

Three Counties Academy Trust



Sharps Policy #SG53

Last amended 7th September 2026 (v1.1)

Policy lifespan: 3 years. Subject to annual compliance check. Next full review 19th March 2029.

Version history

Date	Version	Details	Actioned by	PDF to Websites	Word to Governor Hub
20.03.26	1.0	Formatted to house style and checked against model for updates	MF	✓	✓
07.09.26	1.1	Included summaries and general formatting updates	MF	✓	✓

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Trust Glossary

Policy Abbreviations and Acronyms

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
IHCP	Individual Health Care Plan
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
LA	Local Authority
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
NHS	National Health Service
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
TCAT	Three Counties Academy Trust

NB. Where the term “parent” or “parents” is used this includes those who act as carers or have parental responsibility.

NB. Staff roles noted within this policy may also include those staff performing that role in an ‘Acting’ capacity.

Statement of intent

Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT) is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for pupils, staff, visitors and contractors across all of our schools. TCAT recognises that the use, handling and disposal of sharps, including needles and other medical or laboratory instruments capable of causing injury, presents a potential risk of harm and infection if not properly managed. This policy sets out TCAT's commitment to ensuring that all sharps are used, stored and disposed of safely and in accordance with relevant legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated health and safety guidance.

TCAT will take all reasonably practicable steps to prevent sharps-related injuries by ensuring appropriate risk assessments are undertaken, suitable control measures are implemented, and staff receive appropriate training and guidance. Where pupils require the use of sharps for medical purposes, such as the administration of insulin, TCAT will ensure that clear procedures are in place to support their safe use and disposal.

All staff have a responsibility to follow the procedures outlined in this policy and to report any misuse of or unattended sharps immediately. Through effective management, training and monitoring, TCAT aims to minimise risk and ensure that sharps are handled safely and responsibly at all times across our schools.

Member, Trustee, Local Governor and Staff Summary

Purpose of the Policy

- Establishes a Trust-wide framework for the safe handling, storage, use and disposal of sharps across all TCAT schools
- Seeks to minimise the risk of injury, infection and accidental exposure associated with needles and other sharp instruments
- Supports the safe management of sharps used for pupil medical needs, educational activities and those unexpectedly found on school premises
- Promotes consistent practices through risk assessment, training, monitoring and clear reporting procedures

Governance and Strategic Assurance

- Members, Trustees and Local Governors should seek assurance that effective arrangements are in place for the safe management of sharps across all schools
- Ensure suitable policies, procedures, resources and equipment are available and implemented consistently
- Maintain oversight of compliance with health and safety legislation and good practice requirements
- Seek assurance that risk assessments, training programmes and incident reporting arrangements are operating effectively
- Monitor incidents, emerging risks and policy effectiveness to ensure continual improvement

Understanding Sharps Risks

- Sharps include any object capable of puncturing or cutting the skin and causing injury or infection
- Examples include medical needles, lancets, syringes, scalpels, broken glass, craft knives and discarded needles found on site
- Risks include physical injury, infection, exposure to blood-borne viruses and wider safeguarding concerns in some circumstances
- Schools must remain vigilant because sharps may arise through medical care, educational activities, maintenance work or items brought onto site

Leadership Responsibilities

- Ensure the policy is implemented effectively within the school and staff understand their responsibilities
- Provide appropriate training, guidance and resources to relevant staff
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken where sharps may be used or encountered
- Ensure approved sharps containers, retrieval equipment and disposal arrangements are available where required
- Oversee incident reporting, investigation and follow-up actions relating to sharps incidents or injuries

Safeguarding Considerations

- DSLs should be informed where sharps incidents create safeguarding concerns or indicate risks to pupils or staff
- Sharps-related incidents may be linked to self-harm, substance misuse, behaviour concerns or wider welfare issues
- Safeguarding concerns must be managed in line with safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance

Key Staff Responsibilities

- Follow all procedures relating to the safe handling, storage and disposal of sharps
- Report immediately any discovered sharp, unattended sharp, injury or near miss
- Ensure sharps used in pupil medical care are disposed of safely using approved sharps containers where this forms part of their role
- Take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of others where sharps may be present
- Understand the school's reporting and escalation procedures for sharps incidents and injuries

