

Three Counties Academy Trust



Manual Handling Policy

#HS4

Last amended 6th March 2026 (v1.1)

Subject to periodic amendment. To be reviewed in full no later than 5th March 2029

Version history

Date	Version	Details	Actioned by	PDF to Websites	Word to Governor Hub
05.03.26	1.1	Formatted to house style and checked against model for updates	MF	✓	✓

Contents:

Version history

Common abbreviations and acronyms

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Definitions
4. Risk management
5. Risk reduction

Monitoring and review

Appendices

- a. Manual Handling Risk Assessment Template

Common abbreviations and acronyms

AA	Admissions Authority	GPA	Government Procurement Arrangement
AAI	Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epi Pen)	HASH	Herefordshire Association of Secondary Heads
ACM	Asbestos Containing Materials	HBV	Honour Based Violence
AFH	Academies Financial Handbook	HR	Human Resources
AHT	Assistant Headteacher	H&S	Health and Safety
AIR	Attendance Intervention Reviews	HoS	Head of School
APIs	Application Programme Interfaces	HSE	Health and Safety Executive
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds	ICO	Information Commissioners Office
BCP	Business Continuity Plan	IHP	Individual Healthcare Plan
BFR	Budget Forecast Return	IRMS	Information and Records Management Society
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	IWF	Internet Watch Foundation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	KS1/2/3/4	Key Stage 1/2/3/4
CIF	Condition Improvement Fund	LAC	Looked After Child
CIN	Child in Need	LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
CLA	Children Looked After	LGB	Local Governing Body
CMIE	Child Missing in Education	LLC	Low-Level Concerns

COO	Chief Operating Officer	LSA	Learning Support Assistants
COSHH	Control and Substances Hazardous to Health	MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
CP	Child Protection	MAT	Multi-Academy Trust
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	MFA	Multi-Factor Authentication
CSCS	Children's Social Care Services	MFL	Modern Foreign Language
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	NCSC's	National Cyber Security Centres
CTIRU	Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit	NPQEL	National Professional Qualification in Executive Leadership
CWD	Children with Disabilities	PA	Persistent Absence
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service	PAN	Published Admission Number
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	PECR	Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations
DfE	Department for Education	PEP	Personal Education Plan
DHT	Deputy Headteacher	PEEP	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
DSE	Display Screen Equipment	PEx	Permanent Exclusion
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	PLAC	Previously Looked After Child
DPO	Data Protection Officer	PP	Pupil Premium
EAL	English as an Additional Language	PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
ECT	Early Career Teacher	PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty

EHA	Early Help Assessment	PTFA	Parent, Teacher and Friends Association
EHCNA	Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment	RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan	RHE	Relationships and Health Education
EHE	Elective Home Education	RSHE	Relationships, Sex and Health Education
ELSA	Emotional, Literacy and Support Assistant	SALT	Speech and Language Therapist
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
EVC	Educational Visit Coordinator	SBM	School Business Manager
EWO	Education Welfare and Safeguarding Support Officer	SCCs	Standard Contractual Clauses
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage	SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
FBV	Fundamental British Values	SEMH	Social, Emotional, and Mental Health
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
FOI	Freedom of Information	SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
FSM	Free School Meals	SLA's	Service Level Agreements
FTS	Find a Tender Service	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
GAG	General Annual Grant	TA	Teaching Assistant
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation	TCAT	Three Counties Academy Trust
GIAS	Get Information about Schools	VSH	Virtual School Headteacher

Statement of intent

This policy is designed to outline the legal responsibilities with regard to manual handling in Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT). It sets out the processes in place to minimise any risks associated with manual handling at TCAT and our schools. Full adherence with this policy will ensure legal compliance and also reduce the risks of injury related to manual handling.

The guidelines in this document apply to TCAT staff, pupils, visitors, contractors, and volunteers. It applies to all activities both on and off TCAT property, including school camps, excursions, and any other planned activities outside of the school grounds.

