

# Moving and handling of children and young people with physical (mobility) difficulties



Learning Together, Achieving Forever  
Dysgu Ynghyd, Cyflawni o Hyd

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Physical & Medical Needs  
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### **Introduction**

This policy is about children and young people who have physical difficulties affecting their mobility and the staff supporting them with this.

Having physical difficulties can be profound for some children and young people. It can affect their independence and how they access learning. It can also have an impact on their health and wellbeing. Other children and young people may have difficulty getting around the school and playground, sitting in the classroom, or with personal care and toileting.

Staff can help children and young people with physical (mobility) difficulties by moving and supporting them, sometimes with special equipment. This is known as moving and handling. It is also called manual handling.

This policy explains how we will approach moving and handling at St Martin's School. We want to do this as safely as possible so that we reduce the risk of injury to everyone involved.

Moving and handling can be harmful if it is not done properly. Therefore, it is very important that everyone follows this policy.

### **Vision and Aims**

At St Martin's School, we want our children and young people with physical (mobility) difficulties to:

- ❖ be happy
- ❖ enjoy their education and have equal opportunities
- ❖ be safe
- ❖ be involved in their care

- ❖ be confident about the support they receive
- ❖ achieve their full potential

We also want our staff to be as knowledgeable, confident and safe as possible when undertaking moving and handling activities.

This policy explains how we will achieve these aims.

## Legislation

Our approach to safer moving and handling of children and young people is based on complying with the following relevant legislation, including:

- Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA), 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work (Amendment) Regulations (MHSWR), 2006 –
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations (MHOR), 1992
- Equality Act (EqA), 2010
- Mental Capacity Act (MCA), 2005 – for young people over 16 years
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER), 1998
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER), 1998
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), 2013

We will also follow the *Safer moving and handling for children and young people with physical (mobility) difficulties* policy (Caerphilly Council, June 2024).

## Guiding principles

In line with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, we will:

- ❖ **Avoid hazardous** moving and handling situations, wherever possible
- ❖ **Assess** hazardous moving and handling activities that cannot be avoided
- ❖ **Reduce** the risk of injury to everyone by following the risk assessment
- ❖ Provide information on hazards and how to avoid them
- ❖ **Review** moving and handling risk assessments when either needs change or are no longer valid.

## Training

At St Martin's School, all staff who have been identified to complete moving and handling of children and young people training will receive appropriate training following the All Wales Passport and Information Scheme. This training focuses on and includes:

- ❖ an overview of relevant legislation
- ❖ the responsibilities on employers and employees
- ❖ the need for, and importance of, following risk assessments
- ❖ an awareness of the spine
- ❖ ways to avoid musculoskeletal injuries
- ❖ an explanation of why 'controversial handling techniques' should not be used
- ❖ bespoke practical training session for staff to demonstrate how to apply safer handling techniques
- ❖ the purpose of small manual handling aids and how these can benefit both staff and children or young people.

A record of all staff training and associated competencies will be kept by the school and by the Moving and Handling Key Handler Team.

The course ensures that the standards within the All Wales Manual Handling Training Passport & Information Scheme have been met to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injuries caused by poor manual handling in our school. By developing an understanding of Moving and Handling Training the risk of injury to our staff and the cost of absences for the school is significantly reduced.

Theory and legislation training is only completed once whilst practical training is assessed for continued approval and appropriateness via a competency assessment.

## Risk Assessment and Handling Plan

Because moving and handling can cause injuries, staff and school will avoid such tasks where possible (to ensure a safe system of work), by:

- encouraging a child or young person to do as much as they can themselves, perhaps with assistive equipment
- encouraging a child or young person to help as much as possible
- using lifting equipment where appropriate.

If moving and handling cannot be avoided, or if lifting equipment is needed, school will make sure a risk assessment and handling plan (if needed) is in place.

As the occupationally competent person the Moving and Handling Key Handler will write the risk assessment and this document will be validated/quality assured by either the Headteacher or setting leader whose responsibility it will be to implement any actions and recommendations.

