



# Wattisham Airfield Childcare Centre

## Manual Handling

In order to make our nursery a safe working environment for all our staff and students we must be aware of the dangers of lifting and the safe way to do so and promote this throughout the nursery.

### **Description**

Manual handling is a method of moving materials, equipment or people without the aid of mechanical devices.

### **Main hazards**

Injuries may be caused by adopting an incorrect method of lifting, attempting to lift something which is too heavy or of an awkward shape or an object which is sharp. Difficulties may also be created if the load is of such a size as to obscure vision and in such circumstances trips and falls may result.

### **Manual handling procedure**

#### **The lift**

The key factors are:

1. Balance
2. Position of the back
3. Positioning of the arms and the body

#### 4. The hold

##### **Balance**

Since balance depends essentially upon the position of the feet, they should be apart about hip breadth with one foot advanced, giving full balance sideways and forward without tension.

In taking up this position, lifting is done by bending at the knees instead of the hips and the muscles that are brought into use are those of the thigh and the back

##### **Position of the back**

Straight- not necessarily vertical

The spine must be kept rigid and straight, not necessarily vertical. The spine can be kept straight if it is within 15-20 degrees from the vertical. This, coupled with a bent knee position, allows the centre line of gravity of the body to be over the weight, so reducing strain.

##### **Position of the arms and body**

The further the arms are away from the body, the greater the strain on the shoulders, chest and back.

The elbows must at all times be close to body

Arms should be straight when carrying a load. To achieve this, one hand should be advanced to the other, whichever foot is placed forward, the same hand is extended, the other hand is kept close to the body, this position ensures that the elbows are into the sites, this coupled with the correct foot position, ensures a safe and easy fit.

Arms close to the body.

The further weight is way from the centre line of gravity of the lifter, the greater the strain. At all times get close to the weight and try to make it part of you.

## **The hold**

When grasping a weight, one often hears the phrase “get a good hold”. A good hold means a grasp with the roots of the fingers, not just the tips, plus contact of the weight with the palm of the hand.

One must never forget that size and build has no bearing upon the amount any one individual can lift, you should know your own capabilities, never attempt to exceed them, and if in doubt get help, it is far better to be safe than sorry.

Besides the key factors, there are other important points to remember.

- Centre line of gravity

It is essential that the weight of the object and the centre line of gravity of the lifter should be as close as possible to one another. This reduces strain, discomfort and the likelihood of loss of balance during the course of the lift.

- Testing the weight

When in the initial position for the lift, the lifter should make sure it is within their capability and not too heavy for one person to lift. Many accidents happen when a person raises an object a few inches off the floor, realises it is too heavy and let's go.

- The shape of the weight

Not the shape of the object. It should be turned, if possible, so that the shortest measurement of rectangle is nearer to the centre line of gravity.

- Movement

The movement should be controlled and smooth. The weight should be kept close to the body.

Rhythm plays an important part in reducing tension and creating relaxation.

Before moving any loads, the job should be sized up and possible hazards moved or rectified.

- An inspection of the load itself must be made to ensure that it can be moved without danger to the lifter or others.

The following check list can be usefully applied to all lifting jobs.

1. When lifting anything that may have jagged edges, wear protective gloves.
2. If the load is heavy or too large for one person to handle, help should be obtained.
3. Jerking a load will add a little extra force, but it will also cause severe strain to the arm, back and shoulder.
4. Even if a load is light in weight, it is dangerous to carry if it is large enough to obscure vision.
5. If the load to be lifted exceed half the weight of the person lifting, it is more than likely that the individual will lose their balance.

**NOTE** if in any doubt **GET HELP!**

### **Lifting children**

Regular manual lifting and handling of children, particularly those with physical disabilities, can present significant risk to both the child and the staff. Only those staff whose contract of employment requires them to lift children and where they have been suitably trained should regularly lift children.

When lifting children, the same principles as for lifting any object should be applied, however the potential for the child to move whilst being lifted must be considered.

- Place your feet apart to give balanced stable base for lifting.
- Your body should face in the direction which you intend to move.
- Bend knees and keep the back straight
- When lifting the child keep the child close to you.
- Have a good hold grip of the child
- Are you wearing appropriate clothing, will your clothing snag on the child or restrict your movement?
- Are you wearing flat shoes?
- Do not bend, twist, stoop or lean back.
- Know your own capacity ask for help if required.

Always ensure there is a clear, unobstructed route between the child whom is being lifted and the place in where they are being put down. If not, clear away obstructions and arrange for doors to be held open if necessary.

**Carrying children:**

If the child is old enough ask them to move to a position that is easy to pick up, ask them 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 in order to balance their weight equally.

Wherever possible, avoid carrying the child a long distance.

Where a child is young and is unable to hold onto you, ensure you support them fully within your arms.

Avoid carrying anything else when carrying a child. Make two journeys or ask a colleague to assist you.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Held on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Date to be reviewed \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee \_\_\_\_\_

Name of signatory \_\_\_\_\_

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) \_\_\_\_\_

**Review dates:**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **signed** \_\_\_\_\_