What Staff Must Not Do

- Handle sharps unless authorised and appropriately trained to do so
- Pick up discarded sharps without appropriate retrieval equipment and authorisation
- Place sharps into general waste or recycling bins
- Leave sharps unattended or accessible to pupils and visitors
- Bend, break, recap or manipulate needles after use
- Pass sharps directly from one person to another

Safe Storage and Disposal

- Sharps must be stored securely and protected from unauthorised access when not in use
- Approved sharps containers must be used immediately after sharps are used
- Containers must be correctly labelled, securely positioned and collected through authorised disposal arrangements
- Disposal arrangements must comply with health and safety and clinical waste requirements

Training and Awareness

- Training should be proportionate to staff responsibilities and the likelihood of encountering sharps
- Relevant staff should understand sharps risks, disposal procedures, retrieval processes and incident reporting requirements
- All staff should receive sufficient awareness training to know what action to take if a sharp is discovered

Sharps Injuries and Incident Response

- All sharps injuries must be treated as potentially serious and responded to immediately
- Appropriate first aid, medical advice and incident reporting procedures must be followed without delay
- Incidents should be recorded, investigated where appropriate and used to inform future risk reduction measures

Key Message

- Effective sharps management relies on vigilance, appropriate training, strict adherence to procedures and prompt reporting of concerns
- Robust governance oversight, leadership accountability and staff compliance help ensure that pupils, staff, visitors and contractors remain safe across all TCAT schools

Parent Summary

Keeping Children Safe

- TCAT schools are committed to providing a safe environment for pupils, staff and visitors by ensuring sharps are managed safely and responsibly at all times
- Sharps include items such as needles, lancets, syringes and other objects capable of causing injury if not handled correctly

Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs

- Some pupils may need to use sharps as part of a medical condition, for example insulin administration for diabetes
- Individual healthcare plans and risk assessments help ensure these pupils can access education safely whilst protecting the wellbeing of others
- Schools work closely with parents and healthcare professionals to put appropriate arrangements in place

Safe Storage and Disposal

- Sharps are stored securely and only accessible to authorised individuals where appropriate
- Used sharps are disposed of immediately in approved sharps containers and never placed in general waste bins
- Schools have procedures and equipment in place to safely remove and dispose of any discarded sharps found on site

Staff Training and Responsibilities

- Staff receive appropriate information, instruction and training so they understand how to respond safely if sharps are used or discovered on school premises
- Staff know how to report concerns, obtain assistance and follow established safety procedures

If a Sharps Incident Occurs

- Any sharps injury is treated seriously and responded to immediately
- Appropriate first aid, medical advice and incident reporting procedures are followed without delay

- Parents will be informed where an incident involves their child and appropriate support will be provided

Reassurance for Parents

- Robust risk assessments, staff training and clear procedures help minimise risks associated with sharps in school environments
- The safety, health and wellbeing of pupils remains the central priority in all decisions relating to the use, storage and disposal of sharps
- Parents can be reassured that schools have appropriate controls in place to manage sharps safely and respond effectively to any concerns or incidents

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance and good practice including, but not limited to, the following:

- [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)
- [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
- [Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations \(COSHH\) 2002 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations \(RIDDOR\) 2013](#)
- [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#)
- [Hazardous Waste \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2005](#)
- [The Health and Safety \(Sharp Instruments in Healthcare\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Department for Education guidance on 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions'](#)
- [UK Health Security Agency guidance on infection prevention and control in educational settings](#)
- [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\) guidance on the safe handling and disposal of sharps and prevention of needlestick injuries](#)

Where legislation has been passed or updated during the shelf life of this policy, we will always apply the latest version available irrespective of the version quoted here.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Behaviour Policy
- Bodily Fluids Risk Assessment
- Health and Safety Policy (HS1)
- First Aid Policy (HS2)
- Intimate Care Policy (SD4)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (SG1)
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (SG4)

