

NEEDLE STICK/SHARPS PROTOCOL POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain to parents/carers, students and staff the processes Richmond West Primary School will follow to safely manage a potential health and safety risk to everybody, particularly students from sharps such as used or discarded hypodermic needles.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, including casual relief staff and visitors and volunteers, and students.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Whilst our school will make every attempt to ensure sharps are safely managed, needle stick injuries remain possible. School staff at Richmond West Primary School must:

- be aware of the Department's needle disposal procedures and follow these procedures when disposing of needles in school grounds
- actively discourage students from picking up needles or syringes

Richmond West Primary School Schools has a Sharps/Biohazard container for contaminated waste for discarded needles, stored out of reach of staff, students and visitors. If an approved disposal container is not available a hard-wall container will be used. We do not use glass bottles.

Prevention measures

- At Richmond West Primary School, the school perimeter fence will be swept for needles and drug paraphernalia by the North Richmond Community Health Centre twice daily to minimise the risk of sharps being found by the school community.
- All staff will be provided with professional development as to the correct process for the collection and/or disposal of sharps/syringes, as well as how to respond to needle stick injuries.
- The curriculum for all students will include identification of sharps, dangers associated with sharps, and the correct protocols for storing and disposing of sharps.
- Regular updates and reminders for staff and students will be provided at least at the beginning of each term or as required.
- Students or staff members who use sharps for proper purposes (such as diabetics) must have an individual sharps management plan, agreed to by the principal.
- The school will make available safe and practical storage facilities for sharps in the first aid room.
- All staff members on yard duty will do a visual check of the perimeter of the playground area

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when they go on duty. If a sharp is found in the yard by a staff member or student, it should not be touched, and the person should send for assistance.

- Staff should always go to the sharp with a sharp's container, tongs and gloves rather than the sharp being taken to staff.
- A register of syringes and needles found on the school grounds will be kept at the office to monitor the amount and location of paraphernalia collected.

Management of Needle stick injuries

Any and all needle stick injuries will be managed in the following manner:

- Reassure the injured person.
- Ensure the needle is correctly disposed of in a small individual sharps container in case required for further analysis
- Encourage the wound to bleed.
- Flush the area with warm running water and soap, and pat dry with paper towel or similar.
- Cover the wound with a waterproof dressing.
- Contact the principal, who will contact the NRCH for assessment and treatment.
- If the injured person is a student, then contact parents immediately.
- Ensure the injured person is accompanied by an adult to the hospital or nearest doctor or medical facility as advised.
- Complete all usual Injury Report forms and Principal class to contact Emergency Management to log the incident.
- Maintain confidentiality as required.
- Principal to contact the Needle Stick Program 94189850 or North Richmond Health Centre 94189800 for sharps disposal – unless advice from the hospital is that the needle is required for analysis.
- Staff will be debriefed, and support provided

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related Policies

- Child Safety Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Yard Duty and Supervision Policy

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Syringe Disposals and Injuries](#)
- [Infectious Diseases](#)

Relevant legislation

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#)
- [WorkSafe Victoria First Aid in the Workplace — Compliance Code 2008](#)



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POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle, in response to any medical incident and/or if regulations change.

Policy last reviewed	February 2022
Approved by	Principal
Consultation	N/A
Next scheduled review date	February 2023