DULWICH COLLEGE
FOUNDED 1619

SHARPS POLICY

Sharps

A "sharp" is an item which may puncture the skin, and which may be contaminated by blood or other bodily fluids. It includes medical instruments (not exhaustively), hypodermic needles, suture needles, scissors and scalpel blades. A "sharps injury" is one where a sharp contaminated with blood or other bodily fluid penetrates the skin.

Policy Statement

Dulwich College is committed to the safe use of any sharp object used in the Medical Centre or by the Medical Centre staff. This policy provides a clear framework to ensure safe practice when sharps are used so as to minimise any potential injury caused by contaminated sharps. The policy is applicable to all Medical Centre staff at all times and in all situations.

Practice and Procedures

- **Discarding:** Sharps are discarded directly and immediately into a sharp's container (readily available in the Medical Centre) which is collected by a specialist company on a regular basis. This includes scissors which are single use. Needles are not re-sheathed prior to disposal nor are they bent or broken prior to use or disposal. Sharps containers are kept out of the reach of young children who may be using the Medical Centre and once containers are two thirds full they are sealed, signed and stored in a designated, secure, locked place prior to collection.

- **Sharps Injuries:** Initially injuries are dealt with by making the wound bleed, cleaning the area well with soap and water and applying an occlusive dressing. Thereafter the source of the sharp is identified and appropriate advice sought from the College Medical Officer or the local Accident and Emergency Department.

Reporting of Sharps Injuries

Injuries are reported to the Health & Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). If any individual: (i) is injured by a sharp known to be contaminated with a blood-borne virus (BBV) e.g. hepatitis B or C or HIV, this is reported as a dangerous occurrence; and/or (ii) receives a sharps injury and a BBV is acquired by this route sero-converts, this is reported as a disease. If the injury itself is severe it is reported. If the sharp is not contaminated with a BBV or the source of the sharp's injury cannot be traced, it is not reported unless the injury itself causes an over-seven day injury. If the individual develops a disease attributable to the injury it is reported.

An accident form is completed and sent to the Chief Operating Officer who reports to the Health and Safety Committee as appropriate.

Policy Owner:	Deputy Master Co-curricular, Operations and Partnerships
Last Reviewed:	May 2026
Date of Next Review:	2027-28 (or earlier if required)