

POLICY FOR MANUAL HANDLING

Presented to:

**Full Trustees Meeting
5 October 2023**

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¹ This is the date the policy was approved by the meeting

² This is the date the policy was reviewed prior to its approval above

- Headteacher also means Head of College and Principal
- School also means College, Academy or Academies
- References to School are taken to mean any school within the Four Cs Multi-Academy Trust

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1.0 Associated Legislation

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- The Management of Health & Safety At Work Regulations 1999.
- Manual Handling Regulations 1992.
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment at Work Regulations 1998.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

2.0 Codes of Practice and Guidance

- Manual Handling Assessment Charts, <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg383.pdf>.
- Getting to Grips with Manual Handling, <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf>.
- Are you making the best use of lifting and handling aids? <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg398.pdf>.
- [Manual handling at work - Musculoskeletal disorders - HSE](#)

3.0 Policy aims and objectives

3.1 AIMS

The aim of this policy is to eliminate the need for employees to undertake any hazardous manual handling tasks so far, as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with current legislation and promote best practice with regard to manual handling tasks.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

To meet the aim the following objectives need to be achieved:

3.2.1 Management Commitment/Worker Involvement

To ensure staff are actively involved in addressing significant musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) risks by the appointment of key personnel to:

- assess risk.
- avoid or control risk.
- monitor progress in reducing or maintaining risk as low as is reasonably practicable.
- review and effect change where needed.

3.2.2 Instruction and Training, ensuring:

- Key personnel have suitable competencies to undertake their appointed functions.
- All employees receive clear instructions and training appropriate to the degree of risk presented to them.
- Employee have raised awareness concerning MSDs risk factors and early symptom reporting.
- Employees understand and follow safe systems for handling/use of lifting equipment.
- All employees receive periodic refresher training.

3.2.3 Avoidance/Control by ensuring:

- Engineering controls are used to reduce MSD risk wherever reasonably practicable.
- That during the development and installation of engineering control, raised levels of training is given as a temporary control measure.
- Tasks are designed appropriately.
- That the unit weight of loads required to be manually handled are kept as low as is reasonably practicable and repetitive activities are kept to a minimum.
- That appropriate work equipment mechanical aids/mechanisation are available and that they are used whenever appropriate.
- That the layout of workplace environment is appropriate for the tasks being undertaken.
- Individual capability is considered by both management and the person being allocated a manual handling task.

3.2.4 Managing Cases of MSD and Staying Active with Back Pain by ensuring:

- That management adopts a holistic approach to managing back pain by encompassing workplace precautions, encouraging cases to stay active with back pain and by managing cases of MSD.
- Workers are actively involved in the management of any cases of MSDs.
- Cases know the importance of reporting symptoms early, obtaining correct diagnosis, receiving proper treatment and suitable rehabilitation.
- Managers know when they need to seek professional advice to manage individual cases.
- The organisation has an effective and comprehensive Managing Sickness Absence and Return to Work, (MSARTW) policy.

4.0 **Statement of Intent**

- 4.1 Our school requires a large percentage of staff to perform many different manual handling operations whilst undertaking their duties. The aim of this policy is to eliminate the need for our employees to undertake any hazardous manual handling tasks so far, as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with current legislation and to promote best practice with regard to manual handling tasks.
- 4.2 The school is committed to providing a safe working environment for all our employees. This will include the provision of safe management systems, equipment and any information, training and supervision that is necessary to enable our employees to carry out their duties in a safe manner.
- 4.3 Operations involving the manual handling of loads will be eliminated so far as is reasonably practicable. Where it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate manual handling, assessments will be made and action taken to reduce the risk to the lowest level possible. Measures to achieve this will include ergonomic design of the workplace, operational procedures, training and the provision of automated or mechanical aids.
- 4.4 Commensurate with our legal duties the training of our staff in appropriate moving and handling techniques, the carrying out of risk assessments, and making suitable equipment available to staff will be given raised priority. We remind all our employees of their duties under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 'to make full and proper use of services provided'.

