



Victory Heights Primary School
City of Arabia
**Jewellery in PE, Sports and
Swimming Policy**

Version Date: September 2026

Last review date: September 2026

Next review date: August 2028

Responsible SLT: Deputy Headteacher

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Introduction

Pupils must not wear jewellery during PE, school sport, swimming or any physical activity at VHPS City of Arabia. The only exceptions are those set out in this policy, and each is managed so that it is safe.

This policy applies to:

- all timetabled PE and swimming lessons, on or off site;
- extra-curricular clubs, fixtures, tournaments and DASSA events;
- sports days and physical activity in other lessons;
- all pupils, staff, coaches, contractors and volunteers leading or supervising activity.

Equal Opportunities Statement

VHPS City of Arabia is committed to every child taking a full, safe and equal part in PE, sport and swimming. We value the rich range of faiths, cultures and nationalities in our community, and we recognise that some items worn on the body carry deep religious or cultural meaning.

This policy is applied fairly and consistently to all pupils, regardless of gender, faith, culture, nationality, disability or background. No pupil will be excluded from, or disadvantaged in, physical activity because of a religious or cultural item. Where an item cannot be removed, we will work with the family to find a safe way for the child to take part.

The policy supports the UAE's values of tolerance and respect, and our duty to provide inclusive education in line with KHDA expectations. It should be read alongside the school's Equal Opportunities and Inclusion Policy.

Guidance Referenced

afPE Safe Practice in Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity

<https://www.afpe.org.uk/safe-practice-guide>

KHDA School Inspection Framework expectations for health, safety and wellbeing

<https://web.khda.gov.ae/en/Resources/Publications/School-Inspection/UAE-School-Inspection-Framework-2015-16>

Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to:

1. keep pupils, staff and others safe from injury caused by jewellery during physical activity;
2. give every pupil full and equal access to PE, sport and swimming;
3. respect religious and cultural beliefs while managing risk sensibly;
4. set one clear, consistent standard that pupils, parents and staff all understand;
5. make the responsibilities of pupils, parents and staff clear;
6. help pupils learn to take responsibility for their own safety and that of others;
7. meet our health and safety duties and reflect recognised good practice (afPE).

Definitions of Jewellery

For this policy, jewellery means any item worn on the body for decoration, identification, or religious or cultural reasons that is not part of the PE or swimming kit. It also includes personal devices worn on the body.

Category	Examples
Ear and body piercings	Studs, hoops, sleepers, cartilage and nose piercings, including new piercings
Neck, wrist and ankle items	Necklaces, chains, pendants, bracelets, bangles, anklets, friendship bands, loom bands
Hand items	Rings of any kind
Watches and devices	Analogue watches, smartwatches, fitness trackers, GPS trackers
Religious and cultural items	Kara, sacred threads (e.g. mauli, rakhi), taweez or amulets, crosses, religious pendants
Hair accessories	Hard or metal clips, slides, beads, bobbles with hard parts, decorative headbands
Other items	Badges or brooches, hijab or scarf pins, false or long nails, magnetic or "health" bracelets

The following are **not** jewellery under this policy, but are managed under *Medical items and exceptions* below: medical alert bracelets or necklaces, hearing aids, insulin pumps, glucose monitors and prescribed glasses.

What do we mean by *wearing* jewellery

A pupil is wearing jewellery if any item in the definitions above is on their body, in their hair or attached to their clothing during physical activity. Covering an item with tape, a plaster or a sweatband does not mean it has been removed; it is still being worn.

In practice this means:

- Removed is the expected standard. Items are taken off before the lesson and stored safely.
- Made safe applies only where an item genuinely cannot be removed (a religious item, or a new piercing within the healing period). The item is covered, padded or secured, and the teacher checks it before activity begins.
- Not safe to take part applies where the teacher judges that an item cannot be made safe for a particular activity. The pupil takes part in a modified or alternative role for that activity only.

The standard applies from the moment pupils change for PE or swimming until the activity ends, including warm-ups, travel between venues and time spent waiting at fixtures.

Staff will not remove jewellery, including earrings, from pupils. Pupils remove their own items. Where a young child cannot do so, parents should ensure items are not worn to school on PE and swimming days.

Risks

Jewellery worn during physical activity can cause serious injury to the wearer and to others. The main risks are:

Risk	How it happens
Tearing and lacerations	Earrings or rings catch on clothing, equipment, nets or another child, tearing the ear lobe or finger
Finger injuries (degloving)	A ring catches on a hoop, fence, climbing frame or ball, stripping skin and tissue from the finger
Strangulation or neck injury	A necklace or chain is pulled or caught on equipment
Cuts and scratches to others	Bracelets, bangles, watches, rings and long nails strike another pupil during contact or close play
Eye and face injury	Hard hair clips, beads or hoops hit an opponent's face in contact games or dance
Swallowing or choking	Small items such as studs or butterflies come loose, especially in water or during gymnastics
Swelling	A finger or wrist swells after impact, so a ring or bangle cannot be removed
Infection	New piercings are knocked, or exposed to pool water before healing
Loss or damage	Items are lost in the pool, on the field or in changing rooms, causing distress and disputes

The level of risk varies by activity. It is highest in contact and invasion games (football, netball, rugby, basketball), gymnastics, swimming and water safety, and climbing. Teachers consider these risks when deciding whether an item can be made safe.

