

St Albans Mencap

Charity number: 210073

stalbansemencap.org.uk

Moving and Handling Policy:

This Moving and Handling Policy explains how St Albans Mencap (SAM) ensures that risks associated with moving and handling people, equipment and objects are reduced as far as reasonably practicable. The policy aims to protect the health, safety, dignity and wellbeing of members, children, staff, volunteers and visitors while promoting independence and person-centred support.

Wherever possible, manual handling will be avoided through careful planning, appropriate equipment, suitable training and effective risk assessment.

Document control:

Version:	Date approved:	By:	Review due:
1.0			

Summary of changes:

Version:	Changes:
1.0	Drafted July 2026

1. Aims

St Albans Mencap aims to:

- Provide a safe environment where the moving and handling needs of members and children are assessed and managed appropriately.
- Promote independence by encouraging members and children to do as much for themselves as they are safely able.
- Ensure moving and handling is carried out in a way that maintains dignity, privacy and respect at all times.
- Reduce the risk of injury to members, children, staff and volunteers.
- Ensure staff communicate clearly with one another and with the member or child before, during and after any moving or handling activity.
- Encourage members and children to participate in moving and handling activities whenever it is safe to do so, helping to reduce anxiety and promote confidence.
- Ensure moving and handling practices are consistent with Hertfordshire Therapeutic Thinking principles and the St Albans Mencap Behaviour Policy.
- Ensure that no member or child is moved using force unless there is an immediate risk of serious harm to themselves or others.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All St Albans Mencap services.
- All employees, volunteers, trustees, students and agency workers.

This includes:

- Special needs activity and play (SNAP) where specialist moving and handling equipment may be required.
- Trinity Community Project (TCP), where members are independently mobile and hoists or specialist lifting equipment are not used.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy supports SAM's responsibilities under:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

This policy should also be read alongside other relevant SAM policies including:

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour Support
- Health and Safety
- Staff Code of Conduct

4. Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Approving this policy
- Monitoring compliance
- Reviewing the policy annually

Managers

Managers are responsible for:

- Appropriate risk assessments are completed
- Suitable equipment is available at hired location
- Staff receive appropriate training
- Safe systems of work are implemented
- Ensuring staff follow this policy
- Reviewing moving and handling risk assessments
- Reporting defects in equipment
- Investigating accidents and near misses

- Arranging refresher training where required

Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must:

- Follow this policy and all individual support plans/profiles
- Use equipment only if trained and authorised
- Report hazards, accidents or defective equipment immediately
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others
- Avoid unsafe manual handling wherever possible

5. Risk Assessment

Every member or child with identified moving and handling needs must have an individual risk assessment.

These assessments will identify:

- Mobility levels
- Level of assistance required
- Equipment required
- Number of staff needed
- Environmental risks
- Behavioural considerations
- Medical conditions affecting mobility

Risk assessments will be reviewed:

- Following an accident or incident
- Whenever needs change

6. Moving and Handling Principles

Staff must always:

- Encourage independence wherever possible
- Avoid unnecessary lifting
- Use mechanical aids whenever appropriate

- Plan the task before starting
- Ensure sufficient trained staff are available
- Explain the process clearly to the member or child
- Respect dignity and privacy throughout
- Stop immediately if the task becomes unsafe

7. Manual Handling of Equipment and Objects

Manual handling includes lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving equipment or objects.

Staff should:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling wherever reasonably practicable
- Assess the weight and stability of the load
- Use trolleys or other aids where available
- Keep loads close to the body
- Avoid twisting whilst lifting
- Seek assistance if the load is heavy or awkward

8. Hoists, Slings and Specialist Equipment

Only staff who have received appropriate moving and handling training may use:

- Hoists
- Slings
- Specialist wheelchairs
- Other moving and handling equipment

Each staff member must know:

- The type of hoist to be used
- The correct sling size
- Sling attachment configuration
- Number of trained staff required
- Any additional safety equipment
- Any individual requirements.

Equipment must never be used if:

- It appears damaged
- Safety checks are overdue
- Staff have not received training

Equipment must be maintained and inspected in accordance with LOLER and manufacturer guidance; evidence of this should be obtained from hired location.

9. Wheelchairs

Staff supporting members or children using wheelchairs must ensure:

- Brakes are applied when transferring
- Footplates are correctly positioned
- Seat belts or positioning aids are used where required
- The wheelchair is checked before use
- Safe techniques are used when negotiating slopes, kerbs and uneven surfaces

10. Falls Management

Do not attempt to lift the person unless this forms part of their agreed Risk Assessment Plan and staff have been trained.

If a member falls:

- Remain calm
- Check for immediate danger
- Assess for injury
- Call 999 immediately if serious injury is suspected or the member is unresponsive
- Reassure the member and remain with them
- Complete an Accident and Incident Report

Within TCP, staff may support a member to return to standing only where:

- They have been trained
- The member is able to assist themselves
- There is no suspected injury

- It is safe to do so

If there is any doubt, emergency services should be contacted.

11. Injuries at Work

All moving and handling injuries must be reported immediately. Accidents must be recorded using the SAM Accident and Incident Reporting Procedure.

Where required, incidents will be reported under RIDDOR, including:

- Specified serious injuries
- Work-related musculoskeletal disorders confirmed by a medical practitioner
- Absences from work exceeding seven consecutive days
- Dangerous occurrences involving lifting equipment

12. Training and Competence

All staff and volunteers will receive moving and handling training appropriate to their role.

Training includes:

- Safe manual handling principles
- Risk assessment
- Use of equipment
- Safe posture and body mechanics
- Individual moving and handling plans
- Reporting procedures

Only staff who have completed practical training may operate hoists or other specialist lifting equipment. Refresher training will be provided in accordance with organisational requirements or sooner if needs change.

13. Record Keeping

SAM will maintain records of:

- Moving and handling risk assessments
- Staff training
- Accident and Incident Reports

- Defective equipment reports

Records will be retained in accordance with organisational data protection and record retention procedures.

14. Monitoring and Review

Compliance with this policy will be monitored through:

- Spot checks
- Training records
- Incident reviews
- Health and Safety audits

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation, guidance or organisational practice changes.