

# Manual Handling

Wood St Nursery is a pack-away nursery, which creates additional challenges in manual handling for our staff, along with those in relation to lifting children, and day to day moving of resources in the setting. Manual handling may result in injury if done carelessly or excessively. We will instruct all our staff in safe and effective manual handling, and expect them to follow these to minimise the risks of injury.

Wherever possible, we review the circumstances in which staff have to carry out manual handling, and re-design the workplace to reduce the amount that items must be moved from one area to another.

Specific additional manual handling training will be provided when a need is identified.

Where manual handling tasks cannot be easily avoided, e.g. lifting children for nappy changing, we carry out a risk assessment and introduce appropriate control measures.

Our manual handling assessment considers the following:

- The tasks to be carried out
- The load to be moved (including moving children)
- The environment in which handling takes place
- The capability of the individual involved in the manual handling.

We expect staff to use the following guidance when carrying out manual handling in order to reduce the risk of injury.

## Planning

- Think about the task to be performed and plan the lift
- Consider what you will be lifting, where you will put it, how far you are going to move it and how you are going to get there
- Never attempt manual handling unless you have read the correct techniques and understood how to use them
- Ensure that you are capable of undertaking the task – people with health problems and pregnant women may be particularly at risk of injury
- Assess the size, weight and centre of gravity of the load to make sure that you can maintain a firm grip and see where you are going
- Assess whether you can lift the load safely. If not, get help
- If more than one person is involved, plan the lift first and agree who will lead and give instructions
- Plan your route and remove any obstructions. Check for any hazards such as uneven/slippery flooring
- Lighting should be adequate
- Ensure that you are wearing the correct clothing, avoiding tight clothing and unsuitable footwear
- Avoid lifting loads from the floor or to above shoulder height, and limit the distances for carrying
- Ensure that there are adequate rest periods and breaks between tasks
- Plan ahead – use teamwork where the load is too heavy for one person
- Consider a resting point before moving a heavy load or carrying something any distance.

- Avoid awkward movements such as stooping, reaching or twisting
- Pregnant staff members must speak to the managers as soon as they suspect they are pregnant and before performing manual handling tasks so that a risk assessment can be carried out. They should also speak to their doctor or midwife for personal advice, and discuss this with the managers
- If you are concerned about the manual handling you are being asked to do, for example because of a health condition or injury, speak to the managers before carrying out manual handling tasks.

### **Carrying children**

- If possible, ask the child to move so that it is easy to pick them up, and ask them to hold onto you as this will support you and the child when lifting
- Do not place the child on your hip, carry them directly in front of you in order to balance their weight equally
- Wherever possible, avoid carrying the child a long distance
- Where a child is young and is unable to hold onto you, ensure you support them fully within your arms
- Avoid carrying anything else when carrying a child. Make two journeys or ask a colleague to assist you
- If a child is struggling or fidgeting whilst you are carrying them, stop, place them back down and use reassuring words to calm the child before continuing

### **Position**

- Stand as close to the load as possible with your feet apart and your leading leg forward.
- Keep your weight even over both feet.
- Position yourself, or turn the load, so that the heaviest part is next to you.
- Do NOT twist your body to pick it up.

### **Lifting**

Always lift using the correct posture:

- Bend the knees slowly, keeping the back straight
- Tuck the chin in on the way down
- Lean slightly forward if necessary and get a good grip
- Keep the shoulders level, without twisting or turning from the hips
- Try to grip with the hands around the base of the load
- Bring the load to waist height, keeping the lift as smooth as possible.

### **Moving**

- Keep the child or load close to the body as you walk
- Proceed carefully, making sure that you can see where you are going
- Lower the child or load, reversing the procedure for lifting
- Mind your fingers or toes as you put the load down
- Make sure that the child or load is rested safely and on a stable base
- Report any problems immediately, for example, strains and sprains.

Please alert the managers immediately to any risks or dangers that you find in relation to your manual handling tasks.