Religious and cultural exemptions

We respect a family's wish for a child to keep a religious or cultural item on during activity. An exemption allows the item to be worn, provided it is made safe. It never exempts the pupil from the activity itself.

How to request an exemption

1. Parents complete the exemption request form (Appendix) and return it to the class teacher.
2. The Head of PE reviews the request, discusses it with the family where needed, and agrees how the item will be made safe.
3. The agreement is recorded on the pupil's record and shared with PE, swimming and club staff.
4. The exemption lasts for the academic year and is renewed each September.

How items are made safe

Item	Expected arrangement
Kara (steel bangle)	Pushed high up the forearm and covered securely with a sweatband or tape so it cannot move
Sacred thread or cord (e.g. mauli, rakhi)	Worn tight to the wrist and covered with a sweatband; removed for swimming where the family agrees
Religious pendant, taweez or cross	Removed where possible; if not, worn on a short breakaway cord, tucked under clothing and secured
Sports hijab or head covering	Welcome in all activities. A close-fitting sports hijab without pins is required; swim hijabs and full-length swimwear are permitted
Other items	Agreed case by case with the Head of PE

Where, for a specific activity, the teacher judges that an item cannot be made safe, the pupil will take an adapted role (for example, a non-contact version, coaching, officiating or scoring) for that activity only. The teacher will explain this to the pupil sensitively and inform the family.

Parents are encouraged to consider items designed for sport, such as a plastic or fabric alternative to a metal kara, or a breakaway cord. This is a suggestion, never a requirement.

Procedures and responsibilities

Pupils will:

- remove all jewellery before PE, sport and swimming, and store it where their teacher directs;
- tell their teacher if they have an item they cannot remove;
- take responsibility for their own items.

Parents will:

- avoid sending jewellery to school on PE and swimming days, other than exempt religious items;
- make sure their child can remove any earrings independently, or that none are worn;
- arrange new piercings at the start of the summer holiday, so they are healed before term (around six weeks);
- provide their own tape or sweatbands if a new piercing or exempt item needs covering;
- complete the exemption form for any religious or cultural item.

Teachers, swimming instructors and coaches will:

- check every pupil for jewellery at the start of each session, before any activity;
- confirm that exempt or new-piercing items are safely covered;
- apply the policy consistently and sensitively;
- adapt a pupil's role where an item cannot be made safe, and record it;
- lead by example by not wearing jewellery that poses a risk while teaching.

New piercings. Where a pupil has a piercing less than six weeks old, a plain stud may be covered with tape for land-based activity. The pupil will not take part in swimming or contact activity in the water until the piercing has healed, and will take an adapted role instead. Parents must tell the class teacher in writing.

Storage and loss. Items are placed in a named container held by the class teacher. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost or damaged items and advises that valuable items stay at home.

Staff and visitors. Staff, coaches and volunteers leading activity must remove or make safe any jewellery or watches that could injure a pupil or themselves.

Fixtures and events. For DASSA and other external competitions, the host or governing-body rules apply where they are stricter than this policy. Staff will check pupils before departure.

Medical items and exceptions

Medical items are not jewellery and are never removed by staff without the family's agreement. They are managed through the pupil's individual healthcare plan.

Item	Arrangement
Medical alert bracelet or necklace	Worn and covered with a sweatband or tucked in; the school holds the medical information
Insulin pump or glucose monitor	Secured and protected as set out in the healthcare plan; swimming arrangements agreed with the family
Hearing aids and cochlear implant processors	Managed as advised by the family and specialist; removed for swimming unless waterproof
Prescribed glasses	Sports glasses or a secure strap are recommended; prescription goggles permitted for swimming

The school nurse/doctor and Head of PE agree these arrangements together.

Monitoring and Compliance

The Head of PE and Sport monitors how well this policy is applied and reports to the Senior Leadership Team each term. Monitoring includes:

- lesson drop-ins and learning walks in PE and swimming, checking that jewellery checks happen before activity;
- a review of accident and incident records for any injury linked to jewellery;
- a check that every exemption is recorded, current and known to the staff who need it;
- feedback from pupils, parents, staff and swimming providers;
- any concerns or complaints raised with the school.

Any jewellery-related injury is recorded and investigated under the Health and Safety Policy, and the findings inform the next review.

The policy is reviewed every year by the PE Lead and the Principal, or sooner if there is a significant incident, a change in afPE guidance, or new KHDA or UAE regulations. Changes are shared with staff at the start of the year and with parents through the school communication channels and website.

Version Control Table

Policy Title: Jewellery in PE, Sports and Swimming Policy

Policy Owner: Deputy Headteacher

Last Approved By: Primary Leadership Team

Version Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Changes Made	Next Review Date
1.0	September 2026	PLT	Initial policy release	August 2028

Appendix A: Religious Jewellery Exemption Request

For parent to complete:

Pupil name	
Class	
Item worn	
Religious or cultural reason	
Can the item be removed for swimming? (Yes / No)	
Proposed way to make the item safe	
Parent or carer name	
Signature	
Date	

For school use only:

Agreed arrangement:	
Agreed by:	
Date:	
Review date:	