As the occupationally competent person the Moving and Handling Key Handler will write the handling plan and this document will be validated/quality assured by a second Moving and Handling Key Handler. It is the responsibility of the school or early years to follow the advice and recommendations as outlined in the handling plan.

The risk assessment will consider who could be harmed or injured during the task and what can be done to reduce the risk of such harm or injury. It will help school to identify safer systems of work, such as:

- introducing approved moving and handling techniques
- using small handling aids and equipment (e.g. slide sheets, kneeling pads and handling belts).

The moving and handling risk assessment and handling plan will also detail the daily moving and handling tasks to be undertaken in school, when how and by whom. It will consider the child or young person's capability, medical needs, behaviour, and any other needs.

The risk assessment and handling plan will be shared with all relevant staff so that safer systems of work are followed.

School will ensure that the risk assessment and handling plans are updated every 12 months or sooner if incidents or when needs change that will affect moving and handling.

## Equipment

Some children and young people with physical (mobility) difficulties will have specialist equipment in school or setting. This equipment is usually recommended by either:

- an occupational therapist or physiotherapist for equipment such as specialist seating, standing frames and walking aids or by
- a moving and handling key handler for equipment to support with helping with moving and handling tasks, such as hoisting and transfers.

At St Martin's School all specialist equipment will be used in line with the manufacturer's instructions and all relevant staff will receive competency training in how to use it before doing so. Training in the use of specialist equipment will be provided by either the therapist and/or manufacturer, or by a moving and handling key handler, whichever is the most appropriate.

Staff will check all moving and handling equipment (including slings) before and after each use to check that it is safe, undamaged and clean.

If staff have concerns about the safety of specialist equipment, they will not use this and report it to the Headteacher immediately.

If appropriate, the specialist equipment will be taken out of use and labelled unsafe.

The Headteacher will ensure that all equipment at the school is maintained according to both the manufacturer's and legal requirements, ensuring compliance with Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998 and where necessary, Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998. Equipment will also be cleaned after each use.

## Falls

If a child or young person with mobility difficulties begins to fall, staff at St Martin's School will not attempt to catch them, in line with moving and handling guidance.

However, if **all** the conditions below apply, staff can choose whether to implement a controlled descent to the floor:

- training has been received on controlled descents to the floor
- the falling child or young person is directly next to the staff at the time they are falling
- staff are in a position to support them to the floor
- staff are not putting themselves in danger.

A fallen child or young person will not be moved if it places them or staff at risk of injury or harm. Staff will seek advice from a first aider or moving and handling trained staff.

## Staff clothing and footwear

All staff undertaking moving and handling activities must wear appropriate clothes, footwear and PPE (where required to do so) such as gloves and aprons.

Clothes and jewellery that present a risk must be removed before completing moving and handling tasks.

Staff must be mindful of wearing appropriate and comfortable clothing when performing moving and handling activities to preserve personal dignity.

Shoes must be flat and be closed at the front and back to protect the feet.

Where possible, staff, children and young people with long hair should tie this back for moving and handling tasks.

All staff supporting personal care needs will wear appropriate PPE and adhere to infection prevention and control procedures.

## Headteacher/Leader's responsibilities

The Headteacher or Leader will ensure that the school or setting:

- is compliant with relevant moving and handling legislation.
- has a policy for the moving and handling of children and young people with physical (mobility) difficulties and that staff are familiar with this.
- complies with the requirements of this policy and associated Management arrangements.
- avoids hazardous moving and handling tasks, where reasonably practicable (for example, by eliminating the need for the task, or by using relevant equipment).
- puts processes in place to monitor that safe working methods are followed e.g. through key handlers trainers or supervision.
- provides employees with access to all the information and/or equipment required to enable safe moving and handling, ensure the most suitable equipment is provided, an inventory is kept of all moving and handling equipment used and that all equipment it is maintained in a safe working order.
- where required, provides appropriate training to all staff before they carry out moving and handling of children or young to ensure they are aware of current practices and techniques, and confirm that they are physically fit to perform manual handling tasks. Where employees have a medical/ill-health issue (including those which are non-work related), which affects their ability to work safely, they must be referred to Occupational Health.
- identifies and records moving and handling tasks which present a risk of injury to staff, and/or the child or young person they are supporting.