Central TCAT policies have the policy number identified, e.g. "SG1". Where no policy number is identified this indicates the policy is a school specific policy available from an individual TCAT school's website.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board and where delegated, Local Governing Bodies are responsible for:

- Ensuring that TCAT has an appropriate policy and procedures in place for the safe handling, use and disposal of sharps across all TCAT schools and settings
- Providing strategic oversight of health and safety arrangements relating to sharps management, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and guidance
- Ensuring adequate resources are made available to implement this policy effectively, including appropriate equipment, training and safe disposal arrangements
- Seeking assurance that suitable risk assessments and control measures are in place in schools where sharps may be used or encountered
- Ensuring that appropriate systems are in place for the reporting, investigation and monitoring of sharps-related incidents
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the policy and ensure that it is updated in line with changes in legislation, guidance or operational practice

The CEO working with the CFO is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Sharps Policy is implemented consistently across all schools and that appropriate procedures are in place for the safe handling, storage and disposal of sharps
- Ensuring that Executive Headteachers, Headteachers and Heads of School understand their responsibilities and are supported in implementing safe working practices relating to sharps
- Ensuring that appropriate training, guidance and resources are available to staff who may encounter or handle sharps as part of their role
- Overseeing arrangements for risk assessment, incident reporting and investigation relating to sharps across the Trust
- Ensuring that suitable clinical waste disposal arrangements are in place and that schools comply with relevant health and safety requirements
- Monitoring compliance with the policy and report significant risks, incidents or areas of concern to the Trust Board where appropriate

Executive Headteachers, Headteachers and where delegated, Heads of School are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Sharps Policy is implemented effectively within their school and that their staff are aware of and follow the procedures for the safe handling and disposal of sharps
- Ensuring that appropriate training, guidance and resources are available to their staff who may encounter or handle sharps as part of their role
- Ensuring that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken where sharps may be used or encountered, including where pupils require the use of sharps for medical purposes
- Ensuring that suitable equipment, including approved sharps containers and protective equipment where required, is available and used appropriately
- Ensuring that all sharps-related misuse, unattended sharps or injuries are reported promptly and managed in accordance with TCAT's health and safety and incident reporting procedures
- Monitoring practice within their school to ensure that sharps are handled and disposed of safely and that any concerns are addressed promptly
- Overseeing arrangements for risk assessment, incident reporting and investigation relating to sharps across their school

DSLs will:

- Be informed of any incidents involving sharps where there is a potential safeguarding concern, including where a sharp instrument is brought onto site in circumstances that may indicate risk to pupils or staff
- Work with their Executive Headteacher, Headteacher and/or Head of School and relevant staff where a sharps-related incident raises concerns about pupil welfare, behaviour, substance misuse or self-harm
- Ensure that any safeguarding concerns arising from the discovery or misuse of sharps are managed in line with TCAT's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Liaise with external agencies where appropriate if a sharps-related incident forms part of a wider safeguarding concern

SENCO's will:

- Work with their Executive Headteacher, Headteacher and/or Head of School, medical professionals and relevant staff to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities who require the use of sharps as part of their medical care (e.g. insulin administration for diabetes)

- Contribute to the development and review of individual healthcare plans or risk assessments where a pupil's medical condition requires the use of sharps in school
- Ensure that staff supporting pupils with additional needs are aware of and understand the procedures for the safe use, handling and disposal of sharps where this forms part of a pupil's care
- Support effective communication with parents, carers and relevant health professionals to ensure that pupils requiring the use of sharps can access education safely and appropriately
- Work with the safeguarding and pastoral teams where the use or possession of sharps by a pupil may indicate wider welfare or support needs

The Trust Estate Manager, supported by Site Staff will:

- Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place across TCAT sites for the safe storage, handling and disposal of sharps, including the provision and maintenance of approved sharps containers where required
- Ensure that suitable procedures are in place for the safe management and disposal of sharps discovered on school premises, including the use of appropriate equipment and personal protective equipment where necessary
- Ensure that sharps containers are collected, stored and disposed of through authorised clinical waste disposal services in accordance with relevant legislation and TCAT procedures
- Support schools in maintaining safe environments by responding appropriately to reports of discarded sharps on school grounds and ensuring they are removed and disposed of safely
- Ensure that site staff are aware of and follow safe procedures when dealing with sharps and that they receive appropriate information and training where this may form part of their duties
- Report any sharps-related incidents, hazards or concerns to the Headteacher/Head of School or the CFO in line with health and safety reporting procedures