NB. Where the term “parent” or “parents” is used this includes those who act as carers or have parental responsibility.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- The Provisions and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

Where legislation has been passed or updated during the shelf life of this policy, we will always apply the latest version available irrespective of the version quoted here.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Health and Safety Policy (HS1)
- First Aid Policy (HS2)

Central TCAT policies have the policy number identified, e.g. "SG1". Where no policy number is identified this indicates the policy is a school specific policy available from an individual TCAT school's website.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board and where delegated Local Governing Bodies are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective implementation of this policy

The Headteacher/Head of School will:

- Ensure that specific manual handling tasks are carried out by fit and healthy adults
- Ensure that members of staff will not be at risk when performing tasks

- Implement a systematic approach to manual handling, whereby everyone will be made aware of their individual roles and responsibilities

The Trust Estate Manager will:

- Be responsible for monitoring any control measures put in place to ensure they are reducing the risk of injury and being used correctly
- Keep a central record of all manual handling reports
- Ensure members of staff are informed and trained to take care of their own health, as well as the health of others
- Ensure members of staff are informed and trained regarding manual handling tasks, in order to mitigate any risks
- Ensure that risk assessments are carried out before a manual handling task is completed

Members of staff will:

- Ensure they do not undertake manual handling tasks if they have sustained recent injuries, e.g., hernias, back problems, heart conditions or other physical issues, or if there are any other concerns
- Inform the Trust Estate Manager of any physical health issues they have sustained as soon as possible to ensure risks can be mitigated
- Comply with relevant legislation and TCAT policies

3. Definitions

According to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, manual handling is defined as **“any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force.”**

Manual handling extends to the force required to move or restrain any animate or inanimate object. It also includes any twisting, bending, stretching or other awkward posture you may get in whilst doing a task.

Manual handling can prove hazardous when it has the potential to cause a musculoskeletal disorder. This can be due to repetition of the action, the force and/or posture involved in the completion of a handling task, or a person’s ability to hold or grasp the particular item in a safe and balanced manner.

4. Risk management

The process for risk management is to avoid, assess and reduce any hazards.

TCAT schools will, as far as is practicable, reduce the need for members of staff to carry out any manual handling tasks that involve a risk of injury.

Where manual handling tasks are absolutely necessary and cannot be avoided, a risk assessment will be completed to identify the potential hazards.

Risk assessments will take account of:

- The nature of the load-weight, size, shape, ability to be firmly gripped, balance, and whether the object is animate or inanimate
- The actions or postural requirements involved in the task, including reaching, leaning and lifting
- The time, distance, duration, and frequency of the task
- The individual's capacity for manual handling, including their age, skill, experience, physical health, and strength
- The environment and workplace conditions such as lighting, access, amount of free space and floor surface
- Any obstacles or hazards present in the space where manual handling will occur
- The work organisation at the time of manual handling, the presence of others, time restrictions and availability of others to assist

Where manual handling involves assisting and/or moving a pupil, moving a pupil from a chair to a wheelchair, the staff member(s) involved will always refer to the pupil's individual care plan to ensure that correct equipment and instructions are used. Moves will be planned in advance to ensure that any equipment needed is available and ready to use at all times.

TCAT will ensure that manual handling needs are considered in any refurbishment and construction plans.

Where possible, pregnant members of staff will not be assigned manual handling tasks. Where this is unavoidable, pregnant members of staff require risk assessments to be carried out for six months before and after childbirth, in order to ensure physical injury does not occur during manual handling procedures. Pregnant members of staff will not participate in any manual handling which causes them, or the Headteacher/Head of School, any concern.

Once a risk assessment has been carried out, control measures to manage the relevant risks will be put in place. These will include:

- Changes to the workplace and systems of work
- Provision of mechanical aids to reduce the risk of injury, along with training for the use of these
- Training and education appropriate to the task

Once control measures are in place, they will be monitored by the Trust Estate Manager to ensure they are reducing the risk of injury and being used correctly.

Every stage of this process will be recorded, and dates will be provided for each step. Timelines will be used to track the risk assessment process and provide deadlines for when processes are to be implemented.

Reports will be provided to all relevant members of staff, and the Trust Estate Manager will keep a central record of all the reports.

5. Risk reduction

Procedures will be followed to ensure risks are reduced as is reasonably practicable. Manual handling issues will be considered during the design, refurbishment, alteration, and rearrangement of TCAT and school spaces.

The health and wellbeing of all members of staff will be maintained and promoted by providing a safe working environment, specifically with regards to manual handling tasks.

Practical and workable solutions will be provided to improve the effectiveness of working practices.

Tasks requiring manual handling of any large or heavy items will be planned before any handling is attempted to ensure adequate space, equipment and personnel. Trolleys and other handling aids or hoists will be used wherever possible to move items.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the published schedule at the front of this document and at any point material changes require it by the Executive Headteacher/CEO in collaboration with the Board appointed Trustee, the Trust Board and Executive and Senior Leadership.

Any changes made to the policy will be amended by the Executive Headteacher/CEO and will be communicated to Executive Leaders, the TCAT Central Team and to Headteachers/Heads of School, who, in turn, will alert school-based staff.

