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MANUAL HANDLING POLICY GUIDELINES:

- 1) This policy was formulated in January 2025 by the School Management Team and through consultation with staff at a staff meeting.
- 2) It is the intention of St. Nicholas's Special School to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all employees through the provision and maintenance of a safe place of work, safe plant and machinery and safe systems of work.
- 3) As a school that provides for pupils with physical & intellectual disabilities it is inevitable that some staff will be working in situations where there will be some Manual Handling. Hence minimal handling guidance will be required and in some instances, 'emergency' situations where the use of mechanical aids will not be possible.

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and all other relevant statutes, regulations and Orders St Nicholas's School acknowledge their responsibility to provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a school premises which will be conducive to the safety, health and welfare of all working thereon.

Manual Handling is defined as:

‘Any transporting or supporting of a load, by one or more employees and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving a load which by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions involves a risk, particularly of back injury to employees’.

Employers are required to assess the risk and where possible eliminate it or where it is not possible reduce it to the lowest possible level:

- Through Risk Assessment and risk reduction where Manual Handling cannot be avoided.
- By mechanical means.
- Through better organisation of the work.
- Provide on-going training, information and supervision.

Employees must apply the PRINCIPLES OF SAFER HANDLING:

- a) Assess the load and the area (using TILE – task, Individual, load and environment)
- b) Keep the object close to you
- c) Bend the knees
- d) Broad stable base
- e) Back in neutral (not necessarily vertical)
- f) Firm palmer grip
- g) Arms in line with the trunk
- h) Avoid lifting and twisting – turn feet in the direction of movement
- i) Move smoothly, where possible lead with the head.

It is the responsibility of the Principal, OT, Nurse and staff of the school to undertake a Risk Assessment on any handling issues within the school. This Risk Assessment will be carried out using the guidelines in the Health & Safety Policy.

St. Nicholas’s School will seek to minimise Manual Handling wherever possible and to ensure safe practices through ongoing staff training and supervision, regular risk assessments and appropriate use of resources and aids.

All staff will receive training in safe Manual Handling and Refresher training will be provided every two years in order to keep up to date with new practices and developments. It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that all new staff are put forward for training in Manual Handling and as part of their induction they are made aware of Manual Handling issues and risks.

Employees have access to an O.T. from the HSE on a formal or an informal basis as required. Where high risk situations arise all employees are required to risk assess the situation and inform the Principal.

The Principal will ensure that his/her staff follow a safe system of work and that steps are in place to reduce any risks associated with lifting and handling in their workplace. These steps may include additional resources such as safe staff levels, and the use of lifting aids, hoists etc.

It is the duty of all employees to ensure that they do not risk their own health and safety when carrying out Manual Handling activities. They should always use equipment provided to reduce lifting and handling activities. They should report any problem relating to an activity to the Principal.

Progress in Manual Handling will be monitored by considering the following:

- **Training** –the number of staff who have received training in Manual Handling
- **Observations** of working practice by OT & Physio
- **Risk assessment** –number of lifting/handling activities appropriately assessed.
- **Analysis of incident statistics** –number of injuries relating to lifting/handling
- **Analysis of sickness returns** – time lost through Manual Handling accidents and time lost through musculo-skeletal disorders of staff from lifting/handling activities at work.

In all Manual Handling activities, the wishes as well as the needs of the person are important. In this respect it is necessary to work with the person throughout the activity being sensitive to the needs of the individual for privacy and dignity whilst being mindful of the safety for all involved in the activity.

Links to other policy/planning areas.

Health & Safety Statement:

Intimate Care Policy:

Care Plans:

SPHE Curriculum – Strand unit on “Safety and Protection”.

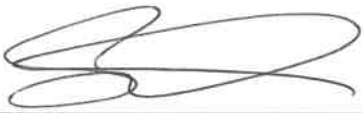
IEP's:

Physio & OT programmes:

Review:

This policy will be reviewed on a two year basis in line with up to date training. The next review date will be 2027.

Ratified by Board of Management on: 26/03/2025

Signed: 
Chairperson, Board of Management

Appendix:

Manual Handling of pupils' in St. Nicholas's.

Manual Handling of Pupils'in St. Nicholas's School.

Pupil name: Date of Birth:	Class: School Year: Teacher		
Ambulatory Pupil:	Fully independent in Walking and general Transfers		
	Some assistance required		
	Part time chair user for long Distance and outings		
Wheelchair User: Type of chair: Manual/powered	Independent in all transfers		
	Can assist with some Mobility/transfer		
	Totally dependent		
	Can weightbear		

Equipment used for transfer:	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.		
Other factors affecting manual handling	Medical	Yes	No
	Physical		
	Sensory		
	Behavioural		
	Communication		
If you ticked yes to any of the above please provide further information.			
Estimated number of transfer and Manual handling movements per day.			

Transfer technique

Tick as required:

Name of transfer	Technique used				
To and from Bus	Hoist	Ramp	Supervision	Partial Assist/ prompt	Staff required
To and from Wheelchair/buggy/ Specialised seating					
Sit to stand					
Ambulation					
To and from mobility aid					

To and from floor/raised Surface					
To and from standing frame/ walker/learning station					
To and from changing bench					
To and from toilet					
Other					
Other					

Please attach a copy of your risk assessment form which outlines management of Manual Handling and all other transfers.