

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

Purpose

To minimise the effect of challenging behaviour, and to ensure safety of students and staff is paramount, the Physical Restraint Policy adds to existing health and safety policies and procedures. This policy deals specifically with the use of physical restraint.

Waverley Park School adopts the five principles from the Ministry of Education Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the use of Physical Restraint (August 2017) regarding the use of physical restraint as part of our process for managing challenging behaviour:

- 1: Physical restraint is a serious intervention. The aim is to minimise the use of physical restraint.
- 2: If there is an alternative to physically restraining a student, use the alternative.
- 3: All schools are required to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students and staff. Parents, students and the public have a legitimate expectation that the school environment will be a safe environment that supports learning.
- 4: The Education Act 1989 provides for the circumstances when teachers and authorised staff members may physically restrain a student. In exercising these powers, teachers and authorised staff members must act reasonably and proportionately in the circumstances to achieve a safe environment for students and staff.
- 5: Students' rights are protected under the Bill of Rights Act 1990.

Guidelines

1. All staff are required to familiarise themselves with Ministry of Education guidelines for registered schools in New Zealand on the use of physical restraint, and to undertake appropriate professional development.
2. Physical restraint is defined as using force to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a student's body or part of the student's body and is a serious intervention.
3. Staff shall be well versed in prevention and de-escalation strategies used to limit the need to physically restrain a student.
4. Use of physical restraint is limited to teachers or authorised staff members and only where:
 - there are reasonable grounds to believe that there is a serious and imminent risk to the safety of a student or of any other person, and
 - the restraint used is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances
5. Authorised staff are employees authorised by the Board to use physical restraint. **All Waverley Park teachers are automatically authorised staff members.** This includes all part-time and relieving teachers employed by the Board
6. Any incident of physical restraint is to be notified to parents or caregivers and reported to the Ministry of Education.
7. The Principal is to report, in writing, to the Board of all incidences when physical restraint is used.
8. After any incident of physical restraint, the appropriate staff are to debrief the incident, focusing on the lead-up to it, the different interventions used that were unsuccessful in de-escalating the behaviour, and what could have been done differently.
9. The Board shall monitor the use of physical restraint, looking for trends and any action that could be taken at a governance level to support reducing such incidents.
10. Seclusion of students is prohibited. Seclusion of students is defined as placing a child or student in a room involuntarily, alone and from which they cannot (or believe they cannot) freely exit.

APPROVED: September 2020

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