



Manual Handling Policy

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Statement of intent

This policy is designed to outline the school's legal responsibilities with regard to manual handling. It sets out the processes in place to minimise any risks associated with manual handling at Fort Royal school. Full adherence with this policy will ensure legal compliance and will also reduce the risks of injury related to manual handling.

The guidelines in this document apply to school staff, pupils, visitors, contractors and volunteers. It applies to all activities both on and off school property, including school camps, excursions, and any other planned activities outside of the school grounds.

Introduction

Fort Royal is a Special School for pupils aged 4- 11 years with a wide range of SEND. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds and all children have an Education, Health and Care Plan. Many of our children and young people require handling and moving by various methods.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to describe our practice in Manual Handling and the principles upon which this is based.

The Senior Leadership team throughout this policy refers to, and includes the headteacher, school business manager, deputy headteachers and assistant head teacher.

Aims

Fort Royal School adopts the following key aims to prevent injury to staff, not only to the back, but to any part of the body.

- Ensure as far as reasonably practicable the health and safety of all employees
- Provide good quality training & information
- Safeguard against accidents
- Have a reporting procedure
- Promote and advocate working within the safe working load

1. Legal framework

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

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- The Provisions and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Senior leadership team will:

- Ensure that specific manual handling tasks are carried out by the most fit and healthy adults.
- Ensure that members of staff will not be at risk, in as far as is 'reasonably practicable' when performing tasks.
- Implement a systematic approach to manual handling, whereby everyone will be made aware of their individual roles and responsibilities.
- Be responsible for monitoring any control measures put in place to ensure they are reducing the risk of injury and being used correctly.
- Keep a central record of all manual handling reports.
- Ensure members of staff are informed and trained to take care of their own health, as well as the health of others.
- Ensure members of staff are informed and trained regarding manual handling tasks, in order to reduce any risks.
- Ensure that risk assessments are carried out before a manual handling task is completed.

Members of staff will:

- Ensure they do not undertake manual handling tasks if they have sustained recent injuries, e.g. hernias, back problems, heart conditions or other physical issues, or if there are any other concerns.
- Inform the senior leadership team of any physical health issues they have sustained as soon as possible to ensure risks can be mitigated.
- Carry out all manual handling tasks in line with the training they receive.
- Comply with relevant legislation and school policies.
- Ensure they report any damaged or broken equipment to the manual handling team.
- Ensure they have read and understood the physical management plan for individual pupils prior to carrying out any manual handling tasks.
- Ensure they have signed any physical management plans for pupils they are moving and handling on a regular basis.
- Inform the manual handling team of any changes to pupil needs to ensure physical management plans can be kept accurate and up to date

3. Definitions

According to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, manual handling is defined as “any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force.”

Manual handling extends to the force required to move or restrain any animate or inanimate object. It also includes any twisting, bending, stretching or other awkward posture you may get in whilst doing a task.

Manual handling can prove hazardous when it has the potential to cause a musculoskeletal disorder. This can be due to repetition of the action, the force and/or posture involved in the completion of a handling task, or a person’s ability to hold or grasp the particular item in a safe and balanced manner.

4. Risk management

The process for risk management is to avoid, assess and reduce any hazards.

The school will, as far as is practicable, reduce the need for members of staff to carry out any manual handling tasks that involve a risk of injury.

Where manual handling tasks are absolutely necessary and cannot be avoided, a risk assessment will be completed to identify the potential hazards.

Risk assessments will take account of:

- The nature of the load-weight, size, shape, ability to be firmly gripped, balance, and whether the object is animate or inanimate.
- The actions or postural requirements involved in the task, including reaching, leaning and lifting.
- The time, distance, duration and frequency of the task.
- The individual’s capacity for manual handling, including their age, skill, experience, physical health and strength.
- The environment and workplace conditions such as lighting, access, amount of free space and floor surface.
- Any obstacles or hazards present in the space where manual handling will occur.
- The work organisation at the time of manual handling, the presence of others, time restrictions and availability of others to assist.

Where manual handling involves assisting and/or moving a pupil, moving a pupil from a chair to a wheelchair, the staff member(s) involved will always refer to the pupil’s individual care plan to ensure that correct equipment and instructions are used. Moves will be planned in advance to ensure that any equipment needed is available and ready to use at all times.

The school will ensure that manual handling needs are considered in any refurbishment and construction plans.

Where possible, pregnant members of staff will not be assigned manual handling tasks. Where this is unavoidable, pregnant members of staff require risk assessments to be carried out for six months before and after childbirth, in order to ensure physical injury does not occur during manual handling procedures. Pregnant members of staff will not participate in any manual handling which causes them, or the business manager, any concern.

Once a risk assessment has been carried out, control measures to manage the relevant risks will be put in place. These will include:

- Changes to the workplace and systems of work.
- Provision of mechanical aids to reduce the risk of injury, along with training for the use of these.
- Training and education appropriate to the task.

Once control measures are in place, they will be monitored by the senior leadership team to ensure they are reducing the risk of injury and being used correctly.

Every stage of this process will be recorded and dates will be provided for each step. Timelines will be used to track the risk assessment process and provide deadlines for when processes are to be implemented.

Reports will be provided to all relevant members of staff and the senior leadership team will keep a central record of all the reports.

5. Risk reduction

Procedures will be followed to ensure risks are reduced as is reasonably practicable. Manual handling issues will be considered during the design, refurbishment, alteration and rearrangement of school spaces.

The health and wellbeing of all members of staff will be maintained and promoted by providing a safe working environment, specifically with regards to manual handling tasks.

Practical and workable solutions will be provided to improve the effectiveness of working practices.

Tasks requiring manual handling of any large or heavy items will be planned before any handling is attempted to ensure adequate space, equipment and personnel. Trolleys and other handling aids or hoists will be used wherever possible to move items.

6. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the senior leadership team.

All members of staff will be made aware of this policy.

The scheduled review date for this policy is **December 2025**.

