



Manual Handling Policy

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Gardens Montessori recognises its responsibility to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to provide and maintain working conditions that are safe, healthy and compliant with all statutory requirements and codes of practice, including those covering manual handling. Statistics show that manual handling is one of the most common causes of injury in the education sector; injuries which often have serious and long-term effects. Manual handling is also covered specifically by the following legislation:

1. the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974
2. the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
3. the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
4. the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 were the end result of a European directive, issued in 1990. Under the Regulations, employers are required to avoid the need for employees to undertake any manual handling operations which involve a risk of their being injured and where such activities cannot be immediately eliminated a "suitable and sufficient assessment" of all such operations is mandatory. Having carried out this assessment, employers must take appropriate steps to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

Aim of the Policy

This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning Gardens Montessori's approach to manual handling.

Manual Handling at Work Policy

Gardens Montessori recognises its responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to provide and maintain working conditions that are safe, healthy and compliant with all statutory requirements and codes of practice.

The organisation understands manual handling as the transporting or supporting of loads by hand or by bodily force. This includes activities such as lifting, carrying, shoving, pushing,



pulling, nudging and sliding heavy objects. It also covers the lifting or moving of children by staff.

Gardens Montessori is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its staff, so far as is reasonably practicable, and of all other persons who may be affected by our activities. As manual handling activities obviously carry the risk of injury if they are not performed carefully, then the organisation will take the following steps to ensure that its statutory duties to protect staff and children are met at all times.

1. Each employee will be given such information, instruction and training as is necessary to enable safe manual handling.
2. All processes and systems of work will be designed to take account of manual handling.
3. All processes and systems of work involving manual handling will be assessed and properly supervised at all times.

Risk assessments

Manual handling tasks will be assessed using the following process.

1. Staff should always consider each manual handling task for risk of injury. If the activity involves occasional lifting of small, regular-shaped, lightweight items, the risk can be deemed to be negligible. If however the task involves repeated movement of a heavier item, or one that is an odd, uncomfortable shape, then the risk is increased and should be identified as a potential risk.
2. A moving and handling risk assessment will be undertaken, by a manager who is trained for the purpose, whenever staff are required to help a child with any manual handling task, as required under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. The results should be included in the risk management plan for that child with specialist advice sought where necessary.
3. If a risk is identified, the manager will next consider whether there is a way to eliminate the need for manual handling altogether. For instance, can equipment be used instead?
4. If the manual handling task cannot be eliminated completely, the specific risks involved must next be assessed. This is done in a similar way to any other health and safety risk assessment but the assessment does not need to be recorded, provided it is easy to repeat. Where it is more complex, records will be kept.
5. Where a specific risk of injury is identified and manual handling is unavoidable, then measures to reduce the risk must be introduced. Examples of these are the use of mechanical aids, changing the task to minimise the risk or altering the working environment to make manual handling less awkward.
6. Any measures taken to ensure manual handling safety must be in proportion to the risk and the cost-benefit involved.



Note:

Staff should never, in any circumstances, attempt to lift a child or a weight where they believe that there is a significant risk of injury involved.

Garden Montessori's policy will, so far as is reasonably practicable, be to:

1. provide and maintain lifting equipment which is safe and healthy to use (if applicable)
2. provide the information, instruction, training and supervision required to ensure the health and safety, at work, of employees and others
3. control and maintain the place of work in a safe condition
4. in the event of any accident or incident (such as a near-miss) involving injury to anybody on work premises to make a full investigation and to comply with statutory requirements relating to the reporting of such incidents.

Managers' Duties

The appointed Managers in Gardens Montessori will ensure the following.

1. Manual handling assessments have been carried out where relevant and records are kept.
2. Adequate information and training is provided to staff carrying out manual handling activities.
3. Any injuries or incidents relating to manual handling are investigated, with remedial action taken.
4. Staff adhere to safe systems of work.
5. Safety arrangements for manual handling operations are monitored and reviewed.
6. Special arrangements are made for individuals with health conditions that could be adversely affected by manual handling operations.

Duties of Staff

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 set out an obligation upon employees to make full use of systems of work laid down for their safety in manual handling operations. This is in addition to their obligations under other health and safety legislation including making proper use of equipment provided for their safety. To conform with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, Gardens Montessori requires its staff to adopt the following three-stage model.

1. Staff should avoid hazardous manual handling as far as is reasonably practical.
2. Where hazardous manual handling cannot be avoided, staff should assess the risk first.
3. Depending on the result of the assessment, staff should reduce the risk involved to the lowest level reasonably practicable.



The successful implementation of this policy requires total commitment from all employees. Each individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and for the safety of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

Employees should not carry out tasks that place themselves or others at risk and in certain circumstances it might be necessary for an employee to refuse to carry out a moving and handling procedure. Such situations might include:

1. where the staff member does not feel confident or competent to carry out the task
2. where there is an identified risk of injury to staff or to service users, even after risks have been reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable
3. where staff are physically unable to carry out the task, for whatever reason.

It is also the policy of Gardens Montessori that, under s.7 of the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974, it is the duty of every employee at work:

1. to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and those of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work
2. as regards any duty or requirement imposed on their employer by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with the employer, so far as is necessary, to enable that duty or requirement to be complied with.

In addition, no person in the organisation shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare in pursuance of any statutory provisions.

Reporting of accidents and incidents

All accidents or incidents involving moving and handling operations should be reported, including "near-misses" (where an accident could have occurred but was narrowly avoided). Staff must complete an incident form following any accident or incident and statements should be taken from witnesses to the incident whenever appropriate.

All incidents should be investigated and accident statistics and reports regularly reviewed by senior management to identify any trends or patterns.

Staff injured at work

Manual handling accidents are covered by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). According to RIDDOR, all manual handling accidents and injuries should be recorded and reported to the HSE if they result in staff being off work for seven days or more. All staff injured at work should be given appropriate support and any staff who have suffered from a manual handling injury should see their GP as soon as possible.



All staff returning from work after a prolonged absence with a musculoskeletal injury or disorder should have a return to work plan and an interview which may include occupational health input if appropriate.

Staff should be encouraged and supported to come back to work where possible and this may often involve some temporary or longer-term adjustment on the part of the organisation to ensure that they do not suffer a recurrence of their injury.

Any necessary alterations to a member of staff's job after an accident should be made in line with current Equality Act 2010 guidelines.

Lifting equipment

Any manual handling equipment provided should be maintained in a safe condition to use and be subject to regular inspections by a responsible person. Records of all such equipment and their maintenance schedules are kept in the central office.

Training

All staff will be given adequate training and information on manual handling risks and how to avoid them. Such training should focus on specific tasks and equipment as well as on the more general information required to carry out safe manual handling. All staff will be trained to assess whether or not a load is too heavy to carry.

All new staff should be encouraged to read the policy on health and safety and on manual handling as part of their induction process. Existing staff will be offered training covering basic information about health and safety. All staff are expected to attend manual handling refresher training. In addition, all staff will be appropriately trained to perform their duties safely and competently and those staff who need to use specialist equipment will be fully trained and supervised while they are developing their competency.