

St Hugh's School

Moving and Handling

Introduction

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as is reasonably practicable. It is the policy of the governing body to conform to the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation.

To this end, St Hugh's Communication and Interaction Specialist College aims to:-

1. Avoid Moving and Handling operations which are a risk to its employees as far as is reasonably practical;
2. Assess all operations involving Moving and Handling procedures judged to be potentially hazardous, and reduce the risk to the lowest level which is reasonably practicable;
3. Ensure that all potentially hazardous operations involving Moving and Handling are assessed at least every six months and that reports of these risk assessments and plans to address them are communicated to all employees;
4. Provide all employees, with thorough training covering all the key elements for safe Moving and Handling techniques
5. Adopt a minimal lifting: minimal handling policy in line with current guidance

Employees have responsibilities too. Every employee has health and safety responsibilities relating to:

1. Safeguarding themselves, students and others in the school
2. Cooperating with the designated staff who, have responsibilities for risk assessment and following handling plans which are in place for individual students
3. Using all equipment provided for Moving and Handling and using it appropriately in accordance with the individualised Moving and Handling plans. Includes checking equipment prior to use for holes, fraying etc.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body in order to keep it in line with operational changes and any future legal obligations.

The Moving and Handling Team

The Moving and Handling Team (called the Team hereafter) is a group of staff who have been specifically trained to conduct risk assessments to identify the level of risk and to formulate Moving and Handling plans that will reduce these risks. They receive regular refresher training from an approved training organization to keep them up to date with best practice.

Each member of the Team has a caseload of students who require regular Moving and Handling. Risk assessments and handling plans are written by the Team members in liaison

with team staff during Curriculum support time. There will be a meeting of the team at least once per term for networking.

The expectation is that a class teacher, must liaise with the allocated trainer when they require a risk assessment update in relation to a particular student. The designated member of the Team will then arrange to spend time with class team members as soon as practicable - usually within two weeks.

The Team members are mostly full members of class teams and cannot be expected to stop their normal work. Members of the team will receive non contact time (one day per half term to work alongside colleagues, observe practices, conduct risk assessments and develop moving and handling plans). However, in an emergency situation, a member of the Team will be made available the same day or next day after request to the Senior Leadership Team.

The members of the Team are empowered by the head teacher and the Governing body to prescribe or ban particular Moving and Handling processes or equipment. Their guidance must be followed; it is not an option for staff to choose to ignore this.

The Role of Other Specialists

The Team members do not have certain responsibilities which are held properly by other staff or therapists. When appropriate, these professionals will liaise with the Team and the appropriate Team members will consult them.

1. The Physiotherapist has a detailed knowledge of normal and abnormal movement and an understanding of how conditions specific to children may affect each student's movement and development. She uses this knowledge to teach the staff, the parents and others how to develop and maintain the student's movement skills. This can involve passive and active exercises and positioning techniques. She will advise on standing frames, walking aids, splints and footwear.
2. A specialist Orthotist does a 'Joint Clinic' with the Physiotherapist to assess and advise on footwear and splintage.
3. The Occupational Therapist is able to advise on the development of children's arm/hand function and self help skills. She takes into account the student's age and learning or physical difficulties. She will be able to advise on how best to seat the student. If a student is in need of a wheelchair or a buggy, she will liaise with other agencies on the provision of such equipment.

Risk Assessment for Moving and Handling

The Team members follow specific methods for identifying Moving and Handling tasks which are likely to require a formal, written risk assessment. They will develop a Moving and Handling plan which attempts to reduce the risk of injury during Moving and Handling. Consideration should be given to the following:

1. Equipment: type of equipment, availability, condition, training
2. Load: the student's independence and communication skills, confidence, cooperativeness, bodily weight, postural control, floppiness or stiffness, flexion and extension patterns, clothing, splintage, sensory impairment, etc.
3. Individual capability of staff: personal capacity, knowledge and training
4. Task: layout of area, context of work routines, accessibility of equipment, space constraints, condition and nature of floor, lighting conditions

Staff will ensure they have read the appropriate plans and risk assessments before they work directly with the specific student and will sign the staff declaration to confirm this.

Implementation

All employees should be aware that there is no such thing as a 'safe' or risk-free Moving and Handling procedure. All Moving and Handling tasks, being physically demanding activities, always contain a degree of risk.

The Team members aim to select and describe appropriate Moving and Handling methods based on informed judgement of the risks associated with a given procedure. All employees are responsible for ensuring that every task they perform is undertaken safely and correctly in strict correspondence with the prescribed methods. The cost of ignoring plans and training is that employees are rendered legally liable for any accidents or injuries that arise from the way that they move or handle students. They would also be responsible for any injuries they, or the child, sustain during non-approved manoeuvres.

Before an appropriate Moving and Handling method can be applied safely and successfully, employees must prepare for it in accordance with the Moving and Handling plan. Then - and only then - is the operation ready to be performed.

Employees should wear appropriate clothing: non-slip, enclosed shoes (no boots), and clothes that allow free, unrestricted movement without compromising modesty. They should also be fit to undertake the physical activity of Moving and Handling students and operating equipment. If they are in any doubt as to their fitness for such activity, they should not participate in it and should inform the head teacher. Medical advice will be sought by the school.

Evaluation

It is important to consider the success with which the tasks are performed on each occasion so that any mistakes, however minor, can be rectified prior to the procedure being repeated. This information must be documented in the appropriate section of the Moving and Handling Plan and communicated to the designated member of the Team.

Accidents

In the case of a 'near miss' situation ie: where an accident is narrowly avoided, a 'near miss' form should be completed and the designated Team Member for the particular student should be informed.

All accidents that occur while following a Moving and Handling plan must be reported to the designated member of the Team and the head teacher made aware.

Accidents resulting in injury must be written up in the Accident book kept in the office. All accidents will be investigated as quickly as possible.