

Heart of the Forest Community Special School
Moving and Handling Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with safeguarding/child protection policy

Introduction

The school seeks to follow the practice and procedures laid out in the Local Authority Guidance on Manual Handling and Risk Assessment for Pupils with Physical Disabilities (Attached as an Appendix)

We recognise our responsibility both to provide curriculum access for all pupils in our setting and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our pupils and employees as far as is reasonably practicable. For pupils, we recognise the need to safeguard their safety and dignity and for staff, we recognise that the risk of injury needs to be eliminated or minimised.

Responsibilities and risk assessments

The overall responsibility lies with the Head Teacher and the Governing Body. There are two trained Manual Handling co-ordinators accessible to school who share operational responsibility for carrying out individual pupil Moving and Handling Risk Assessments in liaison with the class teams. All pupils who are not able to move independently must have an up to date assessment/Moving and Handling plan in place which will be regularly reviewed. The Occupational Therapist and/or Physiotherapist can provide additional advice if needed. Once completed it is the responsibility of all staff involved with the pupil to follow the assessment. If circumstances change it is the responsibility of the class team to inform the co-ordinators so that a new assessment can be completed. All staff are made aware of the policy and are responsible for its implementation within school and during offsite visits. They are responsible for informing SLT of any medical condition that may impact on their ability to carry out manual handling practices safely and an individual risk assessment must be carried out. This includes pregnancy. All staff are responsible for ensuring that they are wearing appropriate clothing and footwear that has closed top shoes when moving and handling.

Staff Training

The school co-ordinators have completed 'Patient Handling - Training the Trainer' which is a course approved and validated by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health in association with Abertay Training Ltd. This training equips them to provide manual handling training to all staff at the school. All staff working with pupils who are not able to move independently are required to undertake this school based training in order to lead on Moving and Handling within school. Untrained staff can support a trained individual. Both co-ordinator and staff training is up dated as required. A record is maintained of all staff who have undertaken this training.

Specialist Equipment

Specialist equipment is provided to support safe practice in moving and handling of pupils. Some equipment is purchased for general use in the school while other items are ordered for specific pupils. In either case equipment is purchased following recommendations from the appropriate medical professional. Equipment for individual pupils is approved and part funded by the LA with the school paying the first £300 of the cost. It is the responsibility of the staff to make sure that they know how to use the equipment properly before doing so. The school has a contract for the regular inspection and maintenance of its moving and handling equipment. If staff note a defect in equipment they should take it out of use and report this immediately to the co-ordinators or SLT.

Health and Safety

This policy links to the school's Health and Safety Policy and all staff are required to ensure that all health and safety issues are reported immediately and that any accidents or incidents resulting from manual handling practices are reported on the accident/incident/near miss form.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency evacuation of the building the manual handling guidance within the Fire Safety Policy is adhered to.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed by the Premises Committee of the Governing Body on a rolling programme. It will be reviewed within three years of

the last review date. The Governing Body, together with the Head teacher monitors the effectiveness of the policy.

This policy should also be reviewed if information comes to light regarding pupil, staff or school needs or if a reportable injury occurs.

Ratified on:

Chair of the Governing Body:

Appendix



GUIDANCE ON MANUAL HANDLING AND RISK ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO PUPILS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

This guidance suggests information on aspects of manual handling and risk assessments associated with pupils with physical disability that **must** be considered. It is intended to contribute to the development of safe inclusive practices and procedures within Gloucestershire schools and complement the Gloucestershire Policy for inclusion.

Pupils with physical disability may need physical assistance from an adult in order to actively participate in National Curriculum and whole school activities. It is crucial to consider the ways in which access to the school day will be achieved, for example, how the pupil will make transfers, use equipment or manage personal needs, alongside the adult support, which is necessary to facilitate these activities. Appropriate ongoing guidance to support safe manual handling should be developed.

What is Manual Handling?

