



Todwick Primary School

Safe Moving & Handling of People September 2023

Approved and adopted by the Governing Body

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Member of staff responsible: Head Teacher

School Governor: Chair of Governors

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1 Why we need Guidance

Rotherham Children & Young Peoples Services attach great importance to the Health & Safety of its employees, children and young people.

Approximately one third of all injuries reported to the enforcing authorities are due to incorrect manual handling. Over £100million a year is lost due to injuries at work associated with incorrect manual handling. A major contributor factor is the lack of proper training, supervision, information and instruction.

Moving and handling of people is hazardous and the potential for injury is always present. Most injuries are cumulative, resulting from poor posture or repetitive actions rather than due to single incident. It is important, therefore, that the risks from hazardous tasks are assessed and staff enabled to follow safe systems of work developed to minimise risk.

This policy sets out guidance on dealing with the moving and handling of children and young people with special needs and or mobility needs. It is designed to help staff members in schools adopt a flexible and manageable approach to the safe moving and handling of young people by achieving a balance between the duty of care owed to children and young people, and the statutory requirements to ensure the health and safety of staff, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Whilst it is acknowledged that for many pupils, the use of a mechanical lifting technique e.g. hoist and sling is the most practical, secure and beneficial to both pupil and carer. It may not be suitable for all situations and therefore each individual must be assessed on their own merits and capabilities. Where it is practical and feasible, pupils should be encouraged to develop their own independent transfers thereby negating the need for school to intercede unnecessarily.

This policy does not exempt the need to undertake manual transfers, however it is essential that school staff should consider the implications on both staff members and the pupil involved, to ensure the best practice is adopted for all personnel under the specific circumstances presented.

It is therefore, the intention of Rotherham Children & Young Peoples Services to implement policies, procedures and guidance in line with current legislation that will reduce the risk of injury when undertaking moving and handling tasks.

Appropriate training and support will assist staff to develop good, safe moving and handling practice. Staff members are required to read and apply the requirements of this policy to their individual workplaces. Where the safe lifting and handling techniques are applied, staff can be assured that injuries and harm to themselves and the vulnerable group of pupils they care for are eliminated or reduced.

2 Relevant Current Legislation

- 1 Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- 2 Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- 3 Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- 4 Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- 5 Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- 6 Reporting of injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence's Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- 7 Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)

3 What do the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 say?

The regulations establish a hierarchy of measures.

Each employer has to:

- **Avoid** hazardous manual handling operations, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Fully **assess** those handling operations that cannot be avoided.
- Take **Action** to reduce the risk of injury from those operations so far as is reasonably practicable.

Additionally, each assessment must be reviewed either where there is a significant change to physical capabilities of the individuals involved (Staff or pupil) or on a pre-determined date, when significant changes to the manual handling operations arise or if it is no longer felt to be valid.

It is important to understand the term “reasonably practicable”.

Put very simply:

reasonably practicable = cost versus consequences.

That is:

An employer can balance the cost of taking action (in terms of time and convenience, as well as money) against the level of risk presented by a hazard. However, it cannot be used as an excuse for not taking action appropriate to the circumstances. Moving and handling young people is very likely to pose a risk of injury to the handler so the control measures determined by the **risk assessment** must be actioned.

4 What do they mean?

Manual Handling Operations are defined as:

“any transporting or supporting of a “load” including:

- Lifting
- Putting down/ Lowering
- Pushing
- Pulling
- Carrying
- Moving

by hand or by bodily force”

Where children or young persons with physical impairments/disabilities are less able bodied than their classmates are involved potential issues may arise for School staff as to how certain activities may be undertaken e.g. transfers from wheelchair to toilet, changing of soiled nappies/clothing etc.

The **Load** becomes any person, who requires assistance to manoeuvre or to undertake everyday activities by another person.

Unlike most static objects we lift, the person requiring assistance may present potential **Hazards** to the carer who is attempting to help.

Risk: - Is the likelihood of the carer/assistant/pupil suffering harm injury or loss as they assist the person with the manoeuvre, the severity of the injury and frequency of lift should be considered to measure the probability, great or small, that someone will be harmed by the hazard.

Risk can only be determined following a risk assessment, which considers:

- **The Task**
- **The Load/Individual**
- **The Working Environment**
- **The Individual Capabilities** of employees
- **Other Factors**

The guidance provides a series of questions to be asked for each factor

- A description of the **TASK**
- The risks identified under the 5 headings above
- The measures that are in place to control the risk
- Further measures that are required
- Review date
- Signature of assessor and date of assessment.

