

Reddish Vale Nursery School

Manual Handling Policy

As it is not possible to eliminate manual handling altogether, correct handling techniques must be followed to minimise risks of injury. A variety of injuries may result from poor manual handling and staff must be aware and adhere to the nursery's manual handling policy.

Preventing Injuries

As with other health and safety issues, the most effective method of prevention is to eliminate the hazard – in this case, to remove the need to carry out hazardous manual handling. For example, it may be possible to re-design the workplace so that items do not need to be moved from one area to another.

Where manual-handling tasks cannot be avoided, they must be assessed as part of a risk assessment. This involves examining the tasks and deciding what the risks associated with them are, and how these can be removed or reduced by adding control measures.

As part of a manual handling assessment the following will be considered:

- The tasks to be carried out
- The load to be moved
- The environment in which handling takes place
- The capability of the individual involved in the manual handling

A number of factors increase the risk of manual handling injuries, and these must be considered and controlled. The following paragraphs offer a number of suggestions.

Correct Lifting Procedure

Planning and Procedure

- Think about the task to be performed and plan the lift
- Consider what you will be lifting, where you will put it, how far you are going to move it and how you are going to get there
- Never attempt manual handling unless you have read the correct techniques and understood how to use them
- Ensure that you are capable of undertaking the task – people with health problems and pregnant women may be particularly at risk of injury
- Assess the size, weight and centre of gravity of the load, make sure that you maintain a firm grip and can see where you are going
- Remove any unnecessary packaging, this will make the job safer
- Reduce the size and weight of loads to make handling easier. This could involve suppliers packaging items into smaller consignments before delivery or unpacking packages before moving them
- Assess whether you can lift the load safely without help. If not, get help or use specialist moving equipment e.g. a trolley. Bear in mind that it may be too dangerous to attempt to lift some loads
- If more than one person is involved, plan the lift first and agree who will lead and give instructions
- Plan your route and remove any obstructions. Check for hazards such as uneven / slippery flooring
- Lighting must be adequate
- Control harmful loads – for instance, by covering sharp edges or by insulating hot containers
- Avoid lifting unsafe loads, such as damaged glass or badly packed chemicals
- Check whether you need any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and obtain the necessary items, if appropriate. Check the equipment before use and check that it fits you
- Ensure that you are wearing the correct clothing, avoid tight clothing and unsuitable footwear
- Consider a resting point before moving a heavy load or carrying something any distance

Position

- Stand in front of the load with your feet apart and your lead leg forward. Your weight must be even over both feet. Position yourself (or turn the load around) so that the heaviest part is next to you. If the load is too far away, move toward it or bring it nearer before starting the lift. Do not twist body to pick it up.

Lifting: Always lift using the correct procedure:

- Bend the knees slowly, keeping the back straight
- Tuck the chin in on the way down
- Lean slightly forward if necessary and get a good grip
- Keep musters level, without twisting or turning from the hips
- Try to grip with the hands around the base of the load
- Bring the load to waist height, keeping the lift as smooth as possible

Moving the load

- Move the feet, keeping the load close to the body
- Proceed carefully, making sure that you can see where you are going
- Lower the load, reversing the procedure for lifting
- Avoid crushing fingers or toes as you put the load down. Make sure that it has rested on a stable base
- Report any problems immediately, for example, strains and sprains. Where there are changes, for example the activity or the load, the task must be reassessed.

The task

- Carry the load close to the body, lifting and carrying at arm's length increases the risk of injury
- Avoid awkward movements such as stooping, reaching or twisting
- Ensure that the task is well designed and that procedures are followed
- Try never to lift from the floor or to above height. Limit the distances for carrying
- Minimise repetitive actions by re-designing or rotating tasks
- Ensure that there are adequate rest periods and breaks between tasks
- Plan ahead – use team work where the load is too heavy for one person

The Environment

- Ensure that the surroundings are safe. Flooring must be even and not slippery, lighting must be adequate, and the temperature and humidity must be suitable
- Remove any obstructions and ensure that the correct equipment is available

The Individual

- Never attempt manual handling unless you have been trained and given permission to do so
- Ensure that you are capable of undertaking the tasks – people with health problems and pregnant women may be particularly at risk of injury.

Lifting Children

- Remember lifting children is not the same as lifting an object, children move
- Use the above techniques when manoeuvring children, e.g. to change a child's nappy, but remember to take into account that the child may struggle or wriggle whilst on the move. If this happens stop, place the child back down and start again after using reassuring words to calm the child
- Encourage the child to hold onto you where possible, this will support you and the child whilst lifting
- Whenever possible encourage the child to use the integrated steps to access the changing table.

Staff have a responsibility to :-

- Adhere to guidance given.
- Follow agreed policies and procedures.
- Access relevant training.
- Alert Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of any situations that could lead to difficulties in safe practice involving manual handling.

Reddish Vale Governors and SLT will:-

- Ensure that the PPE equipment is available for use when required.
- Aids for lifting are provided e.g. trolleys.
- Staff are supported to attend relevant training.
- Carry out individual risk assessments as required.
- Ensure that organisational issues promote safe practice and procedure, for instance, that two people are available to lift heavier items.

Links to other policies, procedures & guidance:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Risk Assessments
- Human Resources
- Care & Control

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