

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

Amendment History

Revision	Author	Description of change	Date updated
Original	Karen Walls	Creation of new policy	January 2006
KASC policy	Carol Hooper	Adapted from adopted Kineton Playgroup policy	August 2006
1	CH/SM	Review, no change required	April 2007
2	CH/SM	Merge Playgroup and KASC policies; update footer	April 2008
3	CH/SM	No change required	March 2009
4	CH/AF	No change	March 2011
5	CH/HS	Added ref to oven	October 2012
6	CH/KG	Reviewed, no change required	November 2014
7	CH	Reviewed, no change required	March 2015
8	CH	Add reference to IDS advice on lifting children	November 2016
9	CH & SF	Reviewed, no changes	February 2018
10	CH & SF	Reviewed, no changes	January 2020
11	CH	Reviewed, no changes	July 2022
12	CH, TH & XF	Reviewed, no changes	July 2023
13	TH	Added items to table	September 2025

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

Health & Safety Regulations require **employers** to:

1. **AVOID** - the need for hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable.
2. **ASSESS** - the risk of injury from any hazardous manual handling that can't be avoided.
3. **REDUCE** - the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Duties of employees

Employees must play their part in understanding the guidelines and adhering to them wherever possible to avoid unnecessary injury.

What makes lifting difficult?

- Heavy, bulky, or difficult to grasp loads
- Unstable or unpredictable loads
- Harmful objects, e.g. sharp or hot
- Awkwardly stacked items
- Carrying items too large or heavy for the staff member to manage

What tasks are potential issues?

- Holding loads away from the body
- Twisting, stooping or reaching upwards
- Large vertical movements or long carrying distances
- Strenuous pushing or pulling
- Repetitive handling

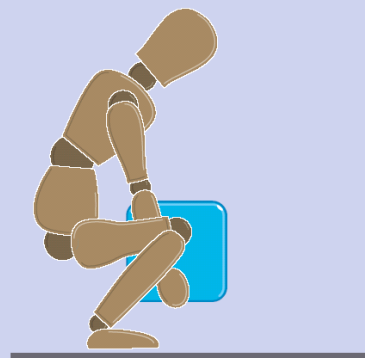
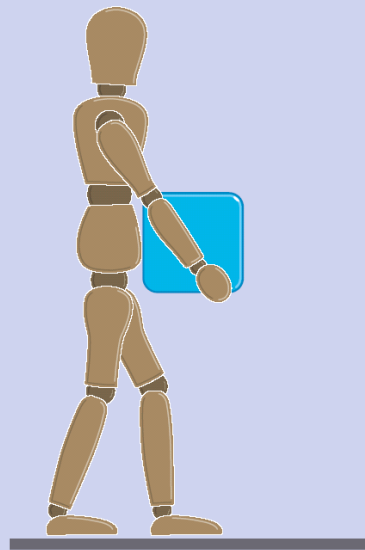
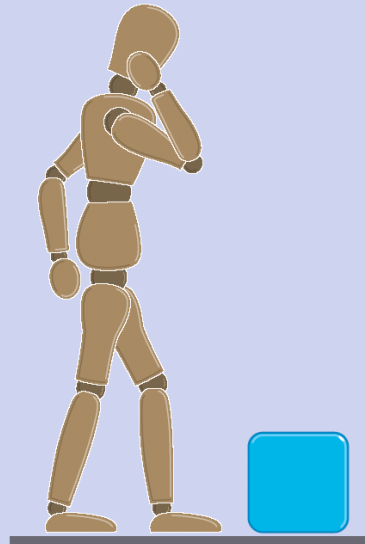
What can be done to minimize the risk?

- Ask a colleague for help if needed and ensure you can see where you are going
- Avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height, especially heavy loads – always lift in accordance with the guidelines below
- Reduce carrying distances wherever possible
- Push rather than pull

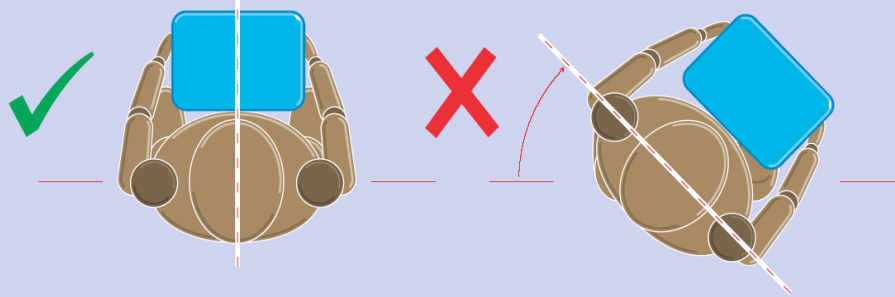
Good handling technique for lifting

Here are some practical tips, suitable for use in training people in safe manual handling. In the following section a basic lifting operation is taken as an example.

