

# LAKESIDE SCHOOL

## Needles, Syringes and Sharp Objects Policy and Procedures

### Introduction

The hazards presented by hypodermic needles and syringes are no longer just a consideration for people in the medical profession. Unfortunately, these may be left lying around or hidden in unexpected locations, e.g. down backs of chairs, behind cupboards or in W.C's etc.

Contact with used syringes or needles may result in ill-health due to infection or illness. Puncture wounds from 'sharps' (i.e. needles and bladed devices such as scalpels, razors etc.) may cause wounds and bleeding which can make the employee susceptible to infections and viruses in the workplace.

To comply with Health and Safety legislation (1974) and thereby minimise the risk of injury to staff, pupils and visitors, Lakeside School will:

- Provide sharps bins for the safe disposal of vials
- Operate clear handling procedures for the disposal of drug related waste
- Ensure that training and information is provided for appropriate staff in relation to safe disposal of sharps or drug related waste.

It is possible when undertaking our duties within the school that you may come across discarded sharps. In such circumstances it is important for you to follow the advice detailed in the following procedures to ensure the safety of both yourself and others.

### Procedures

All staff with specific medical responsibilities, dealing with sharps should ensure they are familiar with procedural information supplied and have attended the diabetic nurse training session.

#### *Dealing with discarded sharps*

- Remember that you may find dangerous items and should be alert to the hazards they present
- If you find any dangerous items or suspect their presence in your work area, make sure that the area where you find the item is left as safe as possible and contact a senior manager immediately.

### *If you find a needle*

- Do not hide it
- Do not separate the needle from the syringe
- Do not put the cap back on the needle
- Do not play with the syringe or needle
- Do not put it in a dustbin, down the drain, down the WC or in a litter bin
- DO NOT ignore it – report it.

### *Needle stick injuries*

If you are injured by a discarded sharp:

- Do encourage the wound to bleed (this helps cleanse it). Do not suck the wound
- Do, if possible, wash the area with soap and water
- Do report to the Accident and Emergency Department at the nearest hospital or your own GP on the same day as the injury occurred
- Do ensure a senior manager is informed of the accident and that it is recorded

Remember that early treatment can prevent infections. DO NOT put yourself or others at risk.

### *Location of disposal points (sharps bins)*

A sharp bin is located:

- The school staff room
- Residential staff room

### *Procedure for Safe Handling and Disposal of Sharps*

If a sharp is found in the school grounds, follow the above procedures and it will be dealt with by a senior manager.

If dealing with a pupil as part of an every day procedure, i.e. a diabetic, all sharps MUST be disposed of safely by placing them into a correctly assembled container that conforms to British Standard 7320 immediately after use.

If you have been provided with a sharps kit, you must wear hand protection and use the pick up tools rather than making direct hand contact with the object. If necessary put the needle into a pot and transfer to the correct container AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Always give maximum concentration to the task in hand.

1. Needles should NEVER be re-sheathed and must NEVER be placed in a plastic bag. Sharps must not be left lying around.
2. The plastic sharps container must be assembled correctly and the lid should be secure.
3. On no account should the sharps container be left in a position that is readily accessible to pupils or visitors.
4. When not in use the lid must be closed.
5. When placing sharps into the container, ensure that all contents actually pass the plastic flap and enter the container.
6. Where possible dispose of any syringe and needle as a complete unit into the sharps container.
7. You must not press down sharps in the container to make more room and on no account attempt to remove sharps from the box.
8. When full the sharps box will be collected and replaced with an empty one by a recognised contractor.

**REMEMBER – TAKE NO RISKS.**