All staff are responsible for:

- Following the procedures outlined in this policy and any related guidance regarding the safe handling, use and disposal of sharps
- Not handling sharps unless they have been authorised and trained to do so as part of their role
- Reporting immediately to the Headteacher/Head of School, First Aid Lead or available Site Staff if a sharp is discovered on school premises
- Ensuring that sharps used as part of a pupil's medical care are disposed of safely in approved sharps containers where this forms part of their duties

- Taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others when working in environments where sharps may be present
- Reporting any sharps-related incidents, including injuries or near misses, in accordance with the TCAT's health and safety and incident reporting procedures

Parents will:

- Inform the school where their child has a medical condition that requires the use of sharps (e.g. insulin injections) and provide relevant medical information to support safe arrangements in school
- Work with TCAT and the school to ensure that appropriate individual healthcare plans and risk assessments are in place where the use of sharps is required
- Provide necessary medical equipment and supplies, including sharps where appropriate, ensuring they are clearly labelled and suitable for use in school
- Ensure that pupils who are able to self-administer medication involving sharps understand the importance of safe use and disposal in accordance with school procedures
- Support the school in ensuring that used sharps are disposed of appropriately and that any relevant medical advice from healthcare professionals is shared with the school
- Inform the school of any changes to their child's medical needs or treatment that may affect the use of sharps during the school day

Pupils will:

- Follow instructions provided by staff regarding the safe use and disposal of sharps where this forms part of their medical care
- Use sharps only where this has been agreed as part of an individual healthcare plan or medical arrangement within school
- Dispose of used sharps safely in the designated sharps container where they are able and authorised to do so
- Not handle or touch any sharp object found on school premises and report it immediately to a member of staff
- Take reasonable care to ensure that their actions do not place themselves or others at risk where sharps are used as part of their medical needs
- Inform a member of staff immediately if a sharp is lost, damaged or if an injury occurs

3. Definition

For the purposes of this policy, sharps are defined as any object or instrument that is capable of puncturing or cutting the skin and which may therefore present a risk of injury or infection if not handled and disposed of safely. In a school setting, sharps may arise from medical needs, educational activities, site maintenance or items brought onto school premises.

Sharps that may reasonably be encountered within a school environment include, but are not limited to:

- Medical needles used for the administration of medication (e.g. insulin injections)
- Lancets used for blood glucose monitoring
- Pre-filled injection pens or devices used for medical treatment
- Used or discarded needles discovered on school premises
- Syringes and associated injection equipment
- EpiPen trainers or medical devices containing needles where applicable
- Broken glass, including laboratory glassware or glass from damaged fixtures
- Laboratory needles or dissecting equipment used in science lessons
- Scalpels or similar instruments used in educational settings where applicable
- Craft knives or safety knives used in design and technology activities
- Razor blades or similar sharp tools used in site maintenance or cleaning activities
- Sharp fragments of metal, plastic or other materials capable of causing puncture wounds

Any object capable of causing a puncture or laceration injury should be treated as a sharp and managed in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

4. Safe storage and use

TCAT recognises that the safe storage and use of sharps is essential in reducing the risk of injury, infection or accidental exposure to blood-borne viruses. Sharps should only be present in schools where their use is necessary, for example to support pupils with specific medical conditions or as part of approved educational activities. Wherever possible, the use of sharps should be minimised, and appropriate risk assessments should be undertaken.

Sharps must only be used by individuals who are authorised and competent to do so. In most cases within a school setting this will relate to pupils who require sharps as part of their medical care, or staff supervising educational activities where sharp instruments are required. Staff must ensure that pupils who are permitted to use sharps do so in accordance with agreed individual healthcare plans or risk assessments and under appropriate supervision where required.

