Moving and Lifting Children Policy (Manual Handling)

LIGHTHOUSE
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

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Approved/ Ratified:	Pat Hunt
Review Dates:	September 2028

Document Version Control Log

Version	Modification Date	Synopsis of Changes
1.0	October 2025	
2.0	September 2026	Policy reviewed and updated with current legislation Appendix 1 examples of lifting updated Policy list updated as new Trust policy – Safer Moving and Handing for pupils with Physical disabilities and complex needs

Introduction

At the Lighthouse Multi Academy Trust we recognise that staff particularly within Early Years, SRP's (Specialist Resources Provisions), ARP (Additionally Resourced Provision) or SEN provision may need to carry out manual handling especially in relation to lifting, moving or carrying children on occasions.

The Trust will ensure that moving and handling practices support the requirements of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers (effective from 1 September 2026)**, including the requirement to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well.

Moving and handling arrangements will be proportionate to the child's age, stage of development, individual needs and circumstances and will promote the child's **safety, welfare, dignity, inclusion and independence** wherever reasonably practicable.

Here is a list of some examples of where this policy comes into practice:

EYFS	**SEND/complex needs**	**Older children**
• babies/young children; • nappy changing; • steps/changing units; • toileting; • settling; • distressed children; • children who cannot yet walk; • emergency evacuation.	• physical disability; • wheelchair users; • standing frames; • hoists/equipment; • postural needs; • medical conditions; • sensory processing needs. **For any of the above the 'Safer Moving and Handling for Physical Disabilities and complex needs policy should be followed.*	• emergency evacuation; • injury; • dangerous situations; • physical intervention where applicable.

*the list is not exhaustive

Moving and handling arrangements will support the academy's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people.

Training

A variety of injuries may result from poor manual handling and staff must all be aware and adhere to the moving and handling children policy. We instruct all staff in correct handling techniques and expect them to follow these to minimise the risks of injury. We know that lifting, moving and carrying children is different to carrying static loads and therefore our moving and handling children policy reflects this. Each academy will deliver training on moving and handling children to all staff at the start of their employment and annually.

Staff receive:

- appropriate manual-handling training;
- practical demonstration where required;
- information about individual children;
- additional training where specialist handling is required;
- refresher training when necessary;
- training following an incident or identified practice concern.

Online resources may supplement, but will not replace, appropriate instruction, practical demonstration and competency assessment where these are required. Academies can share some examples of videos on moving and handling to use as a discussion *(Appendix 3)*

Staff must not use specialist moving and handling equipment unless they have received appropriate instruction and, where necessary, demonstrated competence in its use. *Please see Safer Moving and Handling for Physical disabilities and Complex needs policy for further information.*

Where manual handling tasks cannot be avoided, for example lifting children we carry out a risk assessment by examining and deciding what the risks associated with them are, and how these can be removed or reduced by adding control measures. *(Appendix 2 Moving and Handling pupils risk assessment)*

Our manual handling assessment considers the following:

- The **task** to be carried out – The child needs to be lifted or carried
- The **load** to be moved -The weight and age of the child to be lifted or carried
- The **environment** in which handling takes place – Look at the physical environment where the task is conducted, including space constraints, temperature, and lighting.
- The **capability of the individual** involved in the manual handling - Physical fitness, age, and experience impact an employee's ability to perform manual tasks safely

We expect staff to use the following policy when carrying out manual handling in order to reduce the risk of injury.

Staff will only pick up and carry a child if it is absolutely necessary and cannot be avoided.

Scenarios where you might need to lift or carry a child

A child is:

- still crawling and cannot walk and needs to be carried out during an emergency (e.g. fire alarm, smart response level)

Where a child requires physical assistance during an emergency evacuation, staff must follow the academy's fire evacuation procedures and the child's individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), where applicable.

- an autistic child screams and froze during routines fire bell and needed to be carried out
- a child runs off during a fire drill may need their hand holding or carrying/ holding
- standing on a table and needs to be picked up and lifted down
- struggling to detach from parent due to attachment issue and is carried in by an adult
- A distressed child may require appropriate physical reassurance or support in accordance with their age and needs.
- climbing up the academy fence
- struggling to climb the steps of the nappy changing unit

Parental consent

Where reasonably practicable, routine physical assistance, lifting or carrying should be discussed with the child's parent/carer and should take account of the child's individual needs and any agreed moving and handling plan. Parental consent should not be treated as a substitute for appropriate risk assessment, professional advice or staff judgement.

Where immediate action is necessary to protect a child or another person from harm, staff must act reasonably and proportionately in accordance with this policy and the academy's relevant procedures. Staff must act reasonably, proportionately and in accordance with the academy's safeguarding, behaviour, positive handling and restrictive intervention procedures.