4.5 We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that this Manual Handling Policy provides effective support to all appropriate persons who have cause to work within our organisation. Delegation of this task has been handled through the line management chain, starting with a nominated Governor (the Health and Safety Link Governor) with overall responsibility for managing manual handling risks. Roles and responsibilities are to be clearly stated in job descriptions and monitored through regular appraisal.

4.6 This statement of intent is signed by the Headteacher on behalf of the School. The policy will be maintained on our policy database and will be reviewed every 3 years or more frequently if dictated by any significant change.

4.7 **Policy Review**

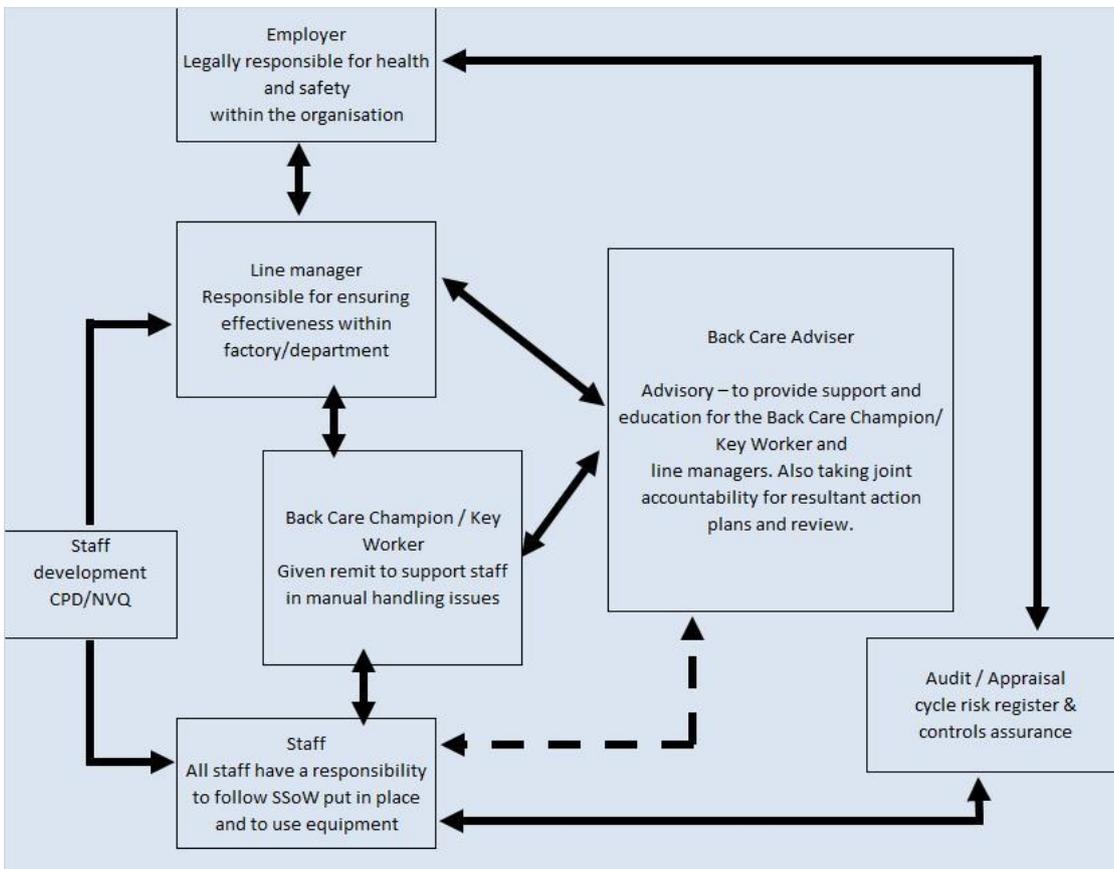
The Trust Board will review this policy in line with the procedure for policy review.

Date for Review

If no other reason for review, this policy will be reviewed every three years by the Trustees.

5.0 **Organisation**

5.1 The right organisational context is one that helps staff achieve the competencies they need to fulfil their duties. The flowchart details responsibilities, accountability and delegation functions that help to facilitate the right context among staff for the implementation and maintenance of a successful manual handling culture.



6.0 **Organisational Responsibilities**

6.1 Headteacher:

The overall responsibility lies with the Headteacher by:

- Ensuring that the Policy is implemented.
- Allocating resources to meet the needs identified.