Definition: "this is any activity that involves the use of bodily force in lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, supporting or otherwise moving a person or object."
Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 ,p.6

Things to remember:

When considering manual handling issues it is important to consider the child's needs; carer's/staff needs; school environment and the other pupils. The views of pupils (as far as is reasonably practicable), alongside parents and other professionals, e.g. paediatric physiotherapist or occupational therapist should be actively sought. These should be taken into account in developing safe manual handling practice which protects the health, safety and dignity of all those concerned.

What are the Manual Handling Regulations?

Under the **Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)**, the employer has an obligation to ensure the safety of all employees involved in manual handling activities. The subsequent introduction of the *Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992)* placed a more defined legal obligation to both employees and employers with regard to tasks involving moving and handling. The emphasis is always on the avoidance of manual handling activities unless an adequate risk assessment has been carried out and employees have had suitable training.

There is a legal requirement to:

- (a) avoid (where reasonably practicable) manual handling operations which involve a risk of injury;
- (b) reduce risks which cannot be avoided through the use of equipment, e.g. hoist or transfer belt, for handling operations which cannot be avoided;
- (c) make suitable and sufficient risk assessments of manual handling operations which cannot be avoided, and in this way avoid risk of injury;
- (d) implement measures to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest practicable level, e.g. these could include training, sharing of information;
- (e) review and monitor the arrangements regularly.

Issues to Consider:

1. Training and Support

Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff involved with a pupil with physical disability are trained in the basic principles of safe handling and moving. Training is available from a range of external providers (see Appendix A) or contact either the Advisory Teaching Service or Gloucestershire S, H and E (Safety, Health and Environment) Unit for information about local providers. Staff working regularly with pupils with physical disabilities must undertake initial training in manual handling.

The pupil's individual physiotherapist and/or occupational therapist may be able to advise on specific individual transfers. Additional advice may be sought via other professionals e.g. Access Officer or specialist equipment supplier, e.g. Nottingham Rehab.

Training should be reviewed regularly updated in response to pupil and staff's needs. A recommended time frame is once every 3 years.

2. What are the Employer's Duties?

These are clearly defined under the Health and Safety Regulations.

They are:

- to provide a safe place of work, including safe access and egress (exits)
- to provide and maintain equipment
- to provide information, e.g. school or centre manual handling policy, instruction, training and supervision for all relevant staff.
- to ensure that risk assessments are carried out
- to consult employees on health and safety issues
- to ensure the safety of others in the work place.
- to determine that staff employed are physically capable of undertaking the manual handling required for each of the students they are working with.

3. What are the employee's duties?

These are clearly defined under the Health and Safety Regulations.

They are:

- to declare the existence of any condition which could affect their ability to perform manual handling activities safely
- to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- to co-operate with their employer, including receiving relevant training
- to report any concerns they may have

- not to interfere with/or misuse anything provided in the interests of their health, safety or welfare
- to make full and proper use of any equipment provided in the interests of their health, safety or welfare
- to be aware of the school or centre manual handling policy and comply with it.

4. What is Risk Assessment?

Developing safe manual handling practices is linked to risk assessment. A risk assessment is nothing more than careful examination of what in school could cause harm to pupil or staff, so that it is possible to weigh up whether enough precautions have been taken, or should more be done, to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt. You are legally required to assess the risks in your workplace.

The important things to decide are whether a hazard, e.g. manual handling, is significant and whether it is covered by satisfactory precautions so that the risk is reduced. Hazard means anything that can cause harm (e.g. chemicals, electricity, etc). Risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard. These factors need to be considered when risks are assessed.

How to assess the manual handling risks in school

- Step 1** Look for hazards
- Step 2** Decide who might be harmed and how
- Step 3** Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done. Consider using equipment to reduce risk.
- Step 4** Record you findings
- Step 5** Review your assessments and revise if necessary annually or in response to pupil need. Further information can be obtained from the Gloucestershire Health and Safety Manual.

