



Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021

Building on the existing voluntary provision in education and community settings funded by the Scottish Government since 2018/19, the Act will ensure that everyone in Scotland who menstruates (girls, transgender men and non-binary individuals) can have reasonably convenient access to period products, free of charge, as and when they are required. This includes visitors to Scotland for the duration of their stay. The Depute Rector (Pastoral Care) and Matrons are responsible for the management and review of this policy.

Scottish Government published Guidance¹ under section 5 of the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 and this policy gives regard to the Guidance in terms of exercising the functions of the Act.

Section 1 of the Act places a duty on Local Authorities to make period products obtainable free of charge for anyone who needs to use them. Section 2 of the Act places a duty on education providers to make period products obtainable free of charge on their premises for pupils during term time. Section 3 of the Act allows Scottish Ministers to specify public service bodies who have to make period products obtainable free of charge to people on their premises. No bodies have been so specified at the point of the initial publication of this Guidance. Hutchesons' Grammar School is committed to ensuring that sufficient period products will be available to meet pupil needs during term time while they are on the premises.

1. MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Sufficient products will be obtainable for free to meet pupil needs either while in Scotland or during term time while they are on the premises, in every building normally used by all pupils (girls, transgender males and non-binary individuals). Supplies will also be taken on all school trips taking place out of school.

There will be no judgement as to the need, no limit to the amount of products an individual can take, nor attempts to 'ration' products. Pupils will not need to provide a reason to access the products, above and beyond the fact that they menstruate.

However individual needs in terms of period products could vary considerably due to the reason for the need arising, including

- a) a period starting unexpectedly or forgetting to bring a product from home
- b) ongoing need due to low income
- c) ongoing need for another reason

www.gov.scot/publications/period-products-free-provision-scotland-act-2021-guidance-responsible-bodies-september-2021/

d) higher than average need due to a medical condition All of the above are valid reasons for needing to access free products. However, it may be that, following consultation, different arrangements are put in place to meet different needs, e.g. single products or bulk supply available in different places. Care will be taken to ensure that the frequency of restocking products is sufficient to meet demand. There is no requirement on the school to make period products obtainable for use outwith term time. Outwith term time, pupils will be able to access free period products under the arrangements put in place by their local authority. Pupils can check provision using an app such as The Period Products Locator. Further information can be found [here](#).





2. PARTICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Reasonable ease of access

Where and how free products can be obtained should be neither complex nor bureaucratic. As described in the Dignity section below, products will be freely accessible from places where individuals are comfortable doing so without having to ask for them, or justify why they need them or the amount that is needed. Products will be available in all female pupil toilets and accessible toilets in the Secondary school, and at the Sports' sites. In both the Primary and Secondary schools, Matron will keep products in the medical room. Any bulk requirements can be obtained from Matron without question or need of explanation.

Respect for Dignity

Period products will be obtainable in a way that respects the dignity of individuals obtaining them.

Pupils who need to access period products for free may still find this an embarrassing situation and any potential embarrassment will be minimised as much as possible. Therefore, the ways in which, and places where, products are made obtainable will consider the needs and wishes of users in relation to privacy and avoiding anxiety or embarrassment. Discreet packaging will be in place as much as possible in busier or multi-access locations.

As part of wider work to tackle the stigma around menstruation and period products, the school recognises the importance of normalisation and visibility. Offering a dignified response does not necessarily require hiding products away. Individuals having to ask someone for products; justify why they need them; or justify the amount that is needed would not generally be considered a dignified approach.

Reasonable Choice

The school is required to provide a reasonable choice of different period products to be available, although the full range of products does not have to be available in all locations -- this means in practice at least one type of tampon, sanitary towel and reusable product available. The provision of tampons in the Primary school will be reviewed regularly, and through consultation.

The environmental impact of single use period products is considerable and there is growing interest in reusable period products. Consideration will be given to making sustainable or plastic-free products available as part of the choice of products.

3. INCLUSION

Not everyone who menstruates identifies as female, therefore as part of ensuring a dignified approach, the school has arrangements in place to allow any individual who menstruates, including transgender men and non-binary individuals, to access products. All accessible toilets and the toilet in Matron's ante-room in the Secondary school will offer a selection of products.

4. CONSULTATION

The school is required to regularly to consult with individuals on the arrangements that should be put in place.





Consultation in schools must include pupils who may need to use products in the future so the consultation must be open to pupils who are not yet menstruating. In relation to primary schools this will be proportionate and need not include pupils in the very early years.

To ensure that the arrangements meet people's needs, the school will consult with individuals who may either

- a) need to use free products currently
- b) need to use products in the future

This will be open to those of any gender identity.

It would be acceptable for the school to seek feedback on existing voluntary provision and on any changes that people think are needed. Some specific issues must be covered in the consultation:

- where period products ought to be obtainable free of charge,
- the ways in which product users ought to be able to obtain period products free of charge, and,
- the types of period products which ought to be obtainable free of charge.

5. COMMUNICATION

The school is responsible for communicating information to the school community about the arrangements in place through which they can obtain free period products. The information that must be provided is:

- a) that period products are obtainable free of charge and
- b) how, where and when people can obtain free products.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

A number of risks have been identified by the school as relevant to our setting, and mitigations outlined:

Safety information

Where tampons are being supplied loose from their packaging (for example, single tampons available from a basket of products within a washroom) and therefore do not have the accompanying safety information leaflet that would be included in a box of tampons, for public health purposes, the school will provide that information to those accessing the products via posters and QR codes.

Important Information On Tampon Use

Tampons are associated with Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS). TSS is a rare but very serious illness that can develop rapidly in anyone. However, across the whole of the UK, there are only about 20 cases reported each year that are associated with people using tampons. TSS is so rare that most doctors will not come across TSS during their medical careers. Further information on TSS is available at www.tssis.com.

The communication of this risk will be managed at the site of collection, via posters/QR codes. Symptoms of TSS include: a sudden high fever usually over 39°C, vomiting, diarrhoea, muscle aches, a sun burn like rash, sore throat, dizziness and/or fainting, and severe flu-like feeling. Not all symptoms of TSS may occur simultaneously.



PERIOD PRODUCTS (FREE PROVISION) POLICY



Blood spillages in public facilities related to reusable products

Spillages can be managed in the usual way within the school community; cleaners are on site and can be alerted (directly or indirectly via other staff).

Product shelf –life

Matrons and the Depute Rector (Pastoral Care) will monitor the sell-by dates of products where relevant.

The Scottish Government Guidance published on 27th September 2021 can be accessed [here](#).

Policy Owner	Mrs G Clarke, Depute Rector, Mrs L Alexander, Mrs A Mustafa (Matrons)
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The Governors of Hutchesons' Educational Trust, Registered Charity Number SC002922, is the governing body of Hutchesons' Grammar School.

