

## Hazardous and Sharp Objects Policy

### **Definition :**

The Hazardous and sharp objects policy can be defined as the policy that lays down the guidelines which emphasizes the importance of safeguarding the children and protecting them from any kind of physical harm by eliminating hazardous or sharp objects from the environment.

The Early Years Learning Framework and the various state and kindergarten guidelines emphasize the importance of the physical environment in children's learning. According to these documents, children's capacity to understand and respect the social and natural environments is fostered in those environments where children can explore and make choices, including those that challenge their physical capabilities. Further, their competence, confidence and independence are supported.

Young children, however, have limited understanding of the potential dangers of certain products, plants and objects in the environment and must rely on adults to ensure the environment is safe for them.

### **Policy:**

This Policy outlines the precautions the School takes to ensure potentially dangerous products, plants and objects are inaccessible to children, and the plans it has in place in the unlikely event of a child having contact with one of these items.

### **Strategies and Practices**

1. During their orientation, all staff are made aware of the need to strictly adhere to the contents of this Policy, and the Policy is discussed during team meetings, at staff appraisals and as and when required.
2. The Nursery School maintains an up-to-date list of all chemicals and cleaning agents used in the School.
3. All potentially hazardous materials are kept in cupboards beyond the reach of children when not being used. Only frequently used items are stored in the rooms that children access.
4. Clear warning signs are displayed wherever potentially hazardous materials are stored. As part of the program, educators discuss with the children various safety issues relating to hazardous materials, poisonous plants and other dangers such as vermin.
5. Wherever possible, hazardous products are kept in their original labeled container. When decanted, the alternative container is clearly labeled with the product name as written on the supplier's label, and the date of decanting. Staff check all labels regularly for legibility.
6. When using any hazardous products, all staff follow the instructions on the labels. Staff members who cannot understand the instructions seek guidance from other staff.
7. Hazardous products and chemicals are disposed of in strict accordance with the instructions on the labels.
8. Staff conduct daily safety checks of the building and outdoor play areas for foreign objects, vermin, sharps, possible harmful plants or damaged equipment.

9. The Nursery is treated by a pest controller licensed by the relevant state health authority, as part of a regular maintenance schedule. This is always carried out during school holiday time, when no children are present at the Nursery.
10. Natural cleaning products are used wherever their use does not compromise hygiene. Only warm soapy water and non-toxic, natural products are used for cleaning when children are present.
11. The Nurseries Administration of Medication Policy contains guidelines for parents when bringing medications into the Nursery, and for the staff handling and storing these medications.
12. Any item brought into the Nursery is checked by educators to ensure it does not pose any danger to children, and any identified risk discussed with the family to ensure they are aware of the danger and why the item cannot be left at the Nursery.
13. Safety plugs are fitted to all power points. Electrical appliances are inaccessible to children. All electrical appliances are appropriately 'tested and tagged' annually.
14. Parents are encouraged to use alternatives to plastic wrap when packing children's lunches. Should any child's lunch be wrapped in plastic, staff ensure the wrapping is disposed of and inaccessible to children.
15. The Service minimizes the use of plastic bags, and these are stored inaccessible to children. When used for soiled clothing, the bags are kept in a container out of reach of children.
16. In the event of a sharp/dangerous object such as a razor or knife blade or broken glass being found at the Nursery School, the item must be disposed of .

#### **Responsibilities of parents**

1. To follow the Service's Administration of Medication Policy at all times. In particular, to ensure medication is never left in children's bags but handed directly to educators.
2. To refer to educators all play items being brought into the Service.

#### **Children must be adequately supervised at all times**

Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazard likely to cause injury . Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities and practiced and implemented . It is ensured that premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

### **Safe Disposal Of Medical Sharps:**

Sharps are needles, lancets, blades (such as scalpels) and other medical instruments that are necessary for carrying out healthcare work and can potentially cause a needlestick injury which may cause transmission of various human infections (hepatitis, HIV etc) by cutting or pricking the skin.

Syringes and needles are often used in the School Clinic in order to check blood sugar levels, administer insulin and provide immunization to school children. Also, the medicine glass bottles come under the definition of “sharps”. The proper disposal of this medical waste is crucial to minimize the risk of human infection.

**Use Yellow bin (biohazardous medical waste):** Always dispose of the medical waste-including the empty medicine glass bottles in the yellow bin. All yellow bags to be stored in a medical waste cabin located outside the school main building to be collected by a Dubai Municipality/ Dubai Health Authority approved medical waste disposal contracted company.

**Placement of sharp box:** A Dubai Municipality approved, biohazardous, rigid, leak proof and sealable sharp container should be placed inside a sharp box, which should be wall mounted at eye level out of the reach of children. The opening of sharp container should be clearly visible

**Handling of sharps:** Always wear gloves when handling needles, syringes and lancets and **do not** purposefully bend, break or remove a needle tip from a syringe or recap / re-sheath needles or lancets. Never try to open a sharp container once sealed.

**Safe disposal of sharps after use:** The medical person using the sharp is responsible for its immediate proper disposal. Drop the sharp in the sharp box immediately after use, do not walk unnecessarily holding the sharp in hand and do not ask for a sharp item to be taken from you or to be disposed of by someone else.

**Sharp box expiry:** Always check the expiry date on the sharp box before opening it. Label the sharp box clearly with the date of first utilization, as well as the expiry date (three months from date of first usage) along with the signature of the medical personnel who opened it. Seal the sharp box and transfer it to medical waste cabin whenever one of the two following conditions is met:

-it is **filled 3/4th of its capacity** as indicated by the marking on the sharp container. Never overfill the sharp box beyond “FULL” marking on the sharp container.

-The **expiry date** has approached as per the opening date of the sharp container, irrespective of whether or not it has been used till 3/4th of its full capacity.

Seal the sharp container securely and transfer it to the medical waste cabin for proper disposal when any one of the above conditions is met.

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