



NARNIA EARLY LEARNING

ACN 002 919 584

(Administered by St. Philip's Christian Education Foundation Ltd.)

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

OBJECTIVE

Narnia Early Learning uses a systematic approach to managing the risks associated with manual handling and the procedures aim to minimise the risk of injury to staff. This policy complies with the Work Health Safety Act 2011 and related Regulations.

DEFINITION

A hazardous manual task as defined by the WHS Regulations, means a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing involving the following:

- Repetitive or sustained force
- High or sudden force
- Repetitive movement
- Sustained or awkward posture
- Exposure to vibration

These factors are known characteristics of hazardous manual tasks which directly stress the body and may lead to injury.

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING AND MONITORING SAFE MANUAL HANDLING

- Staff are encouraged to use their common sense and not to take unnecessary risks when handling large or heavy objects
- When lifting a child or object weighing more than 15 kilos, staff are required to seek assistance.
- Manual handling and correct lifting/back care training will be provided regularly depending upon staff turnover.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to follow the below procedures and assist by identifying manual handling hazards and risks.
- New staff are to be provided with information regarding the correct lifting techniques during their induction.

MANAGING RISKS FOR MANUAL HANDLING

- Identify risks - discuss issues with staff and check past records of incidents/accidents.
- Assess risks - how much strain, pressure, stress, weight, force, grip, skill and duration is required for each activity.
- Control risks - when designing tasks in order to minimise injury, look at changing the way jobs are done, changing the layout of the workplace and changing the equipment.
- Storage of equipment. Every reasonable effort will be made to store all heavy equipment below shoulder height.

Back Care and Manual Handling

Manual handling means any activity requiring the use of force exerted by the person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person or object.

Manual handling injuries can be the result of incorrect manual handling techniques, overuse, or from accidents. Injuries include back strains, and sprains in other parts of the body such as the neck, arm, shoulder and knee, bruising and lacerations.

Employers and managers have a legal duty to provide safe workplaces and implement safe workplace practices.

Principles of Preventing Manual Handling Injuries

1. Eliminate or reduce the amount of manual handling.
2. Reduce the amount of bending, forward reaching, and twisting, in all tasks.
3. Reduce worker fatigue.
4. Keep all equipment in good working order.
5. Keep the workplace environment safe.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- provide annual training in manual handling and back care;
- display written, current information regarding manual handling in the staff room;
- ensure equipment and facilities are designed and maintained to reduce manual handling injuries;
- ensure work practices are consistent with safe manual handling guidelines;
- ensure educators and staff follow our safe manual handling procedures;
- identify, assess and control all risks associated with manual handling;

To help prevent manual handling injuries, educators and staff are advised to:

- do warm-up exercises for three to five minutes before starting work, particularly during cold periods. Simple exercises to warm and stretch all the major muscle groups help prevent injury. Regular exercise such as walking, tennis, or aerobics will help condition muscles, but anyone with neck, back or muscular problems should see a doctor before exercising;

To help prevent manual handling injuries, educators and staff will:

- kneel rather than bend down eg to help a child put their shoes on;
- sit rather than bend eg to comfort a child, educators will sit on the floor and encourage the child to sit on their lap;
- sit in an appropriate sized chair (or on the floor) so their upper legs are horizontal to hips and feet flat on the floor;
- sit in an appropriate sized chair to complete writing tasks
- carry children with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other arm supporting the child's back, with the child facing them as close as possible to their body;
- not carry a child on their hip because this can strain the back, and only carry children when necessary;
- lift safely and avoid twisting, especially with awkward loads;
- lift a child out of a cot by leaning against the cot and raising the child as close as possible to their body. Educators and staff will not stretch over and lift;
- help larger children to climb up steps/ladder provided to change table;
- use a step ladder to reach above shoulder level;
- avoid extended reaching forward eg leaning into low equipment boxes;
- share the load if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward;

- ask for help and organise a team lift when sliding, pulling or pushing equipment that is not easy to move e.g. trestles or gym mats;
- rearrange surroundings to meet the needs of both children and adults where possible;
- use equipment and furniture that can be moved around as safely and easily as possible;
- store seldom-used objects up high between the shoulder-to-raised arm height;
- avoid storing objects between a person's knuckles and the floor;
- use mechanical aids like ladders and trolleys where possible to avoid lifting and stretching;

Reduce accidents by implementing good housekeeping practices including ensuring:

- the floors and other walking surfaces are uncluttered, even and non-slippery;
- the environment is tidy;
- there is adequate space to work;
- equipment is maintained regularly;
- lighting is adequate.

How to Lift Safely

1. Place your feet in astride position.
2. Keep your breastbone as elevated as possible.
3. Bend your knees.
4. Brace your stomach muscles.
5. Hold the object close to your centre of gravity i.e. around your navel.
6. Move your feet not your spine.
7. Prepare to move in a forward-facing direction.
8. Ask for help when it is not possible to lift on your own.

Avoid Twisting when Lifting

To avoid injuries resulting from twisting educators and staff will:

- move equipment when children are not around;
- rearrange storage so that it is easier and safer to replace and remove items;
- lift only within the limits of their strength;
- use beds and equipment that are easy to move;
- ensure they can see where they are going when carrying equipment or children;
- be especially careful when lifting a child with special needs.

Organising a Team Lift

Educators and staff will:

1. Ask a colleague who is willing and able to help, and ideally is fairly well matched with them in size and strength.
2. Agree on a plan of action to achieve a coordinated lift.
3. Appoint one person as team leader to 'call' the lift.

RELATED POLICIES:

Work Health and Safety Policy