

# Paxcroft Primary School

## Manual Handling Policy

Reviewed: February 2025

Next date of review: February 2027



### Purpose

To ensure compliance with the following legislation, 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 Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

This will be achieved by reducing, so far as is reasonably practicable, any risk associated with manual handling operations. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Positive Handling Policy

### Scope

All employees, pupils, volunteers and employed agency staff are included within this policy. This policy takes into consideration the requirements for the movement of both objects and people (including children).

## 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.”*

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.

A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm and a risk expresses the likelihood that the harm from a particular hazard is realised. The risk, therefore, reflects both the likelihood that harm will occur and its severity.

An assessment is a procedure for identifying the level of risks or hazards, which may exist in order to introduce procedures to eliminate, reduce or control the risk of injury.

## Load Handling

In recognition of the fact that manual handling injuries account for a significant number of workplace accidents, Paxcroft Primary School is committed to reducing the risks involved in these operations. Provisions have been made to reduce risks wherever it is reasonably practical, to give appropriate and effective training and guidance and advice to staff on safe manual handling principles and techniques. Paxcroft CE Primary School has adopted, so far as is reasonably practicable, a policy of minimal lifting and handling. The **Manual Handling Arrangements** set out a hierarchy of measures which must be implemented to reduce the risks from manual handling.

These measures include:

**Avoiding** hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practical.

**Assessing** any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided.

**Reducing** the risk of injury so far as is reasonably practical

## People Handling

In addition to the measures outlined above the following approach has been adopted: Staff are not required to perform tasks that put them and/or the pupil at risk unreasonably. Pupils should be encouraged to walk wherever possible and picking up of children is not encouraged.

Paxcroft Primary School is committed to safe manual handling for staff through the minimal manual handling policy, providing training, equipment and devising safe systems of work. Wherever possible staff should apply principles of safe handling and moving to prevent injury not only to themselves but also to the pupil.

Notwithstanding the above, it is recognised that, following a suitable and sufficient risk assessment, there may be situations which do require manual lifting of pupils. For example, a pupil's medical condition or in an emergency situation or a smaller child in distress. Where well intentioned assistance, in consideration of an individual's welfare, is offered and results in injury, damage or loss, employees would not be considered blameworthy unless working outside of their remit of authority and competence. An overall evaluation of the arrangements for specifically identified children will be carried out. If this identifies the need for manual handling, then a more detailed assessment will be completed.

Things to consider:

- parents of pupils are informed of the procedures and advice given to staff as and when manual handling issues need to be varied;
- manual handling tasks are planned (when part of a routine) and if necessary altered to reduce risk;

- clothing, footwear and personal effects should be minimal; finger nails kept short, loose fitting clothing which is not revealing;
- every effort is made to involve the pupil and seek their views;
- further advice and training is required to ensure that best practice is up to date;
- the school has employed and trained a suitable number of staff to deal with the manual handling issues of the children involved; and
- a PEP (Personal Evacuation Plan) including Emergency/fire drill procedures should be completed for any specific children who have had a Manual Handling risk assessment completed on them. This must be practised and all relevant staff made aware of the procedures.

### **Arrangements**

In order to minimise the risk of injury resulting from manual handling operations, so far as is reasonably practicable, the following actions will be taken:

#### **Avoidance of manual handling operations**

Paxcroft Primary School will ensure that, wherever it is reasonably practicable, unnecessary manual handling tasks will be avoided. This will be achieved by appropriate changes to systems of work, pursuing ergonomics and by automating or mechanising the process.

Examples include:

- arranging tasks to avoid extensive periods of moving and handling;
- replacing lifting with sliding techniques;
- providing wheelchair accessible vehicles;
- issuing appropriate equipment i.e. sack trucks, trolleys, rollers etc;

### **Training**

All staff who are required to undertake, or supervise those who undertake, manual handling activities will participate in an appropriate training programme commensurate with their job activity, which will be evaluated. This training will be organised by the Headteacher/SLT.

### **Risk Assessments**

The process for risk management is to avoid, assess and reduce any hazards. If a risk from manual handling has been identified, a manual handling risk assessment must be carried out and reviewed at regular intervals, the time between reviews being dependent on the nature of the risks.

Where manual handling tasks are absolutely necessary and cannot be avoided, an assessment must take place. This involves identifying the hazardous manual handling tasks. This 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 and strength;
- the environment and workplace conditions such as lighting, access, free space and floor surface; and
- the work organisation at the time of manual handling, the presence of others, time restrictions and availability of others to assist.

Assessments must also be reviewed if there are developments which suggest that they may no longer be valid, if:

- there are changes in the manual handling operation;
- the pupil's needs change;
- the working environment changes; and
- there has been an accident or a "near miss" incident has occurred.

Assessments and reviews will form part of staff practice. All significant findings of the assessments will be recorded, monitored and updated as appropriate, and be readily accessible to all staff who need to refer to them.

Records of accidents, incidents and "near misses" and ill health will be monitored in order to identify if there is an implication for manual handling operations. All accidents and injuries must be reported to the Headteacher. Records of manual handling training provided will be maintained by the School Business Manager. For people handling, records of the content of the training should be documented and retained for six years on recommendation from the HSE.