All sharps must be stored securely when not in use. Where sharps are used for medical purposes, they should be kept in a clearly labelled container or medical kit and stored in a safe location that prevents unauthorised access. Where pupils require regular access to sharps for self-administration of medication, appropriate arrangements should be agreed within their individual healthcare plan to ensure safe access while maintaining safety for others.

Sharps should never be left unattended in classrooms, medical rooms or other areas accessible to pupils or visitors. Used sharps must never be passed directly from one person to another and must not be recapped, bent or otherwise manipulated after use. Immediately following use, sharps must be disposed of in an approved sharps container.

Staff must remain vigilant to the potential presence of sharps within the school environment. If a sharp object is discovered on school premises, it must not be handled unless the individual is trained and authorised to do so. Instead, the matter should be reported immediately to site staff or the appropriate member of the school leadership team so that it can be safely removed and disposed of in accordance with TCAT's procedures.

Through appropriate supervision, secure storage and clear procedures for use, TCAT aims to minimise risks associated with sharps and ensure the safety of pupils, staff and visitors at all times.

5. Sharps containers and retrieval kits

Appropriate equipment must be available within each TCAT school to support the safe containment, handling and disposal of sharps. This includes the provision of approved sharps containers for the disposal of used sharps and the availability of retrieval equipment for the safe collection of discarded sharps discovered on school premises.

Sharps Containers

Sharps containers must be used for the disposal of any sharp instrument that has been used for medical purposes, or which otherwise presents a risk of injury or contamination. Containers must be compliant with recognised safety standards for clinical sharps disposal and must be suitable for the type of sharps being used.

Sharps containers must:

- Be rigid, puncture-resistant and leak-proof
- Have a secure lid and clearly marked fill line
- Be clearly labelled and easily identifiable as a sharps container
- Be located in areas where sharps are used, such as medical or first aid rooms
- Be positioned safely to prevent accidental contact or unauthorised access by pupils

Used sharps must be placed directly into a sharps container immediately after use. Sharps must never be left unattended, placed in general waste bins or disposed of in any container that is not specifically designed for sharps.

Sharps containers must not be filled beyond the recommended fill line. Once a container reaches this level it must be sealed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and removed for disposal with an authorised clinical waste contractor.

Where sharps are used as part of a pupil's medical care, suitable sharps containers must be provided within the designated medical area and arrangements for their safe use and disposal must be outlined within the pupil's individual healthcare plan.

Sharps Retrieval Kits

TCAT schools will also have access to appropriate equipment for the safe retrieval of sharps that may be discovered on school premises, such as discarded needles or other sharp objects. Retrieval kits should normally be held by site staff or other designated personnel and should only be used by individuals who have received appropriate instruction.

A sharps retrieval kit should typically include:

- Protective gloves suitable for handling contaminated materials
- Long-handled litter pickers or forceps to allow sharps to be handled without direct contact
- A suitable sharps container for immediate disposal
- Additional protective equipment where required (e.g. disposable apron)

If a sharp object is discovered on school grounds, staff must not attempt to handle it unless they are authorised and have access to appropriate retrieval equipment. Instead, the matter must be reported immediately to site staff or another designated responsible person.

When retrieving a sharp object, staff must use the retrieval tool to pick up the item and place it directly into the sharps container without handling it by hand. Once the sharp has been safely contained, the container must be secured and stored safely until it can be collected and disposed of through the approved clinical waste disposal process.

Through the provision of appropriate containers and retrieval equipment, TCAT seeks to ensure that sharps can be managed safely and effectively across all school sites.

6. Location

The location of this equipment should be carefully considered to ensure it is readily accessible to authorised staff while preventing unauthorised access by pupils or visitors.

Sharps Containers

Sharps containers should be located in areas where sharps are most likely to be used or required for medical purposes. Within a school setting this will typically include:

- The school medical room or first aid room
- Areas where pupils with identified medical needs may administer medication involving sharps, where this forms part of an agreed individual healthcare plan
- Designated staff work areas where sharps may occasionally be required for medical or educational purposes

Sharps containers must be stored securely, positioned to prevent accidental contact and placed out of reach of pupils wherever possible. Containers must not be located in general classroom areas unless there is a clear and assessed need for their presence.

