



SAFE MOVING AND HANDLING POLICY

Reviewed policy agreed by GB on:	Autumn 2026
Reviewed policy shared with staff on:	Autumn 2026
Policy to be reviewed again on:	Autumn 2027
Committee responsible for review:	Policy Committee

Rationale

At Willow Dene we value the health and safety of children and young people and our staff team. In order to reach their potential in their learning and physical development and to ensure comfortable, safe and varied positioning, some of our children and young people require handling and moving. We aim to make this process safe, manageable and as comfortable as possible for all by following the recommendations as set in the Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992/Amended 2023) and Lifting Equipment, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (1998), Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (1998) and HSE Manual Handling at Work (rev. 2020)

As an employer, we protect our employees from the risk of injury and ill health from hazardous manual handling tasks in the workplace. Moving and handling (manual handling) is one of the main causes in the development of musculoskeletal disorders, particularly back pain. Heavy manual labour, repetitive handling, awkward postures and previous or existing injuries or conditions are all risk factors for developing MSDs. Work may also make worse an injury which was not caused at work, such as a sports injury. We encourage workers to report any signs and symptoms to us at an early stage, before they become more serious, so we can take steps to reduce the risk. If employees have developed symptoms, we actively consider taking advice from an occupational health provider on a worker's fitness for work and any restrictions or adaptations to their work that may be required

Manual Handling Regulations

The Manual Handling Regulations set out a clear hierarchy of measures that we follow to prevent and manage the risks from hazardous manual handling. These are:

- avoid hazardous manual handling operations, 'so far as reasonably practicable'
- assess the risk of injury to workers from any hazardous manual handling that can't be avoided
- reduce the risk of injury to workers from hazardous manual handling to as low as reasonably practicable

Employees should:

- follow systems of work in place for their health and safety
- use properly any equipment provided for their health and safety
- cooperate with the school on health and safety matters
- inform the school if things change or they identify hazardous handling activities
- take care to make sure their activities do not put others at risk

Avoiding hazardous manual handling:

In order to avoid hazardous manual handling we consider the following, bearing in mind that we are specifically considering the moving and handling of people as part of our core business as well as other work-related manual handling tasks:

- Can we eliminate hazardous manual handling by not moving loads? for example, by looking at whether the work could be done in a different way
- Does the item really need to be moved, or can the activity be done safely where it already is by redesigning the task?
- Can products or materials be delivered directly to where they will be used?
- If handling the load cannot be avoided, can operations be automated or mechanised to eliminate the manual part of the handling.
- Can you use materials handling equipment or mechanical aids to eliminate or reduce the risks you identify in your risk assessment?

Assessment of the risks:

Where we identify risks from hazardous manual handling in our workplace that cannot be avoided, we will do a manual handling risk assessment to help us decide what to do to manage these risks. Employees are fully involved in the risk assessment process. We consider risks arising from:

- the task;
- the load;
- the working environment;
- individual capacity;
- any materials handling equipment or handling aids used;
- how we organise and allocate work;
- the pace, frequency and duration of the work.

Aims

A safe working environment and the meeting of children's needs will be provided through

- Risk assessments of all hazards and the elimination or control of associated risks
- Safe and appropriate equipment and machinery
- Safe and healthy working and learning environments
- Safe systems of work including monitoring and review procedures
- Appropriate employee training, information, instruction and supervision

Guidelines

To make moving and handling a positive experience for all involved and to reduce the risk of injury, staff are expected to ensure that:

- They have undertaken annual training in Safe Moving and Handling as planned in the school's mandatory training schedule

- They have read the Safe Moving and Handling Policy
- They have read an up to date moving and handling care plan incorporating individual risk assessment and moving and handling profile for each child in their care who requires physical support to move
- They explain clearly to children and young people, what is happening and why at all times
- Every child is in a comfortable and appropriate position to enable them to learn to their full potential

The Head Teacher, Principal Premises Officer and Moving and Handling Coordinator are expected to ensure that:

- Policies, risk assessments and profiles are reviewed and updated regularly
- All staff have access to documentation and are aware of expectations
- Moving and Handling Training is provided annually for all staff
- Profiles are easily accessible
- Equipment is provided in line with best practice on risk assessments
- Equipment is maintained in accordance with regulations

Assessment

Generic risk assessments will be carried out for activities and locations for high risk activities that take place within the school day. The Principle Premises Officer is responsible for these.

Individual risk assessments will be carried out on all children which highlight the risks associated with individual children in all aspects of their care. These are monitored by members of the SLT and are stored electronically as well as in classrooms. They are updated annually.

There is an up to date moving and handling profile for all children identified as needing moving and handling. These include a clearly defined assessment of risk and use the agreed Willow Dene format. These will be carried out by the leadership team in conjunction with class teams. Factors to be addressed while assessing include task, individual, load, equipment and environment. The care plans clearly state how children should be moved and assisted to access activities throughout the day.

All children who are likely to need moving and handling will be part of the risk assessment process. Moving and handling profiles will be reviewed annually or sooner if the need arises. New children will be referred for a risk assessment on arrival in school.

Training

Training will be conducted for all staff on a yearly basis. This will take place virtually or in either small class/group settings. Moving and handling training for new staff

requiring training in moving & handling will be part of the induction process and will happen during the induction period.

Equipment

Equipment used for moving and handling of people within the school includes fixed and mobile hoists, adjustable height changing beds, slide sheets, hoistable changing beds and pool pod. Children are individually measured for slings, which are then solely for their use and are labelled as such. Some children will have both a sitting and a standing sling. The slings provided in school are compatible with any of the school hoists. Staff are required to carry out pre-use checks on equipment and where applicable to report any faults immediately. A qualified person checks equipment every six months to ensure that it is in good working order (LOLER, 98).

Reporting concerns and accidents

Accidents and injuries involving staff or children must be recorded and reported in the accident book, which is held in the office.

Specific concerns involving moving and handling should be recorded on the moving and handling concerns forms, which are kept with the accident books. These should be returned directly to the class line manager.

Reference should also be made to the school 'accidents and illness guidelines'.

Individuals at Risk

The school recognises that some people may be more at risk of injury than others and the school carefully considers their individual requirements through a system of personalised risk assessments, where necessary. People who may be more at risk of injury include:

- New or expectant mothers
- People with disabilities, which may make it more difficult to do a particular task
- Those returning to work after a recent manual handling injury, who may be on a phased return to work
- Inexperienced new, young or temporary workers
- Older workers
- Contractors, homeworkers or lone workers
- Workers who may not have English as their first language.
- Workers' psychological responses to their work and workplace conditions i.e. workloads, deadlines

Pregnancy

The MHOR states that where the employer is aware of pregnancy, allowances must be made in the duties carried out by the employee. Issues such as long periods of standing and walking, hormonal changes to ligaments and joints and increasing difficulty with posture will reduce manual handling capabilities. There is a specific risk assessment to be completed for pregnant staff.

Equal Opportunities

At Willow Dene we support the right of children and young people to access all activities on offer to them in school. Correct handling and the use of equipment will enable children to access activities and their environment. Children and young people have the right to be moved in a safe way that will not cause injury to themselves or others. All our staff have the right to be aware of risks and control measures and to work free of the risk of injury in a safe and positive working environment.

