

GREATER SHEPPARTON SECONDARY COLLEGE

PERSONAL HYGIENE POLICY

Approval Date:	*	Approved by:	
Review Cycle:		Next Review Date:	
Responsible for Review:		Initial Endorsement Date:	

*This is a DET driven policy and is updated as required.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health of the school community and help students manage their own personal hygiene routines.

SUMMARY

- Schools have a responsibility to provide appropriate hand hygiene consumables (for example, soap, hand dryer) to support the personal hygiene routines of students.
- Strategies and actions that schools can undertake to help students manage their own personal hygiene routines include:
 - provision of soap and other hygiene consumables
 - hand hygiene education
 - menstrual hygiene management and education
 - personal hygiene care and learning plans.
- Schools must support all students to manage their own personal hygiene routines, including those with disability or those who identify as trans or gender diverse.
- Schools must ensure that students accessing tampons at school understand the importance of good menstrual hygiene to reduce associated health risks. This includes providing universal access to sanitary items when and where they are needed, soap and water to wash their hands, privacy to change products when required, and providing facilities to dispose of used sanitary products.
- Schools must provide accurate and age appropriate education on menstrual hygiene, including how poor menstrual hygiene can lead to toxic shock syndrome and various reproductive tract infections.

DETAILS

Provision of soap and other hygiene consumables

Schools have a responsibility to provide appropriate hand hygiene consumables to support the personal hygiene routines of students. Consumables include:

- soap, preferably in liquid form via a dispenser (for example, wall mounted)
- a method for hand drying (for example, paper towel or hand dryer)
- alcohol-based hand rub (where deemed appropriate).

Although washing hands with soap and warm water is the preferred method of hand hygiene, alcohol-based hand sanitisers are a useful substitute to hand washing and can be provided in classrooms or where running water is not available. Non-alcohol-based hand sanitisers are not recommended.

Menstrual hygiene management

Menstrual hygiene is a basic need for all students who menstruate. It is an important part of reproductive health. Having periods is a normal and healthy part of growing up, however taboos about menstruation mean that managing periods is often not talked about. Having a supply of sanitary pads and tampons available in school bathrooms can help normalise menstruation. Having open discussions about the safest way to use sanitary products can help to build positive social norms and help menstruating students manage their menstrual hygiene with dignity.

Free sanitary pads and tampons are available in all Victorian government schools. With the provision of sanitary items, schools must provide students with information about the safe use of sanitary items. Schools can refer to the [Guidance tab](#) for further information about their obligations and specific strategies to facilitate positive menstrual health.

As with other school environments, schools should engage with students to promote responsible behaviour and respect in school bathrooms. This includes respecting sanitary items such as soap, hand dryers, toilet paper, pads and tampons and sanitary disposal units.

Schools can refer to the [Guidance tab](#) for further advice and resources to support schools to prevent and respond to vandalism and misuse of sanitary items in school bathrooms.

Schools should ensure that all menstruating students, including those with disability or those who identify as trans or gender diverse, have access to free sanitary pads and tampons.

For trans and gender diverse students, access arrangements should be outlined in their student support plan – gender affirmation. For advice and information on supporting LGBTIQ students, refer to [LGBTIQ Student Support](#) or contact the [Safe Schools Unit](#).

For students with disability, schools may seek to understand a student's personal care requirements related to menstrual management via the [Toileting, Hygiene and Menstrual Management – Medical Advice Form](#).

Hand hygiene education

Schools can incorporate hand hygiene education into the curriculum and daily school activities to maximise opportunities for students to develop and maintain personal hygiene practices. Visit the [Clean Hands Hygiene Curriculum](#) for further information.

Hand hygiene must be routinely performed:

- before, during and after preparing food
- before and after eating
- before using pads and tampons
- after using the toilet
- after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- after touching animals or pets
- before and after treating a wound or cut
- after handling garbage.

Students requiring support for toileting, hygiene and menstrual hygiene management

For students with disability; toileting, hygiene and menstrual hygiene management arrangements can be outlined as required in their [Student Health Support Plan](#) to accommodate preference and medical advice.

Schools can create a [Personal Hygiene Learning Plan](#) that positively reinforces progress for students identified with a learning need in the step-by-step processes of:

- hand hygiene
- face washing, especially after eating
- blowing and wiping their noses
- toileting
- menstrual hygiene management.

Occupational health and safety

All personal hygiene management practices must reflect occupational health and safety standards for the school. Refer to the Department's policy on Environmental Hygiene for further information.

DEFINITIONS

Personal hygiene

Personal hygiene is the action, habit or practice of keeping oneself clean, especially as a means of maintaining good health. The practice of personal hygiene can also protect the health of others.

Hand hygiene

Hand hygiene is a general term referring to any action of hand cleansing. It includes hand washing with soap and water and the use of antimicrobial hand rubs (for example, alcohol-based hand rub).

Menstrual hygiene management

Menstrual hygiene management can be described as the practice of using clean materials to absorb/collect blood that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary when they have their menstrual period.

Management includes using soap and water for washing the body as required and having access to facilities to dispose of used sanitary products.