The next scheduled full review date for this policy is 5th March 2029.

Signed by:

_____ Executive Headteacher/CEO

Date: _____

_____ Board appointed Trustee

Date: _____

Appendix A: Manual Handling Risk Assessment Template

Important note: *This risk assessment identifies typical examples and controls to illustrate how schools may manage certain risks. These can be used as a guide to think about hazards in your school and the steps needed to manage those risks. In order to be compliant with the law and protect your community, you must consider the specific hazards and controls your school needs and **must not** use this template without assessing your school's risks.*

Name of school

Assessment conducted by:	Job title:	Covered by this assessment:
Date of assessment:	Review interval:	Date of next review:

Risk rating		Likelihood of occurrence		
		Probable	Possible	Remote
Likely impact	Major: Causes major physical injury, harm or ill health.	High (H)	H	Medium (M)
	Severe: Causes physical injury or illness requiring first aid.	H	M	Low (L)
	Minor: Causes physical or emotional discomfort.	M	L	L

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
Lack of awareness of policies and procedures	<u>H</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are aware of all relevant policies and procedures, including but not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health and Safety Policy - Manual Handling Policy - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures - First Aid Policy • Equipment required for manual handling is used in line with the school's Health and Safety Policy and Manual Handling Policy. • All staff members are trained to correctly use manual handling equipment as part of their induction, including moving, supervising, and maintaining equipment. • Any contractors used to undertake manual handling are made aware of the relevant school 	<u>Y</u>	<u>Headteacher/ Head of School</u>	<u>XX.XX.XX</u>	<u>M</u>

