

SHARPS (NEEDLESTICK) INJURY POLICY

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SHARPS (NEEDLESTICK) INJURY POLICY

This policy has been developed in line with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance, the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002 (as amended 2004), and The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the SET Infection Control Policy [SET Infection Control Policy May 2026.docx](#)

1. PURPOSE

To minimise the risk of sharp or needlestick injuries and to ensure a clear, consistent response when incidents occur, including appropriate reporting, investigation and post-exposure management.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Boarding and day students
- Teaching and support staff
- Boarding staff, nurses, first aiders
- Cleaning, maintenance staff, contractors
- Visitors on school premises.

3. DEFINITIONS

Sharps / Needlestick injury:

Any injury where the skin is punctured or cut by a needle, lancet, scalpel blade, broken glass, or other sharp object that may be contaminated with blood or bodily fluids.

Blood-borne viruses (BBVs):

Viruses such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV, which may be transmitted through exposure to contaminated blood.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Guidance on Sharps and Needlestick Injuries [Managing the risk of needlestick or sharps injuries - HSE](#)

The school has a duty to assess risks, implement control measures, provide training, and ensure appropriate reporting to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The College will provide appropriate equipment, training and safe systems of work. The Medical Centre Team will manage sharps safely, maintain records and oversee post-exposure care. All staff must follow this policy and report incidents immediately according to Trust policy. Contractors must comply with College health and safety procedures.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT AND PREVENTION

Sharps risks will be identified through risk assessment and reviewed annually or following incidents. The College will identify and assess where sharps may be used or encountered (e.g. in the Medical Centre).

The school shall:

- Provide approved sharps disposal containers in the sickbay and designated areas
- Prohibit students from handling needles or sharps unless medically authorised
- Ensure trained personnel only administer injections or handle sharps

- Conduct regular safety training for staff (especially boarding and health staff)
- Ensure cleaning staff are trained in safe waste handling
- Maintain proper lighting and cleanliness in boarding areas.

7. SHARPS DISPOSAL

- Approved, puncture-resistant sharps containers will be provided where necessary.
- Sharps containers must:
 - Be clearly labelled
 - Not be overfilled
 - Be securely sealed and disposed of through approved medical waste services
- Students must not handle sharps unless medically required and supervised.

8. IMMEDIATE ACTION FOLLOWING A SHARPS INJURY

In the event of a needlestick injury:

1. **Do NOT panic**
2. Encourage bleeding gently (do not squeeze aggressively)
3. Wash the area immediately with soap and running water
4. Do NOT scrub, use antiseptics harshly, or apply bleach
5. Cover the wound with a clean, waterproof dressing
6. Report immediately to:
 - a. Designated first aider
 - b. School nursing team
 - c. Boarding Head of House/Deputy Head of House/SLT
7. Seek assessment and treatment from the nearest Emergency Department.

9. REPORTING AND RIDDOR

All sharps injuries must be recorded using the Trust online incident reporting system (Red form). The Health and Safety department at the Trust will keep a record of any accident which results in a reportable injury, disease, or dangerous occurrence as defined in the RIDDOR 2013 legislation (regulations 4, 5, 6 and 7).

Sharps injuries must be reported to HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) if:

- an employee is injured by a sharp known to be contaminated with a BBV, for example hepatitis B or C or HIV. This is reportable as a dangerous occurrence
- the employee receives a sharps injury and a BBV acquired by this route seroconverts. This is reportable as a disease
- if the injury itself is so severe that it must be reported

If the sharp is not contaminated with a BBV, or the source of the sharps injury cannot be traced, it is not reportable to HSE, unless the injury itself causes an over-7-day injury. If the employee develops a disease attributable to the injury, then it must be reported.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

All medical information and incident details will be treated as **strictly confidential**, in accordance with data protection and safeguarding requirements.

11. TRAINING

Training will be provided at induction and refreshed regularly for all relevant staff, covering prevention, disposal and incident response.

12. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or following significant incidents or changes in legislation.