6.2 Senior Management Team (SMT) and Heads of Department (HODs) as applicable:

- Ensure that HODs (as applicable) are aware of their responsibilities under this Policy.
- Identifying training needs for their teachers/support staff.
- Allowing time for staff to attend training and to implement specific requirements of this Policy.
- Co-ordinating the activities of the HODs to ensure co-operation and consistency of approach in all departments.
- Ensure that Risk Assessments are reviewed on a regular basis with HODs, appropriate to the level of risk, when there has been a significant change or when a reported or suspected injury.
- Monitor the implementation of this Policy in areas under their control by reference to Risk Assessments completed and training targets achieved.

6.3 Heads of Department

HODs will be responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of all Manual Handling Operations with a reasonably foreseeable risk of injury undertaken in their Area.
- Avoiding Manual Handling Operations, which involve a significant risk of injury to staff so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensuring that Risk Assessments of Manual Handling Operations are carried out and recorded by trained assessors where Manual Handling Operations cannot be avoided.
- Adopting an ergonomic approach when considering the inherent risks of the Task, Individual, Load and Environment.
- Implementing control measures and reducing risk from Manual Handling Operations so far as is reasonably practicable following the ergonomic model.
- Monitoring the effectiveness and compliance of control measures taken to reduce the risks associated with the Manual Handling Operations.
- Ensuring that Risk Assessments are reviewed on a regular basis, appropriate to the level of risk, when there has been a significant change or when there is a reported or suspected injury.
- Ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate training and information in manual handling risks and the principles of safe handling, in compliance with the Training Scheme.
- Keeping and maintaining training records.
- Maintaining an inventory of moving and handling equipment for their teaching areas.
- Liaising with the site team over servicing, inspections and repair of manual handling equipment.
- Controlling the movement of equipment in their Department by regular inventory checks and making sure all equipment is marked and recording loans from their Department.

- Providing staff with general indications or, where applicable, precise information as to the weight and nature of the load where the absence may constitute a risk.
- Providing copies of Risk Assessments to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator/Back care adviser.
- Ensuring that nominated Manual Handling Trainers are available and are allocated time to carry out their role.
- Establishing a register of moving and handling aids.
- Managing Manual Handling Operations where reasonably practicable to ensure that throughout the working day, staff are managed such that static or poor posture is minimised and users are allowed adequate breaks or changes of activity.
- Reporting and investigating incidents or injuries associated with moving and handling, and implementing remedial action. (Requesting assistance from the Health and Safety Co-ordinator/Back care adviser where appropriate).
- Ensuring that the Manual Handling Policy is available to all staff.
- Ensuring that staff are fully aware of the policy with regard to manual handling activities and for monitoring good practice on a day to day basis.
- Ensuring that the reduction of manual handling risk is implicit in the management of the day to day routine by planning activities so that the workload is spread evenly across each shift.
- Ensuring any employee with back pain or any other physical condition which may affect manual handling capability, whether or not as a result of injury, are referred to the school personnel department.
- Managing non-attendees on training and staff that become overdue for training.

6.4 Employees

Employee general duties imposed by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 are highlighted in our Health and Safety Policy. Specific duties and responsibilities under the Manual Handling Regulations 1992 are detailed below:

- Not to undertake manual handling activity when a reasonably practicable alternative exists.
- Not to perform any Manual Handling Technique that is recognised as 'unsafe'.
- To inform managers about any physical condition suffered by them which may affect their ability to undertake handling activities.
- Check equipment before use - set aside, label and do not use equipment that is faulty.
- Report injuries, accidents, incidents and near misses involving handling activities and complete Accident/Incident Report Form as necessary.
- Report any problems or concerns that they believe may be related to Manual Handling early, either directly to line management or through other appropriate channels.
- Follow safety procedures, safe systems of work and use clothing and equipment provided for the purposes of minimising the risks associated with handling activities.
- Seek advice from their line manager in any situation where they are unsure of the correct procedure to adopt.
- Failure to comply with these responsibilities may lead to disciplinary action being taken.
- Mandatory induction training and updates form part of the staff' contractual duties. Any employee failing to attend the training at the necessary intervals will be in breach of their contract of employment. Consequently, in the event of an accident to themselves or other staff, contractors, visitors or members of the public they could be considered to have acted irresponsibly.

