



Manual Handling Policy and Guidelines 2025

Responsibility: Michelle Rutherford

Date: April 2025

Date to be reviewed: April 2026

MANUAL AND HANDLING POLICY

STATEMENT

The purpose of this document is to define the requirements for manual handling of pupils/ students in Villa Real School in accordance with Health and Safety Regulations and Manual Handling Regulations 1992 (Please refer to Health and Safety policies, caretaking staff and Headteacher for manual handling of furniture and equipment etc.)

REGULATIONS

REGULATION 2 (1)

'Manual Handling Operations' means any transporting or supporting of a load including the lifting, putting down, pushing, and pulling. Carrying or moving thereof by hand or bodily force. Please note that "load" refers to a pupil/ student in this instance.

REGULATION 4 (1) (A)

So far as reasonably practical, avoid the need for employees to undertake any manual handling operations at work which involve a risk to their being injured.

REGULATION 4 (1) (B) (I)

Make suitable and sufficient assessment of all such manual handling operations to be undertaken by them.

REGULATION 4 (1) (B) (II)

Reducing the risk of injury – each employer shall:

Where it is not reasonably practical to avoid the need for employees to undertake any manual handling operations at work which involve a risk of their being injured, take appropriate steps to reduce the risk of injury to those employees arising out of their undertaking any such manual handling operations to the lowest level reasonably practical.

The Manual Handling Regulations are part of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 **The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**

AIMS

- Secure health, safety and welfare of people at work
- Protect people other than those at work against risks to their health and safety arising from work activities

THE ACT IMPOSES DUTIES ON

The Employer:

To ensure as far as reasonably practicable, the health and welfare at work of all their employees. This includes providing machinery and equipment that is safe and which reduces risk to health. Equipment, devices and systems must be maintained in efficient working order.

Employers must provide for all their employees the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their employees working environment.

The Act also requires every employer (where 5 or more people are employed) to prepared a written statement of their safety policy.

The Employee:

To take reasonable care of health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by what they do. Each employee must use appropriate equipment supplied and work in accordance with the training and instructions provided.

At Villa Real School, each pupil/ student who requires assistance to move, will have a risk assessment. The risk assessment is a working document, it includes information on the pupil/ student, a detailed Safe System of Work and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).

By law, employees must use Safe Systems of Work specified in policies and procedures relating to Manual Handling.

MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1999 Aims:

- Develop, implement and measure the performance of safety systems of work
- Access to competent health and safety advice, help and guidance
- Information regarding training with new technology and systems of work to be made available to all employees
- Whole workforce, including supervisors, to be trained to be capable of their work.

The regulations impose duties upon:

- **The Employer**

To carry out a systematic Risk Assessment of work activity, and, where 5 or more are employed, record significant findings and have written Health and Safety policies. Specific Risk Assessments should be in place for young persons (i.e. under 18 years of age) at work and new or expectant mothers (i.e. employees who are pregnant, who have given birth within the previous six months or who are breast feeding)

- **The Employee**

To take care for health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by what they do

A copy of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 is kept in the coordinators file. These regulations replace a number of pieces of legislation with a new ergonomic approach to reducing back problems at work.

Basically:

- **Do Manual Handling regulations apply?**

Yes, 'load' refers to our pupil/students

- **Is there a risk of injury?**

Yes, to staff backs and joints etc.

Yes, to pupil/ students health, welfare and safety

- **Is it reasonably practicable to mechanise the operation?**

Yes, all staff must now use a hoist or appropriate manual handling aid where appropriate

(except for in an emergency – fire bell, medical seizure etc.)

- **Should a handling assessment be carried out?**

Yes, risk assessments for all pupil/students who need moving are mandatory. Responsibility lies with the class teacher to ensure that these are read, signed and adhered to. Class teachers are also responsible for keeping current risk assessments easily accessible and to drawing them to the attention of all who work with pupil/students in the class

POLICY GUIDELINES

- Villa Real School is committed to the promotion of Risk Management in order to provide a safe environment for all its pupils/ students and staff
- All lifting and handling operations should be avoided if possible. Pupil/students who are partially assisted should be encouraged to move themselves. Risk assessments are in place

- Where Manual Handling Operations cannot be avoided, staff should follow the Safe System of Work
- If a hoist is not used during a Manual Handling procedure, the member(s) of staff must be able to justify the omission and this must be recorded on the sheet at the back of Risk Assessment

RESPONSIBILITY AND TRAINING

Current Manual Handling trainers are:

- Michelle Rutherford
- Fiona Pattison
- Suzanne Blackburn
- Danine Kennedy
- Catherine Walker

These post holders are qualified as 'Client Handling Key Trainers. Incidents should be reported to the Headteacher immediately. Filling in an incident report form if an accident or injury occurred during a manual handling operation is as follows and should include the following information:

- Name of pupil/ student involved
- Name of anyone else involved
- The stated safe method of handling the pupil/ student on the Risk Assessment
- What Manual Handling procedure was being used when the accident occurred (if this is different to the stated method, you need to explain why)
- What equipment (if any) was being used
- Description of injury

An employer has a duty of care to ensure a safe working environment for all of their employees.