5 Roles & Responsibilities

The Head teacher

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that safe systems of work are in place for all activities involving the moving and handling of children & young people.

It is a fundamental requirement that an approach based on risk assessment is adopted in order to identify safe systems of work.

The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring that risk assessments for all moving and handling activities of a non-therapeutic nature are undertaken.

She/he is also responsible for ensuring the ongoing management of staff undertaking moving and handling activities, this may include training (including updating training skills periodically) and operating equipment.

The **Head teacher** is responsible for ensuring:

- A risk assessment is completed for all hazardous moving and handling activities.
- Safe systems of work are identified and implemented for hazardous activities involving moving and handling young people.
- Staff follow the safe systems of work established.
- Control measures (that is: means of reducing the likelihood the hazardous activity will result in injury or accident, e.g. provision of equipment and appropriate training) are established, maintained and reviewed.
- Assessments are reviewed either in response to significant changes, or when the assessment is no longer considered valid, or on a pre-determined date.

Health Professionals

Where a Health Professional prescribes treatment(s) involving moving and handling of a young person, he/she will supply a risk assessment for the therapy programme. He/she must also provide any specialist training to ensure the safety and competence of the person(s) to whom the task is delegated and the safety of the young person involved.

It is recommended that Head teachers have clear and precise guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of the Health Professional(s) whilst on school premises.

Employees are responsible for:

- Safeguarding their own health and safety whilst at work, and also that of any person who may be affected by their actions.
- Informing the headteacher of anything that may affect their ability to safely undertake moving and handling activities, e.g. physical or psychological issues, back ache, neck or muscular strain/sprains etc...
- Reporting any injury or incident that has occurred as the result of a manual handling activity in line with the school's policies.
- Reporting any difficulties, including "near misses" they have experienced in order that the risk assessment can be reviewed to prevent injury occurring.

- Complying with working practices, safe systems of work and using equipment designed to reduce the risk of injury associated with moving and handling activities.
- Complying with school policy regarding the avoidance of injury by wearing suitable footwear and clothing and not wearing jewellery which could injure young people or themselves when undertaking moving and handling tasks.
- Any additional training requirements that staff may require to enable them to provide a suitable level of care; this includes the periodic refresher training.

REMEMBER: - it is the individual employee's responsibility to undertake only those activities for which they have been trained and they are capable of performing.

6 TRAINING

- It is **mandatory for all staff** who undertake moving and handling activities with young people to receive a standard level of training in basic core skills.
This training **should** then be updated on an **annual** basis minimum.
- It is essential that those undertaking risk assessment have sufficient skills and knowledge to do so for this area of work. Where school staff do not feel that they have the pre-requisite knowledge/competence, advice can be sought from the LEA Health & Safety Officer, LEA Manual Handling Co-ordinator or Corporate Health & Safety Section.
- Provision of training alone will not ensure safe moving and handling practices become integrated into all school activities. It is essential that schools develop a positive culture to support safer moving and handling practices. Operational support, workplace supervision, team meetings and provision of resources to improve the task or working environment will further facilitate the process.
- The risk assessment will determine the level of extent of moving and handling training required by each individual member of staff. It will also identify those who may require additional specialist training from therapists to support prescribed therapeutic interventions. It is important that the risk assessment identifies improvement both to the task and the working environment that will also reduce the risk of injury.

- The importance of training in gaining the commitment of staff to implement procedures, which minimise risk, both to the young people and themselves must be recognised and supported.
- Training must feature as a planned, continuous and regularly updated programme. It must reflect both the changing needs of the young people and also of staff. This will enable staff to provide appropriate, safe assistance with daily living activities, whilst also taking responsibility for their own safety and that of the young people with whom they work.
- Moving and handling training can be considered at various levels:
 - Standard level of core skills for moving and handling young people in:
 - Education activity sessions – eg trampolining, hydrotherapy
 - Daily living activity situations
 - Therapy sessions
 - Revision and development of moving and handling skills through refresher sessions.
 - Specialist equipment (staff must receive suitable and sufficient training prior to use of any handling equipment).

It is the Headteacher's responsibility to establish mechanisms to ensure that there is an effective and continuous approach to moving and handling training. Training needs of all staff must be kept under review.

It is essential that records are kept of any:

- Training provided by the school
- Training received by individual members of staff
- Outstanding training requirements and proposed strategies to resolve these.

Maintenance of accurate training records will enable schools to demonstrate the measures taken to fulfil their statutory responsibilities as an employer, where the question of litigation arises, or in response to an accident investigation.