A suggested format for recording risk assessments for pupils with physical disability may be found in Appendix B alongside examples of completed pro-formas. Gloucestershire SHE (Safety, Health, Environment Department are able to provide further advice in relation to risk assessment.

5. Funding

Funding for general manual handling equipment and its maintenance is the responsibility of the school. However, where additional equipment is needed for a

specified individual and cannot be used more generally, application may be made via SENSS.

Funding for training is generally the responsibility of the school, using their training budget.

Some funding for building modifications is available through the Gloucestershire Access Initiative. This may assist in the reduction of manual handling, e.g. through ramp installation. Details are available from Education Planning Group or Schools Access Officer.

6. Developing a policy for Manual Handling

All Gloucestershire schools with one or more pupils with a physical disability who may require manual handling must have a policy which links in with the overall Health and Safety Policy for the school. The policy should be monitored by the Health and Safety Governors and/or the SEN Governor and should be actively brought to the attention of all staff members to ensure that they are aware of and understand the policy. Schools may wish to identify a manual handling co-ordinator.

All schools must within their policies establish the provision/support for manual handling.

The Manual Handling Policy should be kept up to date and reviewed if new information comes to light regarding child, staff and school's needs. It should also be reviewed if a reportable injury occurs and modified where necessary.

The following sections are suggested for inclusion in a school policy. Wording will have to be adjusted to suit the particular needs of your school.

a. Introduction

It is important to recognise the needs of both staff and pupils. For pupils, their safety and their dignity need to be safeguarded. For staff, the risk of injury needs to be eliminated or minimised.

b. Management Responsibilities

The overall management responsibility lies with the Head Teacher/Governing Board but operational responsibilities may be delegated. They should ensure that all staff are aware of and implement the Manual Handling policy, including students, volunteers and people employed by other services (for example, physiotherapist).

c. Assessment

An overall risk assessment of the arrangements for a pupil should be carried out. If this identifies the need for manual handling, then a more detailed assessment will be required. Things to think about are:

- does the pupil have to be moved?
- can the pupil assist in the transfer?
- can the pupils transfer themselves?
- the timetable
- have the parents of pupil been consulted and actively involved?
- can 'moving' equipment be used to minimise risk, e.g. transfer belt, turntable, hoist?
- can you alter the task to reduce the risk?
- can you plan the task to reduce the risk?
- can the school environment be re-arranged, e.g. classroom space?
- are clothing, footwear and personal effects appropriate?
- how are you going to involve pupil and seek their views?
- who gives instructions?
- do you need additional advice or assistance?
- are sufficient staff trained to enable flexibility during staff absences?
- what are emergency/fire drill procedures?

d. Use of Hoists

For some children hoists are required to reduce the risk of injury to staff and/or child. Staff should be trained and deemed to be competent before using any equipment with a pupil. Clear instruction about the use of the equipment should also be displayed on or near to the equipment. All manual handling equipment should be checked and serviced regularly.

e. Transport

Issues arise when pupils are taken out during the school day. It is important that the school policy makes reference to suitable procedures and transport for pupils with physical disability. Further guidance may be obtained from Gloucestershire Health and Safety Section.

An alternative format for a Manual Handling Policy could include:

- a named manual handling co-ordinator
- definition
- guidance
- staff levels
- use of equipment, e.g. handling belt, mechanical aids, hoist

- clothing, e.g. footwear
- training
- accident/incident procedures
- risk assessment pro-forma /frequency of completion
- emergency/fire drill procedures

Policy monitoring and review

This policy has been distributed to *GAPH*; *GASH* and *GASSH*, the Special Schools Manual Handling Group, Education Directorate Safety Committee and the Gloucestershire Paediatric Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Teams. Amendments have been implemented into the policy.

Schools are asked to send any comments on the policy on the form provided.

Monitoring will take place during Health and Safety visits to school by the Corporate Safety, Health and Environment Unit.

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