

01 Health and safety procedures

01.15 Manual Handling

Our Approach

At Peekaboo Childcare, we want to make sure staff stay safe and healthy while caring for children.

Many daily tasks involve lifting—such as carrying children, moving equipment, or setting up the environment—so we follow safe manual-handling practices.

This keeps staff safe and ensures children are cared for by adults who are not injured or strained.

The EYFS requires us to protect staff and children through effective risk assessment, a safe environment, and safe working practices.

Why Manual Handling Matters

Manual handling means lifting, carrying, pushing, or pulling anything that requires physical effort.

This includes:

- carrying babies and toddlers
- lifting equipment
- moving furniture
- pushing buggies or trolleys

Doing these tasks unsafely can cause back, neck, or muscle injuries—so we make safety a priority.

Risk Assessments

To keep everyone safe:

- We risk assess the environment (e.g., stairs, uneven floors).
- Staff tell the manager if something new becomes risky or unsafe.
- Individual risk assessments are made for staff who are pregnant, injured, or have a condition affecting their ability to lift.
- Managers regularly review assessments and update them when needed.

This ensures tasks are safe and appropriate for every member of the team.

Safe Lifting Guidance for Staff

We expect all staff to follow simple safety rules when lifting:

Staff should:

- Ask a colleague for help with heavy or awkward items
- Bend at the knees, not the back
- Push heavy items rather than pull them
- Use trolleys for regular heavy loads
- Use proper step stools—not chairs—to reach high shelves

Staff should NOT:

- Lift anything too heavy for them—even with help
- Stand on unsafe objects to reach up
- Carry heavy objects on stairs
- Lift items above head height
- Carry large objects that block vision
- Rest babies on their hips while standing

These steps help prevent injuries and ensure children remain safe in staff care.

Lifting Babies and Children Safely

Children can be surprisingly heavy! Staff are trained to lift them safely:

- supporting their weight properly
- keeping their back straight
- avoiding sudden twisting movements
- never lifting more than they can manage

This keeps both staff and children protected.

Training and Staff Responsibility

- All staff receive manual-handling training.
- The manager ensures staff know how to lift safely and when to ask for help.
- Staff have a responsibility to follow the guidance—not doing so may affect insurance claims if injuries occur.

Managers monitor safe working practices as part of ongoing health and safety checks.

This procedure supports:

- EYFS – Health and safety risk assessment
- EYFS – Maintaining a safe learning environment
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992