7 What are the personnel issues?

- Manual handling tasks which involve handling even very small young people require staff to be physically able to safely achieve the range of movement required. It must be recognised that this could present a risk to those with existing health problems or who are new or expectant mothers. Individual capabilities and limitations will form an integral part of the risk assessment and the resulting safe systems of work.
- There is a statutory requirement to take particular account of risk to new or expectant mothers. The risk assessment must be reviewed in consultation with them and an agreed safe system of working devised. This will be an ongoing process as the pregnancy progresses, as the hormonal changes affect muscles and ligaments thus increasing postural problems and the susceptibility to injury. These risks also exist for those who have recently given birth.

8 Handling aids and equipment

- There is a wide range of manual handling aids and equipment available. Some allow mechanisation of the handling task, for example: hoists which support the full weight of the young person. Others will improve the posture of the handler and reduce the cumulative strain associated with moving and handling activities, examples include: handling belts and sliding devices.
- A culture should be developed in schools, where use of handling aids and equipment becomes an integral part of any manual handling task. Training and good support systems will facilitate this process, overcoming common reasons for non-usage of equipment.
- It is important that any manual handling aid be carefully selected. Where choice of appropriate handling aids exceeds the scope and level of expertise within a school, the advice of a Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist may be sought. However, it must be recognised that unless required for a specific therapeutic task, there is no responsibility on behalf of the therapist to provide this service.
- All handling aids selected for a specific task must meet the following criteria:

- ❑ Be appropriate for its intended use, for the young person, the handler, the environment and task involved.
 - ❑ Reduce the risk associated with the task, and not introduce further, uncontrolled risks.
 - ❑ Be well maintained according to both manufacturer's instructions and legislative requirements.
- Where the risk assessment indicates the need for handling aids or equipment to reduce the risk of injury to staff when assisting a young person to access the school curriculum, the school is responsible for its provision.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring all equipment within the school is maintained according to both manufacturer's instructions and legislative requirements e.g. (Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998). Specific advice on the requirements of these Regulations can be obtained from the Education Health and Safety Adviser.
- The number of persons undertaking a hoisting task should always be determined by the risk assessment process. As a guide, when using a mobile hoist, two persons would be required – one to operate the hoist, the other to care for the child.

9 Emergency situations

The Regulations do not preclude well-intentioned improvisation in an emergency
but what is an ***Emergency?***

An emergency can be defined as

“.... a sudden, unforeseen event requiring immediate action.”

Therefore an event should only be considered a true emergency if it is not possible to anticipate it happening. All other foreseeable events must have robust systems, identified by risk assessment, to ensure the safety of all concerned when they happen.

- The risk assessment process will enable procedures to be established for emergency situations, where otherwise instinctive, and unsafe, practices would continue.
- Safe working practices must be developed through use of risk assessment by identifying:
 - ❑ Who may be at risk, eg a young person who may frequently fall will place both themselves and members of staff at risk?
 - ❑ Who will be responsible for the young person in an emergency?
 - ❑ How will the young person be moved in this situation?
 - ❑ Any equipment that may be necessary for use in the specific situation.
 - ❑ Any protocol established setting out clearly defined responsibilities and procedures for dealing with emergencies identified through risk assessment.
- Staff must be trained to use any specialist equipment, identified for use in emergency situations, eg stair climbers, with frequent updates to ensure both confidence and competence to comply with the protocols in the “live” situation.
- Planning for unexpected or infrequent events must not be left out of the risk assessment process, therefore both on site and off site activities must be considered.

PLEASE NOTE:

School Fire Risk Assessments should identify what local arrangements are in place, and what action is required by the appropriate personnel.

10 What if there is an accident or injury?

- Following any accident or injury, the school must follow the accident reporting procedure immediately
- An accident report must be completed as soon as possible in as much detail as possible
- The risk assessment relating to either the task or young person concerned must be reviewed to:

- ❑ Ensure the required/control measures have been adhered to
- ❑ Determine the validity of the assessment and control measures currently in place
- ❑ Identify any further measures that are necessary to prevent further accidents/injuries.

11 Acknowledgements

The needs of children and Young people with mobility and or special needs are often complex and involve a number of different people and agencies.

It is right therefore that this policy and guidance has been developed in Partnership, particular thanks go to:

Phillip Nartey, Moving and Handling Coordinator, Rotherham CYPS

Schools and Children's Services Directorate, Calderdale Local Authority

Education Personnel Services, Hampshire County Council

12 References and further information

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