6.5 Heads of Department Appointed as Back Care Champions

- Implementing the systems detailed in this policy for monitoring and analysing safe systems of work in their work areas.
- Maintaining and supporting this policy's communications strategy.
- Attending manual handling meetings and disseminate information gained to their staff.
- Help staff to attain safer manual handling within their department.
- Help their department comply with and complete the organisation's audit trail.
- Help ensure effective departmental risk assessments have been completed – with review dates – and that these have been followed up.
- Help ensure compliance with all manual handling policies and procedures by all staff within the department.
- Supervision of all staff, including completion of records of competence in manual handling for each staff member.
- Help staff and supervise local performance in the risk assessment process.
- Ensure staff have and supervise local performance in equipment provision, selection and usage.
- Help staff and supervise local performance in encouraging staff to care for their own musculoskeletal health.
- Supervision and problem-solving with individuals and groups within the department.
- Completion of staff competency records and informal training sessions.
- Encourage staff to recognise their own limitations.
- Ensure that actions identified following risk assessment have been implemented, including review and evaluation of performance in the local area.
- Maintain clear, legible, records of risk assessments within the department, including evaluation dates, follow-up and outcome information.
- Maintain records of both formal and informal teaching and problem-solving sessions.

6.6 Site Team

- So far as is reasonably practicable, maintains machinery to ensure that all equipment (in accordance with regulation 5 of PUWER 1998) is, maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.
- Ensure that lifting equipment is thoroughly examined at least every six months by a competent person approved by the Company's insurers.
- Notify departmental managers of the results of statutory inspections carried out on specific equipment, ie hoists and slings.
- Maintain an inventory of all mechanical manual handling equipment on site.

7.0 **Elimination of Hazardous Manual Handling Activities**

The School will ensure that operations which involve manual handling are eliminated, so far as is reasonably practicable. Measures to achieve this include ergonomic design of the workplace and activity, and the provision of automated or mechanical aids such as trolleys.

8.0 **Assessment of Risk**

- 8.1 Competent persons will carry out an assessment of the risks of manual handling activities. Identified risks will be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable. Factors detailed in our flow charts, ten steps, guidance documents and records will be used during the assessment process.

8.2 Where it is not reasonably practicable to avoid significant manual handling tasks, steps should be taken to redesign the workplace, change, automate or mechanise the work process. When this is not practical and the risk of injury remains from a manual handling operation a specific handling assessment should be undertaken.

8.3 The meaning of 'so far as reasonably practicable' is defined as follows:

Balancing the degree of risk against the time, trouble, cost and physical difficulty of the measures needed to avoid or reduce it. The greater the risk, the more likely that it is reasonable to go to substantial expense, trouble and intervention to reduce it. However, if the risk is small, it would not be considered reasonable to go to great expense. Ultimately, the judgement is an objective one based on the health and safety risks and not the size, or financial position of the employer.

8.4 Workplace risk assessments must be undertaken and significant hazards including manual handling both of loads and people identified, they will not be specific to an individual but will detail hazards to staff in a general format.

8.5 Risk assessments are a traceable record that detail the control measures that need to be implemented, both as a reference for the benefit of the persons who may be at risk and for the Health and Safety Executive who may ask to see them at any time, not necessarily after an accident.

8.6 Manual handling risk assessments must be kept for a minimum period of 6 years after expiry or conclusion of the task.

9.0 **Staff Involvement**

9.1 The School believes effective staff involvement and consultation on health and safety has a positive impact on both individual staff and the School as a whole. There is a growing body of evidence to support this view which shows that staff involvement helps to reduce workplace injuries and ill health, sickness absence, and can increase productivity and reduce staff turnover. The School is to actively promote the benefits of staff consultation and involvement in improving manual handling operations. Matters on which workers should be consulted on include:

- any measure at the workplace which may substantially affect how manual handling operations are undertaken. For example, changes in procedures, equipment or ways of working.
- the employer's arrangements for getting competent people to help him or her comply with safe manual handling methods and use of equipment for moving loads.
- the information employers must give to employees about manual handling hazards, risks factors, control and preventative measures; particularly the findings from any manual handling risk assessment conducted by the organisation.
- the planning and organising of manual handling training.
- the effect introducing new technology may have on manual handling operations.