Where physical intervention has been required in an emergency, the incident must be recorded and reported in accordance with the academy's procedures.

Restrictive intervention and physical intervention

Definitions:

- **Routine physical assistance** — helping a child stand, supporting them when walking, lifting a young child where necessary, assisting with personal care etc.
- **Physical intervention** — physical assistance/intervention to prevent immediate harm.
- **Restrictive intervention** — deliberately restricting a child's movement or liberty, including physical restraint.

This policy should not be used as a substitute for the academy's Behaviour, Positive Handling Policy.

Moving and handling a child for routine care or mobility purposes is different from using physical intervention to prevent harm or manage behaviour.

Where a child is physically guided, held, moved or carried because they are resisting or refusing to move, staff must consider whether this constitutes a restrictive intervention. Any such intervention must be necessary, reasonable, proportionate and used for the shortest time necessary.

Staff should use preventative and de-escalation approaches wherever possible. Physical intervention must not be used as a punishment, for staff convenience or simply because a child is refusing to comply.

Where physical intervention is required to prevent injury, protect a child or another person, or prevent serious damage, staff must follow the academy's current Positive Handling Policy and the Department for Education guidance on restrictive interventions.

Any use of force or restrictive intervention must be managed in accordance with the academy's current **Restrictive Interventions, including the Use of Reasonable Force Policy** and the applicable Department for Education guidance.

Every significant incident involving the use of force must be recorded and reported to the pupil's parent/carer, in accordance with current statutory requirements and DfE guidance.

Records should include the circumstances leading to the intervention, the type and duration of intervention, the reason force was considered necessary, any injuries or other consequences, and any follow-up action required.

Where a child has repeated incidents or there is a pattern of restrictive intervention, the academy should review the child's individual support, risk assessment, behaviour/SEND provision and whether additional preventative or de-escalation strategies are required.

Planning and procedure

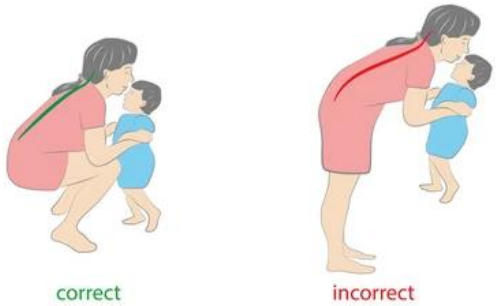
- Remember lifting children is not the same as lifting an object. Children move!
- Use the techniques listed below when manoeuvring children, e.g. to change a child's nappy, but remember to consider that the child may struggle or wriggle whilst on the move. If this happens - stop, place the child back down and start again after using reassuring words to calm the child.
- Encourage the child to hold onto you were possible, this will support you and the child when lifting.
- A child should never be held away from the body or above shoulder height.
- A child should always be held close to the body when carrying and never at arm's length. (Appendix 1- How to pick up a child correctly)
- Staff involved in manual handling of children are given briefing in safe lifting techniques as part of manual handling training and induction.
- Children should be encouraged to participate in their own mobility and moving and handling, where age, stage of development and individual needs make this appropriate.
- Children and young people to use the steps on the nappy change unit when staff are changing their nappy. Children should be supervised whilst doing so. ***They do not need to be picked up and placed on the nappy unit unless there is a medical/SEN reason why they cannot do so independently.***
- Wherever possible, avoid carrying the child a long distance
- Avoid carrying anything else when carrying a child. Make two journeys or ask a colleague to assist you
- Staff must use an age-, size- and need-appropriate handling technique that has been covered through their training and, where applicable, the child's individual moving and handling risk assessment. Children must **never** be lifted by the hands, wrists, arms, clothing or neck. Staff should avoid pulling or dragging a child. Where a child has significant physical, medical or mobility needs, staff must follow the Trust ' Safer Moving and Handling for pupils with physical disabilities and complex needs' policy, child's individual handling plan and any advice provided by appropriate health or specialist professionals.
- All moving and handling of a child or young person should be undertaken in a caring, sensitive manner, respecting their dignity at all times.
- Manual handling training will be conducted at the start of employment and during induction. Regular face to face staff meetings/training sessions will be provided for ongoing training.
- If a child is struggling or fidgeting whilst you are carrying them, stop, place them back down and use reassuring words to calm the child before continuing
- **Volunteers, students will not carry children,** ***unless in an emergency situation where a staff member has asked them to do so.***
- Pregnant workers will not undertake manual handling of children where their individual risk assessment identifies that the task presents a risk to their health or safety or that of the child. The academy will review the risk assessment throughout pregnancy and following any relevant change in circumstances.
- Any employee, who fails to follow safe practice, or puts themselves, a colleague or child or young person at risk, may be subject to Disciplinary Procedure.

