



Green Lea First School Manual Handling Policy

September 2025

It is a legal requirement for employers to manage the risks associated with manual handling.

Manual handling means the transporting or supporting of a load, including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving by hand or bodily force. A load may be an inanimate object, person or animal.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations establish a clear hierarchy of measures for dealing with risks from manual handling. These are:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling tasks so far as reasonably practicable;
- Assess the risk where it is not possible to avoid the task;
- Reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level;
- Review if the circumstances change.

It is not practicable to completely eliminate manual handling. However, management arrangements must consider how risks can be minimised and controlled. As a basic requirement, good back care must be actively promoted.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management Arrangements

These arrangements will apply to employees of Green Lea First School.

Risk Assessments

Where the risk assessment process identifies hazardous manual handling tasks then the manager must ensure the following procedure is carried out:

- Consider whether the hazardous manual handling task can be avoided;
- If not, a manual handling risk assessment should be carried out by a competent person;
- The risk assessment should consider the:
 - **Task** - the job/operation being carried out with reference to working postures, moving distance, frequency, number of employees etc.
 - **Individual(s)** - carrying out the task with reference to the need for information, training and supervision, health status, uniform/clothing, footwear and other personal effects.
 - **Load/person** - with reference to weight, size, shape, handholds and external properties of the load. For person other considerations include: physical factors, behavioural factors, history of falls, medication etc.
 - **Environment** - with reference to space, floor surfaces, working heights, equipment, temperature, lighting, arrangement of furniture etc. and
 - **Other** - (protective clothing, work organisation, equipment)

- The risk assessment must be recorded and communicated to all relevant individuals.
- The assessment must be reviewed if there are substantial changes.
- Safe systems of work should be recorded on the appropriate manual handling risk assessment form or handling plan and communicated to all relevant employees and partners/agencies.
- All handling must be carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the assessment except in a life threatening or emergency situation. If an emergency situation can be foreseen e.g. person identified as at risk from falls or fire then a plan must be in place.
- In partnership/multi agency working environments all organisations and agencies will communicate effectively in relation to moving and handling issues in order to achieve a consistent approach and to reduce the health and safety risks of all those involved.

Managers must be aware of and take account of any of their employees who are new and/or expectant mothers, have disabilities or other health conditions, and those with concerns about their ability to carry out manual handling.

Employees must make their manager aware of any problems or health issues which they have relating to manual handling.

Manual Handling of Inanimate Objects

Manual handling risk assessment must be used to prioritise the most urgent actions to minimise lifting. Mechanical aids should be used whenever possible. Good ergonomics, planning and design of the workplace will often eliminate hazards at an early stage.

For complex or very high risk manual handling tasks, the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service are available to support the manager/assessor to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. This could include providing ergonomic advice and assessment of the task. Where risks cannot be reduced to an acceptable level, this will be discussed with the relevant senior manager.

People Handling

It is a legal requirement under The Equalities Act 2010 to ensure that those with a disability are not subjected to discrimination.

Having suitable movement and handling plans, designed to meet the needs of the individual, helps to ensure that those with mobility limitations are able to participate in life as fully as possible.

Managers must ensure that all service users, pupils and young people who can safely do so must be encouraged to move themselves and where necessary and every person who needs assistance is individually assessed by a competent person taking into account their individual needs, capabilities and circumstances. The rehabilitation and development needs of the individual will be considered in conjunction with the importance of employee and service user safety.

Managers will adopt a problem solving approach which considers the use of a variety of handling methods and equipment to reduce the risk of injury. Service user/pupils independence will be encouraged at all times.

For complex handling tasks, the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Service or training partners can be contacted to support the manager/assessor. Where risks cannot be reduced to an acceptable level, this will be discussed with the relevant senior manager and/or partners.

Following assessment, managers must ensure an individual handling plan is produced which is reviewed at appropriate intervals or when circumstances change.

