Manual Handling Policy and Risk Assessment

Policy statement

At Binfield Preschool we believe that the health and safety of our staff and children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff, and volunteers by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks to enable everyone be safe and thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

We follow five steps to assess risk:

1. Identification of risk: Where is it and what is it?
2. Who is at risk: Staff, children, parents, and visitors?
3. Assessment of level of risk: Is it high, medium, low.
   What is the likelihood of it happening?
   What would be the impact?
4. Control measures to reduce/eliminate risk: What needs to be done to limit the risk and by whom?
   How will we ensure it is done?
5. Monitoring and review: How will we assess if the measures are working? Or need to be adjusted?
   If measures are not working, how will we amend them or find a better solution?

Procedures

Manual Handling

As it is not possible to eliminate manual handling altogether, correct handling techniques must be followed to minimize the risks of injury. A variety of injuries may result from poor manual handling and staff must all be aware and adhere to our manual handling policy.

Lifting and carrying children is different to carrying static loads and our manual handling training should reflect this.
Preventing injuries

Where manual handling tasks cannot be avoided, they must be assessed as part of the risk assessment. This involves examining the tasks and deciding what the risks associated with them are, and how these can be removed or reduced by adding control measures.

As part of a manual handling assessment the following should be considered:

• The task to be carried out
• The load to be moved – size (width, height), weight, ease of holding
• The environment in which the object is to be moved
• The capability of the individual involved in the manual handling
• The number of people required to lift the object
• The proximity of the children to the object

Planning and Minimising Risk

• 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 (shortest route)
• Carry loads close to the body, lifting and carrying a load at arm’s length increases the risk of injury
• Avoid awkward movements, such as stooping, reaching or twisting. Ensure the task is well designed and that procedures are followed
• Try not to lift from the floor or above should height. Limit the distances for carrying
• Minimise repetitive actions by re-designing and rotating tasks
• Consider a resting point before moving a heavy load or carrying something any distance
• Plan ahead – use teamwork where the load is too heavy for one person
• Never attempt manual handling unless you are aware of the correct techniques
• Ensure that you can undertake 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 without help. If not, get help or use specialist moving equipment e.g. a trolley. Bear in mind that it may be too dangerous to attempt to lift some loads
• If more than one person is involved, plan the lift first and agree who will lead and give instructions
• Plan your route, remove any obstructions and for hazards, such as uneven or slippery flooring
• Make sure you have sufficient lighting to be able to see clearly where you are going
• Control harmful loads, e.g. cover sharp edges and secure /loose opening parts. If moving liquids, ensure hot liquids are covered and spills are wiped up immediately
• Check whether you need any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and obtain the necessary items, if appropriate. Check the equipment before use and check that it fits you

**Position for Lifting**
• Stand in front of the load with your feet apart and your leading leg forward. Your weight should be even over both feet
• Position yourself (or turn the load around) so that the heaviest part is next to you. If the load is too far away, move toward it or bring it nearer before starting the lift. 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 shoulders level, without twisting or turning from the hips
• Try to grip with the hands around the base of the load
• Bring load to waist height, keeping lift as smooth as possible

**Moving a heavy load**
• Move the feet, keeping the load close to the body
• Proceed carefully, making sure that you can see where you are going
• Lower the load, reversing the procedure for lifting
• Avoid crushing fingers or toes as you put the load down
• Position and secure the load after putting it down. Make sure it is placed on a stable base
• Report any problems immediately, for example, strains and sprains.
• Where there are changes, e.g. to the activity or the load, the task must be reassessed

**Lifting/Carrying Children**
• Lifting children is not the same as lifting an object. Children move
• If the child is old enough, ask him/her to move to a position that makes it easier for you to pick them up
• Ask the child 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 I in order to balance his/her weight equally
• Wherever possible, avoid carrying the child a long distance
• Where a child is unable to hold onto you, ensure you support them fully within your arms
• Avoid carrying anything else while carrying a child. Instead make two journeys or ask a colleague to assist you
• If a child is struggling or fidgeting whilst you are carrying them, stop, place him/her back down and use reassuring words to calm the child before continuing
• Students, pregnant staff members should not carry children
• Do not carry a child up or down stairs if they are old enough to walk. If the child is ill or unable to walk, always call for assistance
• Do not unnecessarily carry small children. If they are capable, encourage them to walk

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<td>Adrian Hone</td>
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