- identifies individuals able to carry out moving and handling risk assessments and ensure that those undertaking moving and handling risk assessments are adequately trained and competent to undertake manual handling risk assessments within their area of responsibility.
- where moving and handling activities cannot be avoided, arrange for risk assessments to identify safer systems of work to be undertaken in line with the applicable management arrangement. Following the assessment appropriate action must be taken, details must be brought to the attention of employees as appropriate, and the assessment must be recorded, monitored and reviewed.
- updates risk assessments annually or sooner if there is a change in circumstance, such as a child or young person growing, their condition deteriorating or a change in classroom or support staff, etc.
- keeps records of training and any refresher training and ensure that they are maintained in line with record keeping guidelines.
- supervises new staff carrying out moving and handling tasks
- records, reports and fully investigates incidents which result in injury and ensure systems of work and risk assessments are reviewed
- identifies all those activities that carry a musculoskeletal risk
- informs existing and new employees of the risks of developing MSDs at work, particularly those who carry out high risk jobs/tasks.
- informs employees about simple steps they can take to prevent MSDs and minimize the long-term impact of new/existing MSDs through the risk assessment process.
- provides an accessible and useable system for reporting Musculoskeletal Disorders and encourage employees to report symptoms early.
- monitors and reviews individual cases of MSD.
- provides additional support to an employee who is experiencing musculoskeletal disorder symptoms.
- provides suitable and sufficient personal protective equipment for employees carrying out manual handling operations and ensure that where uniforms/work clothes are provided they will not restrict movement or posture whilst carrying out handling procedures.

## Staff responsibilities

Staff who undertake moving and handling tasks, in relation to children and young people with mobility difficulties must ensure that they comply with their responsibilities under relevant legislation by:

- safeguarding their own health and safety and that of any person who may be affected by their actions
- familiarising themselves with the policy for the moving and handling of children and young people with physical (mobility) difficulties
- alerting line managers of any training needs they may have.
- following safe systems of work. Undertake moving and handling operations in the way in which they have been instructed and trained and as specified in the moving and handling risk assessments and any safe working practices
- using equipment provided and reporting faults to line management immediately
- using equipment provided in accordance with the instruction and training received. Where provided utilise appropriate equipment in accordance with manufacturers recommendation. The equipment must be used for its intended purpose and in line with information, instruction and training the employee has received.
- attending training as required and apply the knowledge gained to all moving and handling tasks. Bring to the attention of line managers any training needs they may have.
- reporting all incidents, including 'near misses' which have or could have caused injury to staff, children or young people, so that the risk assessment can be reviewed to prevent future incidents occurring
- informing line management if they are unable to perform normal moving and handling duties
- identifying and informing managers of any new activity, equipment or change in circumstance that requires a risk assessment or review of an existing document.
- only performing moving and handling tasks which they believe are within their physical capability. Advise managers of loads which they believe to be too heavy, bulky, unwieldy, unstable, unpredictable or intrinsically harmful for them to handle, giving reasons.
- complying with the school or setting's policy regarding suitable clothing and footwear so as not to cause injury to themselves or others
- undertaking visual checks on equipment prior to use and ensure that damaged or faulty equipment is not used and that defects are reported immediately to their Line Manager.

- ensuring that personal protective equipment is in good condition and will not be restrictive to the movement and posture required for safe handling
- wearing appropriate flat/low heeled footwear that will support, protect and enclose the foot during moving and handling operations.
- removing badges, pens, ties and buckles etc. that may cause injury or prevent safe handling.
- completing relevant documentation where appropriate
- completing (where appropriate) a dynamic risk assessment prior to commencing a task using the Task, Individual, Load and Environment (TILE) principles. This is an assessment carried out by a person to examine the risk to themselves and others who may be affected by an action. If necessary they MUST communicate their findings to their Line Manager.

## Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years and updated if needed.

## Approval

Approved by:

..... (Optional) Moving & Handling Lead

..... Headteacher

..... Governing/Responsible Body