01.13 Manual handling

- All staff at Maidenbower Preschool PLaygroup comply with risk assessment and have a personal responsibility to ensure they do not lift objects likely to cause injury.
- Members of staff bring the setting manager's attention to any new risk, or situations where the control measures are not working.
- Risk assessments may need to be changed for some individuals, such as a pregnant woman, or staff with an existing or previous injury or impairment that may affect their capacity to lift or move items.
- Risk assessment is carried out of the environment in which the lifting is done. Features such as uneven floor surfaces, stairs, etc., add to the general risk and need to be taken into consideration.
- The setting manager ensures that they and their staff are trained to lift and move heavy objects and unstable loads correctly. Babies and young children are also heavy and need to be lifted and carried carefully and correctly.

Managers are responsible for carrying out risk assessment for manual handling operations, which includes lifting/carrying children and lifting/carrying furniture or equipment.

Identifying hazards and risks

Manual handling can cause back injuries, strains, sprains, joint problems and long-term musculoskeletal disorders.

Common hazards include:

- Heavy, awkward or unstable loads.
- Unpredictable movement from children.
- Repetition, poor posture, twisting, stooping or overreaching.
- Long carrying distances, limited space, stairs, uneven or slippery surfaces.

Manual handling risk assessment

Risk assessments must be completed for significant manual handling activities using the **TILE** principles.

T – Task

- Consider whether handling can be avoided or redesigned.
- Assess frequency, repetition, distance and rest breaks.
- Use task rotation and avoid prolonged carrying where possible.

I – Individual

- Consider height, build, strength, capability, experience and competence.

- Take account of medical conditions, previous injuries and pregnancy.

L – Load

- Assess weight, size, shape, stability and ease of grip.
- Consider whether the load may move unexpectedly.

E – Environment

- Assess space, access, floor condition, lighting, obstacles, stairs and changes in level.
- Consider weather conditions for outdoor tasks.

Guidelines

- Risk assess the task, plan the route and remove obstructions
- Do not lift heavy objects alone. Seek help from a colleague and discuss the task beforehand.
- Keep the load close, adopt a stable stance and bend from the knees.
- Lift smoothly and avoid sudden movement, twisting, stooping or overreaching.
- Bend from the knees rather than the back.
- Do not lift very heavy objects, even with others, that are beyond your strength.
- Use trolleys for heavy items that must be carried or moved on a regular basis.
- Items should not be lifted onto, or from, storage areas above head height.
- Do not stand on objects, other than proper height steps, to reach high objects and never try to over-reach.
- Push rather than pull heavy objects.
- Do not carry heavy objects up or down stairs or carry large objects that may block your view of the stairs.
- Do not hold babies by standing and resting them on your hips.
- Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

Children with disabilities or additional needs

Some children and young people may require specialist handling arrangements.

In these circumstances:

- An individual risk assessment and handling plan must be completed.
- Appropriate specialist equipment must be provided where required.
- This may include hoists, slings or other approved equipment.
- Only staff who have received appropriate training should use specialist equipment.
- Handling plans should be reviewed regularly and whenever needs change.

Monitoring and Review

Managers will:

- Review accident and incident records.
- Investigate manual handling injuries and near misses.
- Review risk assessments following incidents or significant changes.
- Monitor compliance with this procedure.

This procedure will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, guidance or operational practice changes.

Legislation

This procedure is based on the requirements of:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended).
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

These regulations require employers to avoid hazardous manual handling where practicable, assess remaining risks, reduce risks as far as reasonably possible and provide suitable information, instruction and training.