



# THE LAKES SOUTH MORANG P-9 SCHOOL

## Manual handling policy procedures

The following is a procedure to enable the school to fulfil its obligations as stated in the Manual Handling Policy and also comply with the requirements of the OHS (Manual Handling) Regulations 1999. The HSR and staff will be **consulted** about the identification, risk assessment and control of risks.

This process will also make use of resources such as the *Code of Practice for Manual Handling* ([www.workcover.vic.gov.au/vwa/vwacop.nsf/COP?Openview](http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au/vwa/vwacop.nsf/COP?Openview)) the *Compliance Guidelines for Schools – Manual Handling* ([www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/HRWeb/ohs/accp/comply.htm](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/HRWeb/ohs/accp/comply.htm)) and the DEECD publication *Manual Handling Solutions* (sample risk assessments.)

- 1) The school will undertake a process involving all school staff to **identify** all manual handling hazards in the school. The following aspects will be included:
  - a) Analysing injury records to see in which areas, and on which tasks, injuries are occurring,
  - b) Consulting with employees at a special staff meeting/brain storming session about tasks which they carry out,
  - c) Formal observation of work practices.

In identifying potential manual handling hazards consideration needs to be given to a broad range of school situations and activities. Some of these include:

- Moving furniture
  - Lifting/ carrying computers/televisions or other heavy/ bulky objects
  - Pushing a trolley
  - Restraining a frightened child
  - Typing school reports using a computer in an awkward posture
  - Stretching to reach a high shelf or bending to a low shelf
  - Separating fighting students
  - Lifting PE equipment
  - Stretching to pin up students' work
  - Activities at a gardening/ working bee
  - Bending over for extended periods to be at the same height as students
  - Poor workstation layout or design
- 2) The risk assessment team will then undertake a **risk assessment** on tasks identified as having a hazardous manual handling component. The purpose of assessing the risk is to firstly establish if there is risk involved in a task and secondly to determine the level of risk: high, medium or low.

This **risk assessment** must take into account the following factors:

- The force to be applied by the employee.
- The actions and movements involved (eg reaching up, forward reaching, unbalanced or uneven lifting or carrying, awkward grip).
- The range of weights handled.

- The duration and frequency of the manual handling.
  - The time and distance over which an object is handled.
  - The availability of mechanical aids.
  - The layout and condition of the workplace environment (eg height of workbenches, restricted access, confined space, hot/cold, poorly lit areas, floor surfaces slippery or uneven).
  - The work organisation (eg availability of people/ time, flow of materials).
  - The postural requirements imposed by manual handling (eg bending, twisting, stretching).
  - The analysis of injury statistics relevant to manual handling.
  - The age, skill and experience of the person carrying out the manual handling.
  - The nature of the object being handled (e.g. size, shape structure and material, animate or inanimate.).
  - Any other factors considered relevant by the employer, the employees or the HSR. It will also be necessary to consider the risks to staff returning from leave, teaching a new activity or in a new environment etc.
- 3) Once the risk assessments have been conducted **controls** will be developed by the risk assessment team, starting with the tasks rated as high risk.

When developing controls, the risk control hierarchy is as follows:

- **redesign** to eliminate or reduce the risk as a first step;
- **change the workplace, systems of work and/or the object;**
- **provide mechanical aids** to reduce the risk and **training** in their use;
- **provide training and education** appropriate to the task.

For some manual handling tasks a combination of the risk control methods for reducing risk may be appropriate. However information, training or instruction should **never** be the sole or primary means of controlling the risk.

- 4) Once the control measures are in place, these will be **monitored** by the risk assessment team to make sure they

- are being used correctly
- are not increasing the risk of injury
- do help to reduce the manual handling risk and
- do not need further improvement

#### **References:**

*The OHS (Manual Handling) Regulations 1999 and Code of Practice for Manual Handling.* (VWA 2000)

*The Compliance Guidelines for Schools – Manual Handling.* (DE&T 2002)

*Reduce Manual Handling Injuries* (VWA 1996).

*Preventing Manual Handling Injuries* (Ministry of Education 1991 reprinted by the DoE 1999).

*OHS Guidelines - Support Material for School* (DSE 1994 updated 1999).

*Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide 2003* section 6.9.

([www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/referenceguide/](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/referenceguide/))