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<p>policies, such as the Health and Safety Policy, before contracted work begins.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An approved list of manual handling activities is established and communicated to all staff. • Staff do not undertake manual handling for which they are not suitably trained. • Staff undertaking manual handling carry a working mobile phone on them at all times to ensure they can contact a nominated person, such as the Headteacher/Head of School, in case of emergency. • Staff inform the Headteacher/Head of School when they need to undertake extended periods of manual handling, and state how long the period will last, and when they can expect the work to be finished. • This risk assessment is reviewed annually or as soon as possible when changes to manual handling procedures are required. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
Improper lifting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifting aids are used where possible. • Extra care is taken when lifting an item that is bulky or irregular in shape or cannot be easily gripped. • All loose and moving parts of an item are secured prior to lifting. • Lifting heavy loads from floor level or above shoulder height is avoided where possible. • Staff are made aware that where the lifting position is not safe or comfortable, to put the item down safely and adjust their position and/or grip as needed. • Twisting or stooping whilst holding items is avoided. • Carrying distances are kept to a minimum as much as possible. • Where items must be carried long distances without a lifting aid, staff make regular stops while carrying items to avoid strains and injuries. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Items are pushed rather than pulled, where possible. • Where possible, repetitive handling is avoided. • Work is varied to allow for rest periods between actions and avoid repetitive strains. • When lifting heavier items over <u>15kg</u>, staff members always request assistance from a colleague. • Members of staff do not attempt to lift anything they feel is unreasonably heavy. 				
Improper handling		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care is given to keep items stable at all times. • Any items that are harmful, or carry risk, e.g. items that are sharp, are not handled without the appropriate PPE. • Suitable PPE is available for handling potentially dangerous items, e.g. items that are hot, as required. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy or fragile items are always clearly marked and stored so that the label is visible. • Suppliers are asked to provide easy to handle loads, e.g. using smaller packages and handles and pallets for larger items. • Heavy items are never stored above head height – where possible, heavy items are stored at ground level. 				
Unsafe work environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All work surfaces are kept clear of hazards at all times. • Pathways are kept clear at all times and fire exits are never obstructed. • Items are only be moved over suitable surfaces, e.g. smooth, hard floors – lifting aids are used where a surface is not suitable, e.g. across carpets. • All surfaces are properly maintained, and faults are reported to the Trust Estate Manager as soon as possible. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work environment is properly ventilated, with temperature controls. • Where possible, steps and steep ramps are avoided whilst transporting items • Lifts and access ramps are used to transport heavier items. • Manual handling is only undertaken in well-lit areas to avoid collisions, slips, trips and falls. • All lighting is regularly checked and maintained by a qualified technician. • PPE is always checked before use to ensure safety. 				
Unsuitability for staff		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of staff who have physical disabilities or other mobility issues are not asked to handle items that may cause them discomfort. • Precautions are taken for staff who have existing medical issues. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra precautions are taken when items are handled by pregnant members of staff, e.g. they only handle smaller objects. • Where required, a separate risk assessment for pregnant members of staff is carried out six months before and after childbirth in order to avoid injury due to manual handling. • Members of staff are provided with extra information when required to undertake new manual handling tasks. • Regular visits from an occupational health advisor are arranged and any advice given is applied appropriately. • No member of staff is asked to handle items they feel unable to manage safely. 				
Lack of staff training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff complete the required manual handling training. • Additional manual handling training and regular refresher courses for members of staff. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New members of staff receive the relevant manual handling training during their induction. 				
Moving and/or lifting pupils with SEND		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff undertaking any moving or lifting of pupils with SEND adhere to the Manual Handling Policy as well as the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.and Procedures Pupils are only lifted and/or moved according to the needs outlined in their EHC plan. Any manual handling of a pupil is planned in advance to ensure any equipment needed is available and ready to use. The manual handling of pupils with SEND is only carried out by staff who are adequately trained, and only applies to the following situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving pupils around the premises Supporting pupils during physical and external activities 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assisting pupils in using the bathroom facilities - Managing accidents and injuries - Evacuating pupils during emergencies • The manual handling of any pupils is only carried out by staff who are authorised to do so by the <u>Headteacher/Head of School</u>. • Staff without the appropriate background checks or level of supervision never apply manual handling to any pupil. • Where appropriate, mechanical aids are used to lift pupils who require it. • Staff using mechanical aids have the appropriate level of training to use the equipment safely and effectively. • The pupil's rights to dignity are always prioritised during any manual handling. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
Improper pushing or pulling techniques		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying devices, such as trolleys and wheelbarrows, are held by the handles at between shoulder and waist level. • Where possible, surfaces across which items are pushed or pulled are flat, in order to minimise the force required to move the item. • Where necessary, assistance is requested from another member of staff when pushing or pulling items. • Items are moved at a sensible, steady pace to reduce the risk of injury to the handler or others in the vicinity. 				
Improper movement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstructions are removed from the path the item is to be moved through prior to moving the item. • Extra care is taken when moving an item that is bulky or irregular in shape or cannot be easily gripped. • All loose and moving parts of an item are secured prior to moving. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Items are only handled and moved in areas with clear pathways. • All wrapping materials are removed from the area prior to moving the item. • When lifting, a stable starting and standing position is adopted. • Items are held with both hands and kept as close to the body as possible. • All staff members are aware that lifting from ground level is done by using the legs to resume the standing position, not by leaning down and using the lower back. • Items are moved as smoothly as possible to avoid injuries due to sudden movements. • Handling is varied to allow one set of muscles to rest while another is being used. • The item is held close to the waist in order to keep it close to the person's centre of gravity. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, the heaviest side of the item is kept closest to the body. • Shoulders are kept forward when lifting to avoid straining the handler's back. • The member of staff moving the item ensures they look ahead of them when moving an item, not down at the item. • Care is taken not to lift too much at once, e.g. lifting one heavy item at a time. 				
Lack of concentration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work tasks are changed regularly to avoid monotony and complacency. • Workloads and deadlines are monitored to avoid unrealistic targets. • Good communication is encouraged between staff who are responsible for handling items and/or pupils with SEND. • Staff are not asked to complete tasks that they feel to be unreasonable or unrealistic. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
Failure to report injuries and accidents		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All incidents or injuries that occur during manual handling are reported to the Headteacher/Head of School as soon as possible. A record is kept of all manual handling accidents and injuries. Regular reviews of manual handling procedures are conducted, and the relevant risk assessments are amended where required. 				
Faulty handling aids		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All manual handling equipment is checked by the Trust Estate Manager regularly for suitability and safety. All manual handling aids are properly maintained and stored when not in use. Manual handling aids are stored securely to avoid unauthorised use. Faulty or broken equipment is removed from use immediately and is replaced or disposed of. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All replaceable parts, such as wheels and handles, are regularly checked and replaced as necessary. 				
Improper first aid procedures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event of injury or an accident, manual handling is ceased as soon as it is safe to do so, and first aid is sought as soon as possible. Where an accident or injury has occurred during the manual handling of a pupil, the pupil is returned to a safe area at ground level before seeking medical attention, where it is possible to do so. There is at least one trained first aider on site at all times during the school day. The location of the nearest first aid kit is known prior to undertaking any manual handling. Emergency evacuation and rescue procedures are taken into account each time manual handling is undertaken. In the event of an injury, first aid is administered by the school nurse or a trained first aider. 				

Area for concern	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accidents and injuries are reported to the school nurse in line with the school's First Aid Policy. 				