Training as follows:

- Demonstration of hoists and slings.
- Assisted manual handling by the trainer/ other trained staff whilst using the above equipment for the first time or with an unfamiliar pupil/ student
- Training regarding 'condemned practises and lifts' basic understanding of the spine and possible injury to staff/ pupil/ student from condemned lifts
- Training regarding regulations and legislation knowing duties and rights

- A Risk Assessment for each pupil/ student who needs to be manually handled is a legal requirement. Copies of these must be available in each Individual pupil/ student file (blue file) and in the co-ordinators file (electronic), which is to be easily accessed by all persons handling pupil/students
- Risk Assessments must be reviewed termly or when there is significant change to the pupil/ student. Changes include new positioning equipment, AFOs etc. either when supplied or withdrawn
- Moving and Handling trainers will be on hand to offer practical solutions or for advice/ assistance at any time. Staff must ask for this help whenever necessary
- Moving and Handling trainers liaise with Occupational Therapists,
 - Physiotherapists and Senior Management Team
- Staff must record all accidents to allow monitoring of problems and further changes to be made. All accidents/injuries must be reported to the Moving and Handling trainers, the Headteacher and the First Aider as soon as possible and written up on an incident form
- Poor manual handling techniques which include; not using the correct equipment and or using condemned lifts are forms of physical abuse of pupil/ students (UK CC September 1999)
- All pupil/students are entitled access to the National Curriculum, Manual Handling Regulations should not be seen as a reason for pupil/ students to miss out on activities or to be left in one position for long periods of time
- Teachers and/ or Class Managers are responsible for identifying position and equipment according to therapy advice and used within the timetable/ SST and for ensuring safe practices for their class
- Manual handling must be carried out correctly. The safety of the pupil/ student and handler is of paramount importance, not the time allocation of using the hoist/ equipment etc.
- Providing training information or discuss with staff for information on:
 - Regulations and why they have been introduced.
 - Possible injuries to pupil/students from manual handling
 - When to use the hoist
 - Possible injuries to staff

Staff should remember the following guidelines when using Manual Handling procedures to ensure both their own and pupil/students' safety:

- Spine in line – tilt the head in direction of movement to relax the spine
- Centre of Gravity – firm stance, feet apart, hold as close to body as possible
- Palmer Hold – don't grip, which produces tension in the hand, try to hold in the palm of your hand whenever possible

Condemned practice:

- Drag lifting under pupil/students' arms
- Orthodox cradle lift – 2 person lift
- Neck lift – pupils/ students arm around neck
- Through arm – holding on to forearms from behind
- Bear Hug – hands around back
- Australian lift – head and shoulders on their chest to move along trolley
- Pivots – knees to knees and swivel around

If any member of staff does not follow the recommended guidelines or complete a risk assessment, then that member of staff may be held accountable. If correct guidelines are not followed for whatever reason (i.e. emergency) this must be recorded in the Manual Handling Risk Assessment file. It must include the date, pupil/student name, reason why and what procedure was used instead.

Pupils/students should not be moved as a response to presenting challenging or disruptive behaviour. It is only possible to move someone against their wishes if they are endangering their own or someone else's health and safety. Task avoidance or convenience to staff is not an acceptable reason; please liaise with Team Teach coordinators and Manual Handling co-ordinators. Behaviour plans must also be kept up to date and include holds/ restraints that are likely to be used. This needs to be in place to protect staff if necessary.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY WHEN USING MANUAL HANDLING PROCEDURE

If a pupil/student is injured during a Manual Handling procedure, the family may cite negligence on the part of the handler. The deciding factor in establishing the appropriateness of the claim would be "was the correct Manual Handling procedure (stated in the Risk Assessment) followed. Alternatively, if the handler is injured and decides to take action, then questions of negligence on your part, and the possibility of your being wholly or partly responsible for your own injuries would be thoroughly investigated again, looking at whether the correct procedures were followed.

The Risk Assessment is designed for the handler's protection as well as the protection of the pupil/ students:

- During the School day, all pupil/students must be handled in accordance with agreed procedure. Offsite, when there is no access

to a hoist; staff must use their discretion and assess the risks in order to formulate a strategy that carries the least amount of risk

- The Occupational Therapist will liaise with parents/carers regarding manual handling at home

VISITING PROFESSIONALS

Therapists and school nurses are required to attend and be up to date with their own employer's manual handling training and to work within those guidelines.

Within a 'Therapy' session, there may be different manoeuvres carried out to promote movement and as part of 'Therapy'. This is acceptable practice within the Physiotherapists own professional practice. However, the Therapists cannot ask school staff to work outside their own Manual and Handling guidelines.

All other professionals who are trained, are required to follow the Schools Manual and Handling safe systems of work with a member of school staff.

TO AND FROM SCHOOL TRANSPORT

This is the responsibility of the transport companies and Durham County Council. School staff should not assist taxi drivers or escorts in 'condemned practices' i.e. drag lifts etc. steps into buses. Pupils/ students who cannot weight bear should use a mechanical lift onto the taxi/minibus. Transport operators carry out Risk Assessments on pupil/ students with physical difficulties:

As part of the Risk Assessment, all pupils/students need a form (as provided by Durham County Council) completed that identifies manual and handling needs for transport between home and school.

Incident/Accident reporting forms are kept in the main school office.