Manual Handling in the Event of a Fire

As part of the Fire Safety arrangements for premises, individuals who will require help to evacuate must be identified and a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) should be developed. As part of the PEEP, any equipment that will be required to facilitate evacuation e.g. Evac[®] Chair must be identified and provided.

Manual Handling Equipment

Equipment identified by the risk assessment to be used to reduce the risk must be:

- Appropriate for its intended use;
- Stored in a convenient and easily accessible place;
- Serviced and maintained to meet manufacturers' standards;
- Where appropriate comply with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (Refer to management arrangements on the Safe Use of Lifting Equipment).

Dress Code for Moving and Handling

The following dress code must be implemented when carrying out manual handling activities for employees who are involved in regular hazardous moving and handling tasks:

- Flat or low heeled, supportive footwear with non-slip sole (open-toed footwear should not be worn);
- Clothes should be non-restrictive and allow ease of movement;
- Employees should not wear jewellery, have body piercing(s) or have long nails/nail extensions which may cause harm to themselves or the person/load being moved.
- Long hair should be tied back.
- Personal protective equipment e.g. gloves and protective footwear should also be worn in accordance with local risk assessments.

Incidents/Ill health

Managers must ensure that they record every work related manual handling incident and reported ill health.

Where personal injury results from any manual handling activity an Accident Investigation Report Form (HSF 40) must be completed and forwarded to the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Service.

Managers must investigate any incidents reported to monitor trends in MSD and ensure they identify clear courses of action.

Managers can refer employees suffering with MSDs to the council physiotherapy service (see operational guidelines) to support managers and employees to manage any ill health symptoms. Evidence shows that early intervention can support employees to remain in work/return to work/full duties more quickly than without physiotherapy.

Training and Information

Manual handling training, including how to use equipment, will be provided to all employees as identified by line managers. A range of training programmes have been developed to meet the needs of specific occupational groups. Refresher training should take place in accordance with the training programme recommended timeframes. This will generally be annually and once every 3 years for Manual Handling Trainers. For advice and support on determining suitable manual handling training refer to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service.

Record keeping

Once a manual handling risk assessment is no longer valid it must be kept for at least 5 years. In the case of individual risk assessments that relate to a child the assessment must be kept for 21 years from their date of birth.

Manual handling training records need to be kept for a minimum of 5 years

Monitoring and reviewing these arrangements

Risk assessments should also be reviewed following significant changes or if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid e.g. change in best practice, after an accident, change in person's health etc. It is good practice to review risk assessments annually. Managers must monitor the effectiveness of control measures and ensure that they are implemented and effective and have been communicated to all relevant parties.

Management of Contract Activities

When commissioning outside agencies/contractors to carry out a service on behalf of the school that involves hazardous manual handling tasks, it is essential that the commissioning process includes the following:-

- An assessment to determine the competency of the agency/contractor;
- A review of their health and safety performance and access to competent advice;
- Ensuring evidence that suitable risk assessments and control measures are in place;
- The agency/contractors working practices are operated in line with current legislation and codes of practice;
- Suitable training is in place and this training is documented;
- Agency/contractor has suitable public and employer liability insurance cover in line with council guidelines (further advice and guidance available from Insurance Services);
- Agencies/contractors are audited and monitored by the service to ensure standards are maintained.
- Agencies/contractors report on their health and safety performance which should details of accident/incident trends to the commissioning officer.

Health Safety and Wellbeing Supporting Information

- Guidance on Safe Handling of Inanimate Objects and People
- Manual Handling Risk Assessments Quick Reference Flow Chart

The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Service have received specialist training and are able to provide advice on complex manual handling activities. Occupational Nurses are available to advise managers on how to manage and support employees with vulnerabilities/medical conditions.

Forms

HSF25 Manual Handling Risk Assessment Record (Inanimate Objects)

HSF24 Manual Handling Risk Assessment and Handling Plan (People Moving)

Equalities and Human Rights Consideration

This procedure has had an equalities impact assessment using the equality commission screening criteria. No significant equality implications have been identified.