



## Sharps Protocol: Staff Overview and Actions

**1. Purpose:** To ensure the safe issue, use, storage and supervision of sharp instruments in all lessons, reducing the risk of injury, misuse or loss, and ensuring full accountability for all sharp-edged tools and instruments.

**2. Scope:** This protocol applies to:

- All curriculum and enrichment activities involving sharp instruments
- All sharp instruments and edged tools (e.g. lino cutters, paring knives, peelers etc)
- All students, staff and visitors.

**3. Legal and Policy Framework:** This protocol supports compliance with:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Trust Health & Safety Policy
- Subject Specialist guidance on sharp instruments e.g DATA.

### 4. Definitions

- **Sharp Instruments:** Any bladed or pointed tool capable of cutting or piercing
- **Issue Station:** Designated supervised area where sharp instruments are signed out/in
- **Sharps Register:** Physical or digital log used to track sharps allocation and return

### 5. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 5.1 Curriculum Cluster Leaders:

- Ensure this protocol is implemented and reviewed
- Maintain an up-to-date Sharps inventory
- Ensure staff training and induction

#### 5.2 Subject Teachers

- Conduct dynamic risk assessments each lesson
- Control issue and return of sharp instruments
- Maintain visual supervision at all times
- Complete and check sharps register at the start and end of every lesson.

#### 5.3 Teaching Assistants

- Conduct a daily sharps check at the beginning and end of every school day.
- Prepare, check and store sharp instruments securely
- Report damage, loss or concerns immediately

#### 5.4 Students

- Follow all Sharps safety instructions
- Use sharp instruments only when authorised
- Return sharp instruments as directed

### 6. Sharps Storage and Security

- All sharp instruments must be stored in a **locked cupboard, container or other suitable housing e.g Sharps block** when not in use

- Access to all sharps is restricted to authorised staff only – the teacher holds the responsibility for all sharps throughout every lesson.
- Keys/code held by teaching staff only.
- Sharps storage must not be left open or unattended.
- Sharp instruments must never be stored in student-accessible drawers

**7. Sharps Inventory:** A master inventory across the school site must be maintained, including:

- Item: type and size
- Unique ID or numbering system
- Quantity
- Condition
- Location

Inventory checks must take place:

- At least weekly, daily audits of items should be a routine and regular part of practice.
- Immediately after any reported loss

**8. Signing In and Out Procedure (Mandatory)**

**8.1 Pre-Lesson Preparation**

1. Teacher unlocks storage area.
2. Sharp instruments counted and checked for condition
3. Sharps Register placed at Issue Station

**8.2 Issue (Sign-Out)**

- Sharp instruments are issued **one at a time** by named staff, who will complete the sharps register.
- Students must:
  - State their name
  - Be allocated a specific number
  - Be recorded in the Sharps Register

The Sharps Register will record:

1. Date
2. Lesson/group
3. Student name
4. Sharps ID/number
5. Time issued
6. Staff initials
7. Condition of item based upon a visual check.

**8.3 During the Lesson**

- Teachers must ensure that no surplus or unissued sharps remain accessible at any time during the lesson. Any sharp instruments not in active use will be securely locked away and not left on benches or worktops.
- No walking around with sharp instruments unless directed
- When a student has finished using a sharp instrument for the lesson, it must be returned and signed back in.
- Immediate reporting of any drop, damage or injury

**8.4 Return (Sign-In)**

- Students return sharp instruments directly to staff
- Staff visually check:
  - Sharps present
  - Sharps undamaged

- Sharps clean

Sharps Register must record:

- Time returned
- Staff initials confirming return
- Confirmation of visual check and satisfactory condition.

### **8.5 End of Lesson**

- Staff count all sharp instruments
- Total returned must match total issued
- Sharp instruments locked away immediately
- Any discrepancy escalated immediately

### **9. Safe Use Rules (Student-Facing)**

Students must be explicitly taught and reminded of:

- Carry sharp instruments pointing down, blade to side (if moving under instruction)
- Always cut away from fingers and body
- Use claw grip to protect fingertips
- Never leave sharp instruments in sinks or under water
- Place Sharps flat on bench when not in use
- Never pass a Sharps directly hand-to-hand
- No horseplay or distraction when sharp instruments are out

Failure to follow rules will result in:

- Immediate removal of Sharps
- Consequences in line with behaviour policy

### **10. Adaptations in line with dynamic risk assessment to enable students to use sharps safely: where appropriate**

- Increased staff supervision
- Reduced Sharps size
- Use of safety sharp instruments
- Pre-cut ingredients
- Individual risk assessment

Decisions recorded on class on a page, and individual student risk assessment as appropriate.

### **11. Lost, Damaged or Missing Sharp instruments: If a Sharps is:**

#### **Missing**

- Immediate stop to lesson
- Full search of room
- Senior leader informed
- Incident logged
- Parents/carers informed if required

#### **Damaged**

- Removed from use immediately
- Tagged and stored separately
- Logged for repair or disposal

### **12. Injuries and First Aid**

- All cuts must be reported immediately
- First aid administered by trained staff

- Accident form completed where required
- Patterns of injury reviewed by H&S Lead

**13. Training and Induction:** All staff must receive:

- Annual sharps safety refresher led by the site team or suitable subject training and updates.
- Induction on this protocol as part of new staff induction.
- Relational strategies specific to practical lessons to support positive behaviours from all students.

**14. Monitoring and Review**

- Spot checks by DSL, SLT and Estates Team will be undertaken.
- Termly Sharps inventory audit
- Annual protocol review

**In summary:**

- Locked Sharps cupboard or cabinet
- Numbered sharp instruments
- Sharps blocks or blade guards
- Clearly marked Issue Station
- First aid kit in room
- Cut-resistant gloves (where appropriate)

**Documentation**

- Sharps Register (paper or digital)
- Master Sharps Inventory
- Individual risk assessment templates
- Accident/incident report forms

**Training Materials**

- Student Sharps safety posters
- Staff induction checklist
- Visual step-by-step sharps safety guide

**Disposal of all sharps must be done alongside a member of SLT and the Estates Team to ensure that records are kept up to date and accurate.**