Manual Handling techniques

Position
Stand in front of the child with your feet apart and your leading leg forward. Your weight should be even over both feet. Position yourself, so it is easier to lift the child. If the child is too far away, move closer before starting the lift. Do not twist your body to pick them 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 the shoulders level, without twisting or turning
- Try to grip with the hands
- Bring the load to waist height, keeping the lift as smooth as possible



The task

- Carry the child close to the body, as lifting and carrying the load at arm's length increases the risk of injury

The environment

- Ensure that the surroundings are safe. Flooring should be even and not slippery, lighting should be adequate, and the temperature and humidity should be suitable
- Remove obstructions to ensure there are no trip hazards when carrying a child.

The individual

- Staff must only undertake manual handling where they have received appropriate training and where the handling is necessary, reasonable and appropriate to the child's needs. Where an individual handling plan is required, staff must follow that plan.
- Ensure that you are capable of undertaking the task – people with health problems and pregnant women may be particularly at risk of injury.
- Where applicable and age/stage appropriate encourage children to use steps for the nappy changing unit rather than lifting. Where this is not appropriate always follow the lifting process.

Record and Review

Manual handling incidents and interventions must be recorded through the appropriate academy system according to the circumstances. The following arrangements apply:

Routine manual handling	Recorded through the child's individual plan/risk assessment where appropriate.
Accident/injury **Emergency lifting**	Follow academy accident/first-aid reporting. Record according to the academy's incident procedures.
Physical/restrictive intervention	Record in accordance with the current restrictive-intervention requirements.
Safeguarding concern	Record on CPOMs and follow safeguarding procedures.
Allegation or concern about staff conduct	Follow safeguarding/LADO procedures.

Safeguarding
Any concern that a child's handling has been inappropriate, excessive, unsafe, humiliating or inconsistent with this policy must be reported immediately to the DSL and Director of safeguarding and attendance, and managed in accordance with the academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Examples of this may include:

- a child is repeatedly carried;
- a child is physically resistant;
- an adult loses patience;
- a child alleges they were hurt;
- there is an allegation about an adult;
- there is unexplained injury;
- an intervention appears disproportionate.

Legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers – effective 1 September 2026
- **DfE: Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools – effective from 1 April 2026**

The main legislation governing the manual handling of children in the UK is the **Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (MHOR),** which places a duty on employers to avoid, assess, and reduce risks associated with moving children. This involves conducting specific risk assessments and care plans, providing appropriate training, and implementing control measures like using lifting equipment, to minimise injury to both the child and the person handling them.

Related Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures stated below support the effective application of this policy:

Academy Policies	Trust Policies
• Behaviour Policy • Fire Policy and Procedure • Health and Safety Policy • Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy • Smart Response Policy	• Intimate Care Policy • Positive Handling Policy • Safer Moving and Handling for pupils with physical disabilities and complex needs

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier if necessary.

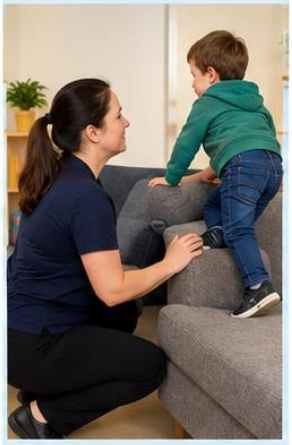
Appendix 1

How to pick up a child correctly

Pick Up a Child Safely

If a child is climbing on furniture, follow these steps to pick them up correctly:

1 Stay calm and get close



Move in close to the child, keeping your body low and stable.

Speak calmly and reassure them.

2 Support their body

Place one arm around their back and the other under their bottom or legs (depending on their size and position).

3 Lift with your legs

Use your legs, not your back, to lift.

Keep the child close to your body.

4 Hold them securely

Keep a firm hold with both arms.

Make sure the child feels safe and secure before moving away from the furniture.

5 Move away safely

Once the child is secure, step back and move them to a safe place.

DO

- ✓ Stay calm and reassuring
- ✓ Keep your back straight and use your legs
- ✓ Support their back and bottom
- ✓ Hold them close
- ✓ Move them away from the furniture safely

DON'T

- ✗ Don't pull them by their arms or hands
- ✗ Don't lift them by their clothing
- ✗ Don't bend at the waist or twist your body
- ✗ Don't rush – take your time to keep them safe

Remember

Children can be unpredictable when climbing. Picking them up safely protects both you and the child and helps prevent accidents and injuries.

