The Orchard Nursery

Manual Handling Policy

The manual handling policy outlines procedures to minimise the risk of injury to employees during manual handling activities.

1. Planning and Preparation

Before lifting or moving any load:

- Consider the **task**: what you are lifting, where it will go, the distance, and obstacles along the route.
- Only attempt manual handling if you have **read and understood safe techniques**.
- Ensure you are **physically capable** to perform the task; staff with health issues or pregnancy may be at increased risk.
- Assess the **load**: size, weight, centre of gravity, grip, and visibility.
- Remove unnecessary packaging or reduce the size/weight of the load if possible.
- Determine if help or **specialist equipment** (e.g., trolley) is needed.
- For team lifts, **plan and agree roles**, including a lead person to give instructions.
- Check the **route for hazards** (uneven or slippery floors, obstructions) and ensure adequate lighting.
- Control harmful loads (sharp edges, hot containers) and avoid unsafe loads (damaged glass, poorly packed chemicals).
- Use **personal protective equipment (PPE)** if required and ensure it fits correctly.
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Consider resting points for long or heavy lifts.

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2. Positioning

- Stand **in front of the load** with feet apart and leading leg forward; weight even on both feet.
- Position the heaviest part of the load **next to you**. Move closer to the load if needed.
- **Do not twist** your body while lifting; reposition the load if required.

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3. Lifting

Always maintain **correct posture**:

- Bend the **knees slowly**, keeping the back straight.
- Tuck the chin in during the descent.
- Lean slightly forward if necessary; get a firm grip.
- Keep **shoulders level** and avoid twisting at the hips.
- Grip the load near its base.
- Lift to **waist height** smoothly.

4. Moving the Load

- **Move the feet**, keeping the load close to the body.
- Ensure you **can see your path** clearly.
- Lower the load by **reversing the lifting procedure**.
- Avoid crushing fingers or toes.
- Position and secure the load on a **stable base**.
- Report any issues (strains, sprains) immediately.
- Reassess the task if load or conditions change.

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5. Task Considerations

- Carry loads **close to the body**. Avoid lifting at arm's length.
- Avoid **awkward movements**: stooping, reaching, or twisting.
- Avoid lifting from the floor or above shoulder height; **limit carrying distances**.
- Reduce repetitive actions via **task rotation** and redesign.
- Allow **adequate rest periods** between tasks.
- Use teamwork for **heavy loads**.

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6. Environmental Considerations

- Ensure surroundings are **safe, level, and free of obstructions**.
- Ensure **adequate lighting, temperature, and humidity**.
- Use the **correct equipment** for the task.

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7. Individual Considerations

- Only undertake manual handling if **trained and authorised**.
- Ensure you are physically capable; **pregnant staff and those with health issues** should take extra precautions.

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9. Toys, Equipment, and Resources

- All toys and equipment must be **safe, maintained, and conform to regulations**.
- Damaged or unsafe items should be **repaired or discarded**.
- Furniture must be suitable for children; staff have **adult-sized chairs** in each room.
- Equipment and resources are **cleaned regularly**.

Signed on behalf of the nursery.....*Emma Middleton*.....Date:… August 2026