- **Think before lifting/handling.** Plan the lift. Can handling aids be used? Where is the load going to be placed? Will help be needed with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials. For a long lift, consider resting the load midway on a table or bench to change grip.
- **Keep the load close to the waist.** Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible while lifting. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.
- **Adopt a stable position.** The feet should be apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load, if it is on the ground). The worker should be prepared to move their feet during the lift to maintain their stability. Avoid tight clothing or unsuitable footwear, which may make this difficult.
- **Get a good hold.** Where possible the load should be hugged as close as possible to the body. This may be better than gripping it tightly with hands only.
- **Start in a good posture.** At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (squatting).



- **Don't flex the back any further while lifting.** This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.

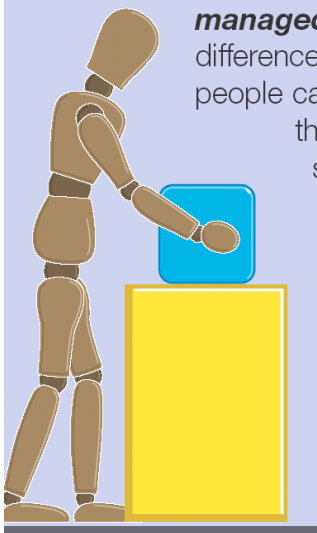
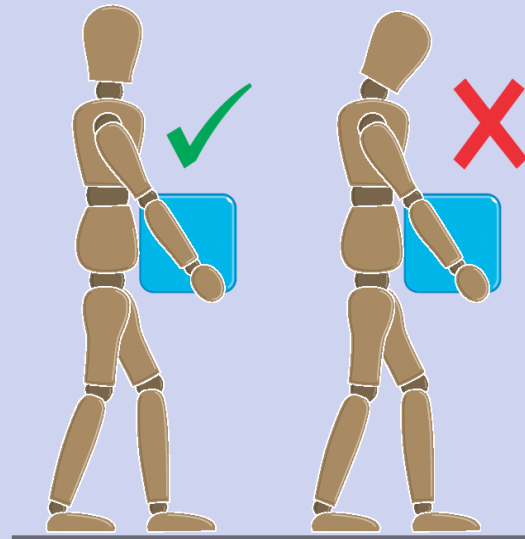


- **Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways,** especially while the back is bent. Shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.

- **Keep the head up when handling.** Look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.

- **Move smoothly.** The load should not be jerked or snatched as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.

- **Don't lift or handle more than can be easily managed.** There is a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift. If in doubt, seek advice or get help.



- **Put down, then adjust.** If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.

PLAYGROUP EQUIPMENT - MANUAL HANDLING GUIDELINES

GENERAL GUIDANCE

- Visitors should not be asked to get involved in heavy lifting, as they are not covered by Playgroup insurance to do so.
- These guidelines are a 'guide' only. Common sense must always prevail, and members of staff must never lift or manoeuvre anything which is beyond their personal capability.
- Lifting children can also cause injury. Care must be taken and wherever possible Playgroup staff should adopt the same lifting approach as outlined in this policy for lifting children.
- Any questions or concerns regarding this policy by any staff member should be raised and dealt with. Prevention of injury is better than the cure!

KEY:

CATEGORY 1 = HEAVY OR UNMANAGABLE

In the context of this policy, any single item 25kg or over is considered heavy, although factors other than weight must also be considered

CATEGORY 2 = LIGHT OR MANAGAGABLE

ITEM	CAT:	CAUTIONS / NOTES	POLICY REQUIREMENTS
Office Desks	1	Move only in exceptional circumstances	2 or more members of staff
Chairs	2	Do not stack chairs more than 6 high	1 member of staff, maximum 2 or 3 chairs at once, depending on size
Snack trolley	1 or 2	Push on wheels rather than lift	1 member of staff to manoeuvre on the flat, 2 members of staff to ease over thresholds
Lunch box trolley	1 or 2	Push on wheels rather than lift	1 member of staff to manoeuvre on the flat, 2 members of staff to ease over thresholds
Drinks trolley	2	Push on wheels rather than lift	1 member of staff
Fridges	1	Heavy items, but move only in exceptional circumstances	Optional – minimum of 2 members of staff to lift; empty unit, use trolley jack
Tables	1 or 2	Folding and wooden wheeled tables = 1; other tables = 2	1 or 2 members of staff to manoeuvre on the straight
Boxes and crates	1 or 2	Depends on contents	- Care must be taken to avoid twisting when lifting/manoeuvring boxes - Take time to move other boxes out of the way
Garden table and bench	1	Heavy and awkward shape	2 members of staff to lift or manoeuvre
Children!	2	Can be heavy and awkward	Avoid lifting if possible – get down to child's level instead. Otherwise follow lifting guidelines; if necessary, follow advice from IDS manual handling team.
Oven	1	Heavy item, move only in exceptional circumstances	Optional – minimum of 2 members of staff to lift; use trolley jack
Washing Machine	1	Heavy item, move only in exceptional circumstances	Optional – minimum of 2 members of staff to lift; use trolley jack