Safe hands make a big difference

Picking Up a Child on the Floor

During a fire drill – if the child has no mobility

Stay calm, be kind, keep the child safe.

1 Stay calm and reassure

Speak calmly to the child, reassure them and let them know you are there to help.

2 Get into a stable position

Kneel beside the child with one knee on the floor. Place one arm behind their back and the other under their legs.

3 Support their body

Lift the child gently, keeping their body close to yours. Support their back and legs at all times.

4 Keep them close and secure

Hold the child securely with both arms, keeping their body close to your chest. Make sure their head is supported and they feel safe.

5 Move to the assembly point

Walk calmly to the assembly point, keeping the child close and supported. Stay with them until a handover can be made if needed.

Key things to remember

- ✓ Stay calm and speak reassuringly
- ✓ Use a safe lifting technique – support their back and legs
- ✓ Keep the child close to your body
- ✓ Move at a steady pace
- ✓ Always prioritise the child's safety and comfort

Avoid

- ✗ Do not pull the child up by their arms or hands
- ✗ Do not lift them by their clothing
- ✗ Do not bend at the waist or twist your body
- ✗ Do not carry them too far from their body

Remember

Every child is different.
If a child has a physical disability or a medical condition, follow their individual care plan and seek additional support if needed.

Safe hands make a big difference

Safety • Support • Together in an emergency

LIGHTHOUSE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Moving and Handling Pupils Risk Assessment

Academy Logo

Childs Name:	DOB:	Approx. Height:	Approx. Weight:

Factors to be considered when assessing manual handling tasks		
The Child – is he/she:	**Yes**	**No**
Heavy?	☐	☐
Uncooperative?	☐	☐
Difficult to grasp in relation to size/shape?	☐	☐
Unable to assist with lifting or weight bearing?	☐	☐
Unpredictable in temperament/behaviour?	☐	☐
The Tasks – do they involve:	**Yes**	**No**
Twisting?	☐	☐
Stooping/bending?	☐	☐
Long carrying distances?	☐	☐
Supporting child in static position?	☐	☐
The Working Environment(s) – are there:	**Yes**	**NO**
Limitations on movement?	☐	☐
Space restrictions?	☐	☐
Variations in levels?	☐	☐
Hot/cold/humid conditions?	☐	☐
Poor lighting levels?	☐	☐
Individual Capability – does the task:	**Yes**	**No**
Need specific strength/height?	☐	☐
Pose hazards to those with health problems?	☐	☐
Pose hazards to those who are pregnant?	☐	☐
Other factors:	**Yes**	**No**
Is movement or posture hindered by child's/employees clothing?	☐	☐
Is movement hindered by child's personal aids?	☐	☐

Assessment of Dependency	Category* (please tick)	
Able to walk independently	☐	1
Needs minimal assistance/supervision	☐	2
Needs assistance and will co-operate	☐	3
Needs assistance and may behave unpredictably	☐	4
Unable to assist but behaviour stable	☐	5
Unable to assist and may behave unpredictably	☐	6

**Categories 1 and 2 may not require completion of the remaining sections where the assessor has established that the handling activity presents no significant manual-handling risk and the existing control measures are sufficient. The assessment must be reviewed where there is a significant change in the child's needs, the task, environment, equipment, staffing or other relevant circumstances.*

Nature of Lifting Tasks							
From floor to:							
Feet	☐	Chair	☐	Changing Table	☐	Standing Frame	☐
Wheelchair	☐	Transport	☐	Other (please specify)			

Overall Moving/Handling Assessment			
Occasional assistance from one adult	☐	Frequent assistance from one adult	☐
Occasional assistance from two adults	☐	Frequent assistance from two adults	☐

Identify any special additional factors likely to affect health and safety of staff and medical factors that will affect moving and handling tasks, consider sensory impairment:

Assessor Name:	Date:	Signature:

Appendix 3- CPD

Videos on Moving and Handling children for staff CPD

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-tNlA-Kvwc
How to lift children safely - manual handling in education settings
8 minute 43 seconds

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zfhtwey17LM
Childcare 7: Moving and Handling in the Childcare Setting - BVS Training
3 minutes 29 seconds

CPD Course for Early Years Leader to attend and share with all staff

https://nationalnurserytraining.com/product/manual-handling-level-2/

Designed specifically for those working with children our manual handling course has been developed to take into consideration the range of movements that many childcare workers carry out on a daily basis. Correct manual handling technique can help to reduce back strain and instill good practice across your workforce. As part of the course we consider how we should lift correctly and also where we should ask for assistance to minimise potential injury.
£18

Other training suggestions

https://www.flicklearning.com/course/manual-handling-training-safe-lifting-of-children