The location of sharps containers should be known to relevant staff, including first aiders and staff responsible for supporting pupils with medical needs. Headteachers/Heads of School should ensure that the locations are clearly identified and communicated as part of their school's health and safety arrangements.

Sharps Retrieval Kits

Sharps retrieval kits should normally be stored in a secure location as designated by the Trust Estate Manager that is accessible to authorised personnel responsible for site management and safety.

Retrieval kits must not be stored in locations where pupils can easily access them. Only authorised and appropriately instructed staff should access and use retrieval equipment.

TCAT schools should ensure that their site staff, senior leaders and other relevant staff are aware of the location of retrieval kits and the procedures to follow if a sharp object is discovered on their school's premises. Clear internal reporting arrangements should be in place to ensure that discarded sharps are dealt with promptly and safely.

7. Safe disposal

The Trust Estate Manager is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place across all TCAT sites for the safe collection, storage and disposal of sharps in accordance with relevant health and safety and clinical waste regulations.

All sharps must be disposed of immediately after use in an approved sharps container. Under no circumstances should sharps be placed in general waste bins, recycling containers or any other form of waste disposal. Sharps must not be handled directly by hand, bent, broken or recapped prior to disposal.

Sharps containers must be clearly labelled and used only for the disposal of sharps. Containers must not be filled beyond the manufacturer's recommended fill line. Once a container reaches this level, it must be sealed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and stored safely until collection.

The Trust Estate Manager will ensure that arrangements are in place with an authorised clinical waste disposal contractor for the safe removal and disposal of sealed sharps containers. This will include ensuring that collections take place at appropriate intervals and that all waste is handled and disposed of in accordance with relevant environmental and health and safety legislation.

Where sharps containers are sealed and awaiting collection, they must be stored in a secure location that prevents unauthorised access and minimises the risk of accidental contact. Site staff must notify the Trust Estate Manager when containers are ready for collection or replacement.

Records of sharps waste collections should be maintained as required to demonstrate compliance with relevant waste management and health and safety requirements.

8. Training

TCAT recognises that appropriate training and awareness are essential to ensure that sharps are handled, used and disposed of safely within our school environments. Training will be proportionate to the roles and responsibilities of staff and the likelihood that they may encounter sharps as part of their duties.

The CFO and Trust Estate Manager will ensure that suitable arrangements are in place across TCAT to provide information, instruction and training relating to the safe management of sharps where this is required.

Training should ensure that relevant staff understand:

- What constitutes a sharp and the potential risks associated with sharps injuries
- The procedures for the safe handling and disposal of sharps
- The correct use of sharps containers and retrieval equipment
- The actions to take if a sharp object is discovered on school premises
- The procedures for reporting sharps-related incidents, injuries or near misses

Specific training or instruction may be provided to staff whose roles are more likely to involve contact with sharps. This may include:

- First aid leads and staff supporting pupils with medical needs involving sharps
- Site staff responsible for retrieving discarded sharps from school premises
- Staff responsible for the storage or oversight of sharps containers

All other staff should receive appropriate awareness through health and safety briefings or induction so that they understand the basic procedures to follow if a sharp object is encountered.

Headteachers/Heads of School should ensure that relevant staff are aware of this policy and that training needs are reviewed periodically or following any sharps-related incident.

9. Preventative measures

TCAT is committed to reducing the risk of sharps-related injuries through the implementation of appropriate preventative measures. The presence and use of sharps within our school environments will be minimised wherever possible and managed through clear procedures, appropriate equipment and staff awareness.

Our schools must ensure that sharps are only present where there is a legitimate need, such as to support a pupil's medical condition or for approved educational activities. Where sharps are required, suitable risk assessments and individual healthcare plans must be in place to ensure that risks are identified and managed appropriately.

TCAT staff must remain vigilant to the potential presence of sharps on school premises, particularly in external areas such as playgrounds, car parks, hedgerows or public access points. Where a sharp object is discovered, staff must follow the procedures outlined in this policy to ensure that it is managed safely.

