for communicating it to all staff who may be tasked with changing children.

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Topic	Reference
Child safeguarding	Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
Toileting and use of bathrooms	Toileting Policy and Procedure
Clothing and kit	Clothing in the Outdoors
Photographs and video	Use of Photographs and Videos Policy
Excursions and transfers	Travel Policy and Procedure
Accidents and incidents	Accident and Incident Reporting Procedure
Sun protection	Sun Protection Policy
Adverse weather	Adverse Weather Policy and Procedure

Table: Wildlings policies and procedures referenced by this policy.

This changing policy protects the privacy, dignity and safety of every child at Wildlings, and protects the staff who care for them. Where the safe option and the convenient option conflict, staff choose the safe option. If in any doubt, staff stop and contact a Child Safeguarding Lead before acting.