



Moving and Handling Policy

Review Date: August 2022

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Willow Banks Forest School aims to keep all children safe.

This policy is designed to outline the forest 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 Willow Banks Forest School.

Full compliance with this policy will ensure not only legal compliance but also that risks of injury related to manual handling are reduced to a minimal level.

Introduction

The guidelines in this document apply to forest school staff, pupils, visitors, contractors and volunteers ("relevant persons").

It applies to all activities both on and off forest school property, including excursions, and any other planned activities outside of the school grounds

This Policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to:

- 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 Provision and Use of work Equipment Regulations 1998
- LOLER 1998 (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998)

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote and maintain the health and wellbeing of those involved in our forest school by providing a safe working environment, specifically with regard to manual handling tasks.

- Implement a systematic approach to manual handling, whereby everyone is aware of their individual roles and responsibilities.
- Provide practical, workable solutions to improve the efficacy and safety of our working practices.
- Provide the equipment and information necessary to ensure the health and safety of those involved with manual handling.
- Ensure staff are informed and trained to take care of their own health, as well as the health of others.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, such as The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 and LOLER 1998 (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998)

Definitions

According to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, manual handling means “any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force,” and 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, and/or a person’s ability to hold/grasp the particular item in a safe and balanced manner.

Manual handling tasks in forest school generally includes supporting pupils; managing behaviour; moving furniture, restraining pupils, stretching to reach shelves/storage, changing wall displays, moving heavy equipment etc.

Risk management strategy

According to the relevant regulations, the process for risk management is to avoid, assess and reduce any hazards. These will be explained in further detail below.

Avoidance:

Per legislation, Willow Banks Forest School will eliminate, as far as reasonably practicable, the need for relevant persons to carry out any manual handling tasks that involve a risk of injury.

Assessment:

Where manual handling tasks are necessary and cannot be avoided, an assessment must take place. For pupils, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the Moving and Handling Co-ordinator in conjunction with feeder school staff, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

Identification

Identification of hazardous manual handling tasks should take account of:

- The nature of the load-weight, size, shape, ability to be firmly gripped, balance, animate/inanimate etc.
- The actions/postural requirements involved in the task-reaching, leaning, lifting etc.
- The time, distance, duration and frequency of the manual handling.
- The individual's capacity for manual handling - their age, skill, experience, strength etc.
- The environment-layout and workplace conditions such as lighting, access, free space, floor surface etc.
- The work organisation at the time of manual handling-presence of others, time restrictions, availability of others to assist etc.

Control:

Once risk assessments have been carried out, controls to manage the relevant risks must be put in place.

These may include:

- Redesign to eliminate or reduce the risk.
- Changes to the workplace, systems of work and/or the object.
- 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.

Monitoring:

Once control measures are in place, they should be monitored to ensure they are reducing the risk of injury and being used correctly. The school's Moving and Handling Coordinator is responsible for this step.

Recording:

Every stage of this process should be recorded and dates provided for each step (identification, assessment, control).

Risk assessments will be recorded centrally.

Individual capabilities

General physical capability:

Risk of injury is unacceptable if the specific manual handling task cannot be carried out by most reasonably fit and healthy adults. While employees can decide whether or not they believe they can manage the task, it is ultimately the Headteacher's duty to ensure the employee will not be at risk when performing the activity.

Health issues:

It must be taken into account if a relevant person has sustained recent injuries, hernias, back problems, heart conditions or other risk factors. If there are concerns, the advice of the Occupational Health practitioner will be sought and reasonable adjustments will be considered where practicable within the requirement of the role. (The Equality Act may require adjustments to enable a person with a disability to perform certain manual handling tasks safely.)

New or expectant mothers:

Require risk assessments to be carried out for about six months following childbirth in order to ensure physical injury does not occur during manual handling procedures. It is strongly advised that pregnant women are not to participate in any manual handling which is a cause for concern either to themselves or the Moving and Handling Coordinator.

Risk reduction

Procedures must be followed to ensure risks are as minimal “as is reasonably practicable”.

Manual handling issues will be considered during the design, refurbishment, alteration or rearrangement of school spaces.

Equipment will be provided to assist with manual handling and reduce any safety risks where this is possible.

Relevant persons will receive information and training regarding manual handling so that they are able to mitigate any risks to their health and safety.

Information and training

The forest school will ensure that the Moving and Handling Co-ordinator is appropriately trained.

All relevant persons should be aware of the school’s policies and procedures regarding manual handling.

Practical advice and training regarding best practice and strategies to minimise risk during manual handling should be provided where practicable and relevant.

Responsibilities

The forest school Manager and the Moving and Handling Co-ordinator will ensure:

- Risk assessments have been carried out and updated as necessary (these should be reviewed at least once annually).

- Where there has been a risk identified, that this has been followed up appropriately and within a reasonable amount of time so as to ensure the risk to any relevant person is minimal.
- That all remedial action and risks are documented.
- Relevant persons are following the forest school's health and safety procedures.
- That all relevant equipment is maintained regularly in line with current legislation and that unsafe equipment is withdrawn for use
- All employees have undergone manual handling training.
- All manual handling accidents/incidents are fully investigated and followed-up on.
- Risk assessments should be carried out immediately on the task being performed when the incident took place and measures put in place as soon as possible to prevent its recurrence.

Staff members must:

- Familiarise themselves with this document, and therefore their rights/responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992; and LOLER 1998 (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998).
- Be aware of their own individual capabilities and refuse to undertake manual handling which would exceed this and place them at risk of injury.
- Attend manual handling training sessions.
- Report all manual handling accidents, incidents and 'near misses' to the Moving and Handling Coordinator or Forest School Manager.