The following preventative measures should be observed across all TCAT schools:

- Sharps must only be used where necessary and by authorised individuals
- Approved sharps containers must always be used for the disposal of sharps
- Sharps containers must be located and stored safely to prevent unauthorised access
- Sharps must be disposed of immediately after use and never left unattended
- Staff must report the presence of any discarded sharps on school premises immediately

Staff and pupils must not:

- Attempt to pick up or handle a sharp object with bare hands
- Place sharps in general waste bins or recycling containers
- Attempt to recap, bend, break or manipulate needles after use
- Pass sharps directly from one person to another
- Leave sharps unattended in classrooms, medical areas or other accessible locations
- Attempt to dispose of sharps without using an approved sharps container
- Attempt to retrieve discarded sharps unless authorised and equipped with the appropriate retrieval equipment

By following these preventative measures, TCAT aims to minimise the likelihood of sharps-related incidents and ensure a safe environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

10. Sharps inflicted injury procedure

A sharps injury, including a puncture wound from a needle or other sharp object, presents a potential risk of infection and must be treated seriously. Any sharps-related injury involving staff, pupils or visitors must be responded to promptly and in accordance with the TCAT's health and safety and incident reporting procedures.

If a sharps injury occurs, the following steps must be taken immediately:

1. Encourage the wound to bleed gently, but do not suck the wound
2. Wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and running water
3. Dry the wound and cover it with a clean waterproof dressing
4. Seek medical advice as soon as possible, particularly where the sharp may have been contaminated. This may include contacting NHS 111, attending a GP surgery, or attending an accident and emergency department where advised
5. Inform the Headteacher/Head of School or a senior member of staff immediately

Where the injury involves a member of staff, the incident must be reported in accordance with the TCAT's health and safety reporting procedures. The incident should be recorded and investigated where appropriate to identify any further control measures that may be required.

Where the injury involves a pupil, parents or carers must be informed as soon as practicable and appropriate medical advice sought.

The sharp object involved in the injury should not be handled unless it can be safely contained using appropriate retrieval equipment. Where possible, it should be placed in an approved sharps container for safe disposal.

The Headteacher/Head of School must ensure that the incident is recorded and, where appropriate, reported in accordance with the TCAT's incident reporting procedures and relevant statutory reporting requirements. Advice should be sought from the Trust Estate Manager where required.

Support should be provided to any individual affected by a sharps injury and appropriate follow-up actions should be taken where medical professionals recommend further monitoring or treatment.

Consideration will be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations. If little or no information is given during the assessment prior to a home visit, the visit should not be made alone.

11. Risk assessment

TCAT recognises the importance of identifying and managing risks associated with the presence and use of sharps within school environments. Appropriate risk assessments must therefore be undertaken where there is a foreseeable risk that sharps may be used or encountered.

Risk assessments should consider situations where sharps may be required for legitimate purposes, such as supporting pupils with medical conditions, or where sharps may be encountered unexpectedly on school premises. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that suitable control measures are in place to minimise the risk of injury, infection or accidental exposure.

Risk assessments should be undertaken by the Headteacher/Head of School or a delegated competent person and should take account of:

- The circumstances in which sharps may be used or encountered within the school
- The individuals who may be required to use, handle or dispose of sharps
- The availability and location of appropriate sharps containers and retrieval equipment
- The arrangements for safe storage, use and disposal of sharps
- The training or instruction required for relevant staff
- The procedures to follow in the event of a sharps-related incident or injury

Where a pupil requires the use of sharps as part of their medical care, the risks should be addressed within the pupil's individual healthcare plan and any associated risk assessment.

Risk assessments should be reviewed periodically and updated where there are changes to circumstances, following a sharps-related incident, or where new risks are identified.

Monitoring and review

Lifespan of Policy: 3 Years

At any point this policy is updated or fully reviewed, it will be updated on the main TCAT website and will automatically update on all TCAT school websites simultaneously.