### **Safe Systems of Work**

In order to ensure that risk reduction measures are implemented, the following must be considered:

- avoid manual handling activities wherever possible;
- adhere to safe systems of work which have been designed to reduce
- the risk of injury;
- fully co-operate with the employer to ensure safe working practices;
- fully utilise mechanical / automatic lifting and carrying aids where
- identified as appropriate;
- fully utilise personal protective clothing / equipment;
- ask suppliers to assist when deliveries are made;
- plan your route prior to undertaking the manual handling activity;
- reduce the carrying distances;
- carry lighter or less bulky loads or consider sharing the load;
- vary the work, allowing one set of muscles to rest; and
- request assistance from the School Business Manager if unsure about any activity

### **Management Responsibility**

Headteacher and staff must ensure that:

- alternative measures to undertake the task should be considered to avoid manual handling;
- risk assessments are carried out, reviewed and appropriate records are maintained;
- staff are made aware of their responsibility to follow safe working methods and systems are in place to enable this to be checked at appropriate intervals;
- immediate action is taken where it becomes apparent that an employee is not following safe working systems;
- any manual handling injuries are reported, investigated where appropriate with remedial action taken;

- employees attend the appropriate training programme and records are maintained by the Premises Manager;
- if they have concerns about the use of equipment or any activities, they must speak to their line manager/Phase Leader and or the Headteacher;
- new or expectant mothers require risk assessments to be carried out for six months before childbirth, and after childbirth, in order to ensure physical injury does not occur during manual handling procedures; and
- pregnant women will not participate in any manual handling which is a cause for concern, either to themselves or the health and safety coordinator.

### **Employee Responsibility**

Employees must ensure that they:

- take personal responsibility to follow safe systems of work and do not risk their own health and safety nor that of others when conducting manual handling operations;
- use any equipment provided to reduce manual handling activities;
- report any problem related to an activity or any defective equipment to the School Business Manager or Headteacher;
- in line with legislation designed to protect the safety of employees, report to the Headteacher any personal condition or circumstances which may affect their role. It is also advisable that in the interests of safety to mother and baby, the Headteacher is informed of pregnancy at the earliest opportunity;
- adhere to safe systems of work as defined within the manual handling risk assessments;
- comply with the findings of a risk assessment if it requires the wearing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); and
- speak to the headteacher if there are any concerns on the use of equipment or any aspect of the risk assessment.

### **General Requirement**

All staff referred to within the scope of this policy are required to adhere to its terms and conditions. Individual senior staff are responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied within their own workplace. Any queries on the application or interpretation of this policy must be discussed with the Headteacher.

**Appendix – Risk Assessment Checklist**

This checklist will remind you of the main points to think about while you:

- Consider the risk of injury from manual handling operations
- Identify steps that can remove or reduce the risk
- Decide your priorities for action

<p><b>SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT</b>                  Operation covered by this assessment:                  .....                  .....                  .....</p> <p>Location:                  .....</p> <p>Personnel involved:                  .....</p> <p>Date of assessment:                  .....</p>	<p>Overall priority for remedial action: Nil / Low / Med / High*</p> <p>Remedial action to be taken:                  .....                  .....                  .....                  .....                  .....</p> <p>Date by which action is to be taken:                  .....</p> <p>Date for reassessment:                  .....</p> <p>Assessor's name:                  .....</p> <p>Assessor's signature:                  .....</p>
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Section A – Preliminary:

**Q1 Do the operations involve significant risk of injury? Yes / No**

If 'Yes' go to Q2. If 'No' the assessment need go no further. If in doubt answer 'Yes'.

**Q2 Can the operation be avoided / mechanised / automated at a reasonable cost? Yes / No**

If 'No' go to section 'B' (see next page). If 'Yes' proceed then check that the result is satisfactory.

**Section B - More detailed assessment, where necessary:**

Question	Risk?	Levels of Risk	Possible action
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	Y/N	Low	Med	High	
<p><b>The Task:</b> -does it involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding loads away from trunk of body?</li> <li>• Twisting?</li> <li>• Stooping?</li> <li>• Reaching upwards?</li> <li>• Large vertical movement?</li> <li>• Strenuous pushing or pulling?</li> <li>• Unpredictable movement of loads?</li> <li>• Repetitive handling?</li> <li>• Insufficient rest or recovery?</li> <li>• A work-rate imposed by a process?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>The Loads:</b> -are they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy?</li> <li>• Bulky /unwieldy?</li> <li>• Difficult to grasp?</li> <li>• Unstable / unpredictable?</li> <li>• Intrinsically harmful (eg sharp/hot?)</li> </ul>					
<p><b>The working environment</b> – are there:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constraints on posture?</li> <li>• Poor floors?</li> <li>• Variations in levels?</li> <li>• Hot/cold/humid conditions?</li> <li>• Strong air movements?</li> <li>• Poor lighting conditions?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Individual capacity</b> – Does the job:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require unusual capabilities?</li> <li>• Hazard those with a health problem?</li> <li>• Hazard those who are pregnant?</li> <li>• Call for special information/training?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Other factors:</b> Is movement or posture hindered by clothing or personal</p>					

protective equipment?					
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**Section C – Overall assessment of risk:**

**Q1 what is your overall assessment of the risk of injury?**

**Insignificant / Low / Med / High**

If not 'Insignificant' go to Section D. If 'Insignificant' the assessment needs go no further.

**Section D – Remedial action:**

**Q1 What remedial steps should be taken, in order of priority?**

- 1. ....
- 2. ....
- 3. ....
- 4. ....
- 5. ....
- 6. ....
- 7. ....