10.0 **Monitoring Health and Safety Performance**

It is necessary to ensure that arrangements are continually addressing the health & safety needs of the School; therefore Senior Management must provide a monitoring system that addresses the work undertaken in their areas of operation.

10.1 Active Monitoring Arrangements

10.1.1 Regular review of risk assessments and safe systems of work should be undertaken. Workplace Inspections should be a frequent part of a monitoring system and be recorded, it is suggested that Inspections are held at least six monthly and more often, dependent on the risk involved. Regular dialogue between safety representatives, employees and management should take place so issues can be resolved before they escalate to a serious nature.

10.1.2 Periodic comparison of incident and absence statistics, results of employee leaver interviews and occupational health records are useful in identifying the level of risk to employees. Monitoring trends over a period of time also provides an indication of how well the organisation is controlling risk as part of its business.

10.2 Reactive Monitoring Arrangements

10.2.1 Investigation of incidents is of great importance in determining whether control measures are adequate to prevent further or similar injury, therefore employees should be encouraged to report all incidents whether they result in injury or not (near miss). Musculoskeletal disorders are often a result of poor manual handling practice.

10.2.2 Changes to health and safety legislation may also require review with resulting change to operational policy and procedures.

11.0 **Risk Assessment Review**

11.1 The School as a matter of best practice require risk assessments to be reviewed as a minimum on an annual basis. Assessments should also be reviewed when there is a significant change in the matter to which it relates or if circumstances or conditions change eg:

- The activity or process has been altered.
- The working environment is different to the original assessment.
- The numbers or abilities of personnel changes (temp workers etc).
- The nature of the load(s) to be handled changes.

11.2 Reassessment may also be required where accident/absence statistics show that the original control measures were not sufficiently effective. This may also be indicated by 'near miss' incidents.

12.0 **Training**

12.1 Legal and professional requirements for training

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Part 1, Section 2(2)c requires employers to provide; information, instruction, training and supervision.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (Regulation 13(2) and (3)) requires employers to provide health and safety training; on recruitment, when risks change, to be repeated periodically as appropriate, to take place during working hours.
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (Regulation 4 (1)(b) (i), (ii), (iii), Regulation 5) do not specify training but this is implicit in some of its requirements. Employees should be given information on:

- Task, load, environment and individual capability.
- Recognition of risk.
- Safe working systems.
- Use of equipment.

12.2 Training - planning and recording

- There must be a training needs analysis to identify what is required. This may be informed by a health and safety audit process.
- This policy and associated procedures need to be in place to promote best practice.
- There must be management commitment and support for the manual handling policy and training strategy.
- The programme should start with management and must include staff at all levels.
- Training must be specific to group needs, and be job specific according to level required.
- Length of training must be sufficient to encourage and develop a change in knowledge, attitude and skills. Demonstrations alone are not sufficient. Staff must have sufficient time to practice and develop practical skills under close supervision.
- Feedback must be provided to management on attendance and ability of delegates to participate and any ongoing training needs.
- A strategy for recall and update training, on at least an annual basis, must be in place.
- Full records of all training must be kept, including.
 - Printed names/signatures of trainer/trainee.
 - Participants job title/place of work.
 - Participants date of birth.
 - Date/place of training.
 - Duration of session.
 - Content.
 - Handouts.
 - Full/partial participation.
 - Refusal/inability to attend.
 - Equipment/aids used.

12.3 Standard elements of the training programme

- Spinal mechanics and function, the importance of back care and posture, risk factors for back pain.
- Current relevant legislation and professional guidelines where relevant.
- Assessment of risks addressing:
 - Tasks (including unexpected).
 - The limits of individual's capability (their own and that of others).
 - Loads.
 - Environment and the importance of good housekeeping.
 - This policy.
 - The importance of ergonomic approach and the principles of normal human movement.
 - Safe management of loads, use of equipment, and problem solving.