Where an annual check or other check results in minor changes, the Version History will be reviewed and updated with a change in the number following the decimal point, for example, v1.1 ⇒ v1.2. Where the policy is reviewed in full, then the number before the decimal point will change and reset, for example v1.4 ⇒ v2.0.

Any changes made by the CEO in collaboration with the Board Appointed Trustee will be passed to the Trust Board for ratification and subsequently be notified to Clerks to Local Governing Bodies and Headteachers/Heads of School.

The next scheduled full review date for this policy is 19th March 2029.

Date approved by the Board Appointed Trustee: 20th March 2026.

To be ratified and recorded in the minutes at the first Trust Board Meeting after 20th March 2026.

Trust Glossary

AA	Admissions Authority	H&S	Health and Safety
AAI	Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epi Pen)	HoS	Head of School
ACM	Asbestos Containing Materials	HSE	Health and Safety Executive
AHT	Assistant Headteacher	ICO	Information Commissioners Office
AIR	Attendance Intervention Reviews	IDSR	Inspection Data Summary Report
APDR	Assess Plan Do Review Cycle	IHP	Individual Healthcare Plan
APIs	Application Programming Interfaces	IRMS	Information and Records Management Society
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition	IWF	Internet Watch Foundation
ASP	Analyse School Performance	KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
ATH	Academy Trust Handbook	KS1/2/3/4	Key Stage 1/2/3/4
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds	LAC	Looked After Child
BAT	Board Appointed Trustee	LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
BCP	Business Continuity Plan	LGB	Local Governing Body
BFR	Budget Forecast Return	LLC	Low-Level Concerns
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	LSA	Learning Support Assistants
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
CIF	Condition Improvement Fund	MAT	Multi-Academy Trust

CIN	Child in Need	MFA	Multi-Factor Authentication
CLA	Children Looked After	MFL	Modern Foreign Language
CMIE	Child Missing in Education	NCSC	National Cyber Security Centre
COO	Chief Operating Officer	NoV	Note of Visit
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health	NPQ	National Professional Qualifications
CP	Child Protection	PA	Persistent Absence
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	PAN	Published Admission Number
CPOMS	Child Protection Online Management System	PECR	Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations
CSCS	Children's Social Care Services	PEP	Personal Education Plan
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	PEEP	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
CTIRU	Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit	PEx	Permanent Exclusion
CWD	Children with Disabilities	PP	Pupil Premium
CYPMHS	Children and Young People's Mental Health Services	PPG	Pupil Premium Grant
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service	PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
DfE	Department for Education	PTFA	Parent, Teacher and Friends Association
DHT	Deputy Headteacher	QA	Quality Assurance

DSE	Display Screen Equipment	RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	RHE	Relationships and Health Education
DPO	Data Protection Officer	RPA	Risk Protection Arrangement
EAL	English as an Additional Language	RSHE	Relationships, Sex and Health Education
ECT	Early Career Teacher	SA	Severely Absent
EDIB	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging	SALT	Speech and Language Therapist
EHA	Early Help Assessment	SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
EHENA	Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment	SBM	School Business Manager
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan	SCC	Standard Contractual Clause
EHE	Elective Home Education	SCITT	School-Centred Initial Teacher Training
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant	SCR	Single Central Record
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	SDP	School Development Plan
EVC	Educational Visit Coordinator	SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
EWOSSE	Education Welfare and Safeguarding Support Officer	SEF	Self-Evaluation Form
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage	SEMH	Social, Emotional, and Mental Health
FBV	Fundamental British Values	SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
FFT	Fischer Family Trust	SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	SIP	School Improvement Partner
FGMPO	FGM Protection Order	SLA	Service Level Agreement
FOI	Freedom of Information	SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
FSM	Free School Meals	SLT	Senior Leadership Team
FTS	Find a Tender Service	SPOC	Single Point of Contact
GAG	General Annual Grant	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation	TA	Teaching Assistant
GIAS	Get Information about Schools	TAC	Team Around the Child
HASH	Herefordshire Association of Secondary Heads	TCAT	Three Counties Academy Trust
HBA	Honour Based Abuse	TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)
HR	Human Resources	VSH	Virtual School Headteacher