

KNOCKAVOE SCHOOL & RESOURCE CENTRE

Manual Handling Policy February 2024

Ratification

Position	Signed	Date
Principal	<i>J. Cassidy</i>	<i>8/2/24</i>
Chair of Board of Governors	<i>Jane Neill</i>	<i>8/2/24</i>

Date of Review: *2026*

1. Policy Statement

1.1 It is the policy of Knockavoe School to comply with the *Health and Safety at Work Act 1994* (and the regulation under it is a legal requirement.) In complying with the act, all staff must have read the Knockavoe Manual Handling Policy supported by the Education Authority guidance (Appendix 1). Staff sign a copy to indicate their understanding and agreement to uphold its content.

1.2 This Document applies to the movement and positioning of children and young adults either located at Knockavoe School or out on a placement and the equipment they use or interact with.

1.3 Knockavoe School is committed to inclusion and a process which enables our students to participate to their full potential in the school curriculum, including activities outside the school within the constraints of their medical condition if present, as far as reasonably practicable.

1.4 It is the aim of Knockavoe School for pupils to achieve minimal assistance and handling. It seeks to adopt a balanced approach to the protection of the health, safety and welfare of both students and staff as provided by legislation and the policy of the Education Authority (EA).

1.5 The policy is for all staff who support pupils daily in Knockavoe and to ensure that all staff practice the 4 principals of safe manual handling.

1. *Avoid manual handling*
2. *Keep your spine in line*
3. *Create a mobile stable base*
4. *Keep load as close as possible to your body.*

2. Accident Prevention

2.1 The School and the EA recognises that the prevention of accidents and ill health resulting from work is part of the overall Safer Manual Handling policy.

2.2 The elimination of the stressful manual assistance of students whilst desirable is not always practicable or lawful. The use of mechanical equipment and aids to assist with safer movement of both pupil and inanimate loads should be used where appropriate and suitable.

3. The Working Environment

3.1 It is the aim of the school to ensure the environment which students and staff work in is as safe and free from risk as far as reasonably practicable.

3.2 It is the responsibility of staff to maintain an uncluttered environment and that all equipment is returned to its rightful place and stored in a safe manner. Staff must report defects immediately to the identified member of staff with the completion of the appropriate paperwork.

4. Reporting of Accidents

4.1 It is the responsibility of the management of the school to comply with the Education Authority guidance on accident reporting and investigation. (Appendix 2)

4.2 All Staff must ensure that any student handling activity, in which a near miss or an actual injury occurs, is reported and recorded, as soon after the event as possible.

5. The use of Mechanical Handling Aids

5.1 Therapists and the Manual Handling Trainer are responsible for the training of staff in using equipment and ensuring its maintenance as directed by the *Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipments Regulations*. They will liaise directly with the EA for guidance with regard to training and the regular servicing of equipment.

5.2 Staff and authorised placement students are expected to make full use of any items of equipment provided for a particular pupil. This should be in accordance with training and the procedures described in the Individual Pupils Manual Handling plan and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions on use and care.

6. Unsafe Practices

6.1 The use of any unsafe practices will not be condoned by the Education Authority. Any staff using proscribed assistance or handling techniques will be investigated in line with the EA policy.

7. Conflicts in Assistance and Handling

7.1 Any conflicts or concerns expressed over a method of handling will be discussed by all parties involved and a balanced decision achieved in which one party's benefit does not significantly increase the risk of the other to an unacceptable level.

8. Training

8.1 The provision of training under the *Health and Safety at Work Act* and other regulations stresses the importance of training to protect the welfare and safety of all staff.

8.2 The Principal and SLT must have a working knowledge of the assistance and handling procedures being used in the school.

8.3 All staff will receive training in what is relevant to the duties they are expected to perform as part of their contract of employment.

8.4 Employees are expected to undertake the training that is provided by the Education Authority and apply what they are taught in the workplace.

8.5 The School will maintain staff training records.

8.6 All newly appointed staff, or those returning to work after a break of more than a year, who will be involved in the moving and handling of pupils with physical needs will attend training before they are permitted to work with these students unsupervised.

8.7 Personnel who are not directly employed by the Education Authority should not be allocated duties which involve handling or moving of pupils/students unless working under the supervision of an experienced practitioner.

8.8 Refresher training will be provided. It is the responsibility of managers and staff to ensure that the updating of skills as required by the Education Authority has taken place.

9. Appropriate Dress

9.1 All staff and authorised persons are required to wear appropriate clothing for their area of work. When involved in assisting in transferring pupils/students non-restrictive clothing and flat enclosed shoes are required.

9.2 Jewellery should be kept to the minimum and any worn which is likely to be a potential hazard to assisting staff or pupils/students should be removed.

10. Implementation.

10.1 **Personal Care Hygiene** - some pupils require help with personal hygiene. Only specifically trained staff will carry out intimate medical procedures.

10.2 **Emotional Support** - staff and authorised persons may use physical contact eg. an arm around a shoulder, in order to give a pupil emotional support.

10.3 **Encouragement** - a pupil may need physical prompts to encourage their participation and enjoyment of an activity. To maximise interaction this will be done in a thoughtful and sensitive manner.

10.4 **Sensory/ Physical Therapies** - pupils must experience appropriate handling during sensory and physical therapy sessions, and Staff will have due regard to the pupils right to respect and dignity. When working from any individual assessments maximum independence will be encouraged in all pupils. The advice from therapists should always be taken into consideration when routinely handling pupils.

10.5 **Appropriateness** - all staff should be aware that physical contact can be misconstrued. All staff may need to exercise particular caution. All touch should be, wherever possible, age appropriate.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

11.1 Staff members have the responsibility to inform SLT should their circumstances change hindering them to follow Manual Handling Plans.

11:2 The policy of the school will be reviewed accordingly or if there is a significant change in environment, practices and procedures, or change in general statute. Any revisions that arise from any of these factors which would improve performance and safety will be made and feedback given to staff as quickly as possible.

Appendix 1

Employee Health and Safety Handbook

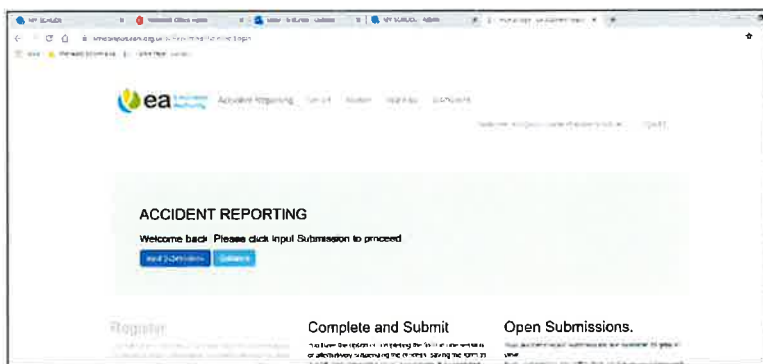
<https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/Health%20and%20Safety%20Awareness%20Handbook%20V3b.pdf>

Appendix 2

Completion of on-line Incident Report Form

The form can be accessed at <https://schoolapps.eani.org.uk/acReporting/>

Log in details – available from the School Office



Click on input submissions and begin to enter the details of the incident.

Ensure all relevant information is added and all details are correct.

Any other relevant information section – should contain any records of phone calls to parents/guardians or conversations with staff members.

When completed click on Save as Draft.

Let the Principal/Vice Principal know that the form has been saved. The form will then be read and signed and submitted by the Principal/Vice Principal.