

GILLINGSTOOL PRIMARY SCHOOL

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MANUAL HANDLING POLICY: MATERIALS

Signed ... 

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Chair of Governors

Date: June 2021

Signed 

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Date: June 2021

Rationale

This policy applies to all school staff, students, visitors, contractors, volunteers and those on work experience.

It also applies to all activities both on and off school property, including school visits, excursions, and any other programmed activity outside the school grounds.

The aim of the policy being to promote and maintain the health and wellbeing of staff, students and visitors, and to minimise the risks of manual handling injuries

Guidelines

The Headteacher will co-ordinate the plan for managing manual handling in the school, and will ensure that resources are provided to meet Health & Safety commitments by implementing a systematic approach based on a **risk assessment** as follows:-

- **Identify** the hazardous manual handling tasks.
- **Assess** the risks
- **Control** the risks
- **Monitor** the controls
- All completed risk assessments are stored with the school's H&S documentation and reference is made annually on INSET Day 1.
- A system will be developed to ensure that any new manual handling hazards are identified, assessed and controlled as they occur.

Definitions

Manual Handling is defined under the Occupational Health and Safety (Manual Handling) Regulations:

Any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move or restrain any animate or inanimate object. Also actions involving repetition and sustained awkward posture.

Hazardous Manual Handling is defined as:
when the actions described above cause or have the potential to cause a Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD) as a result of the following characteristics:

- Repetitive or sustained application of force;
- Repetitive or sustained awkward posture;
- Repetitive or sustained movement;
- Application of high force;

- Exposure to sustained vibration.
- Handling live persons or animals.
- Handling unstable or unbalanced loads, or loads which are difficult to grasp or hold.

Procedures

Following is a procedure to enable the school to fulfil its obligations as stated in the Manual Handling Policy and also comply with the required Manual Handling Regulations.

The Headteacher should be **consulted** about the identification, risk assessment and control of risks. In turn they will consult the School's Health & Safety Manual or seek further guidance from H&S Dept.

- 1) Where possible, manual handling risks should be considered prior to any building upgrade, new activities and/or the purchase of all goods to be used at the school.
- 2) Review annually all manual handling hazards in the school. The process should involve all school staff.
 - a) Look at injury records to see in which areas, and on which tasks injuries are occurring
 - b) Formal observation of work practices where manual handling is prevalent
 - c) In schools, manual handling risks include:
 - Moving furniture,
 - Carrying computers/televisions
 - Pushing a trolley
 - Lifting a ladder
 - Restraining a child
 - Typing school reports using a laptop or computer in an awkward posture
 - Stretching to reach a high shelf
 - Separating fighting students
 - Lifting PE equipment
 - Displaying work on notice boards, walls or display boards
 - Bending to a bottom shelf
 - Carrying large slabs of milk/drinks
 - Lifting large containers of cleaning chemicals or art materials
 - Digging, gardening
 - Bending over for extended periods to be at the same height as students
 - In special settings, lifting, changing, and supporting children (See Manual Handling of Pupils Policy)
 - Poor workstation layout or design
- 3) The risk assessment team should then undertake a **risk assessment** on tasks identified as having a hazardous manual handling component. The purpose of assessing the risk is to firstly establish if there is risk involved in a task and secondly to determine the level of risk: high medium or low. The **risk assessment** must take into account the following factors:

- The force to be applied by the employee.
- The actions and movements involved (e.g. reaching up, forward reaching, unbalanced or uneven lifting or carrying, awkward grip).
- The range of weights handled.
- The duration and frequency of the manual handling.
- The time, and distance, over which an object is handled.
- The availability of mechanical aids.
- The layout and condition of the workplace environment (e.g. height of workbenches, restricted access, confined space, hot/cold, poorly lit, floor surfaces slippery or uneven).
- The work organisation (e.g. availability of people, flow of materials, lack of time).
- The postural requirements imposed by manual handling (e.g. bending, twisting, stretching).
- The analysis of injury statistics relevant to manual handling.
- The age of the person carrying out the manual handling.
- The skill and experience of the person.
- The nature of the object being handled (e.g. size, shape structure and material, animate or inanimate.).
- Any other factors considered relevant by the employer, the employees or the Headteacher. Need to consider the risks to staff returning from leave, teaching a new subject/in a new environment etc.

4) Once the risk assessments have been conducted **controls** should be developed by the Senior Leadership Team starting with the tasks rated as high risk.

When developing controls the risk control hierarchy is as follows:

- **redesign** to eliminate or reduce the risk as a first step;
- **change the workplace, systems of work and/or the object;**
- **provide mechanical aids** to reduce the risk and **training** in their use;
- **training and education** appropriate to the task.

For some manual handling tasks a combination of the risk control methods for reducing risk may be appropriate, however information, training or instruction should **never** be the sole or primary means of controlling the risk.

5) Once the control measures are in place, they must be **monitored** to make sure they:

- are being used correctly
- are not increasing the risk of injury
- do help to reduce the manual handling risk and
- do not need further improvement.

Conclusion

It is the school's responsibility to ensure that all risks involved in manual handling are identified and minimized and that the health and safety of all is not compromised.