

## Restraint of Student Policy

### Rationale:

To ensure school communities are informed about the Department's policy about restraint including that restraint is only used when certain conditions are met and that appropriate standards and procedures are followed.

### Definition:

In this policy, restraint means the use of physical force to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of a person's body or part of their body for the primary purpose of behavioural control.

### DET Policy:

Regulation 15 of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 provides that:

"A member of staff of a Government school may take any reasonable action that is immediately required to restrain a student of the school from acts or behaviour dangerous to the member of staff, the student, or any other person."

### Implementation:

#### When a restraint MAY be used

School staff may only use restraint on a student when all of the following conditions are met:

- the situation is an emergency and the danger of harm to the student and/or others is imminent;
- the restraint is used to prevent the student from inflicting harm on him/herself and/or others;
- there is no reasonable alternative that can be taken to avoid the danger

#### When restraint must NOT be used

Restraint must not be used unless alternative measures to avoid the danger of harm have been exhausted.

Restraint should never be used in the following circumstances:

- to intentionally provoke or punish a student
- cause harm or injury to the student.

Restraint must not be used on a student in any of the following circumstances:

- to maintain good order or respond to a class/school disruption
- to respond to:
  - a student's refusal to comply
  - verbal threats from a student
  - a student leaving the classroom /school without permission
  - property destruction caused by the student.

Restraint must not be used unless all of the following conditions are met:

- the situation is an emergency and the danger of harm to the student and/or others is imminent;
  - the restraint is used to prevent the student from inflicting harm on him/herself and/or others;
- there is no reasonable alternative that can be taken to avoid the danger

### How to Restrain

If applying restraint, staff must only:

- use the minimum force required to avoid the danger of harm
- apply restraint for the minimum duration required and remove the restraint once the danger has passed.

It is also important for staff to consider the following factors:

- the age of the student
- the stature and weight of the student
- any impairment of the student e.g. physical, intellectual, neurological, behavioural, sensory (visual or hearing), or communication

- any mental or psychological conditions of the student
- any other medical conditions of the student
- the likely response of the student
- the environment in which the restraint is taking place.

Staff should talk to the student throughout the incident. Staff should make it clear to the student when and why the restraint is to be applied. Staff must also calmly explain that the restraint will stop once it is no longer necessary to protect the student and/or others.

It is also advisable that whenever possible:

- At least one other staff member is present to witness the restraint being used (this will lessen the opportunity for staff actions to be misconstrued).
- Only staff trained in using restraint should use restraint on a student.
- Parents/guardians are made aware of the Department's restraint policy.

### **Actions after restraint has been used:**

#### **Reporting of the restraint**

The staff member(s) involved in the restraint must immediately notify the principal of the incident. A staff member must contact the student's parents and provide them with details of the incident as soon as possible.

The incident may need to be reported to:

- the Security Services Unit (previously known as the Emergency Management Unit) 0395896266 and or Worksafe

#### **Providing supports for those involved**

Following the use of restraint on a student, appropriate supports must be offered to following people:

- The student who has been restrained and their parents/guardians. This may include participation in decisions involving the student's behaviour management, student support group meetings, the development of a student behaviour management plan, and involvement of Student Support Services. For policy advice on the prevention of endangering behaviour and promoting positive behaviours see: [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#).
- Other students and staff members who were involved in or witnessed the incident. This may include a debriefing in relation to the incident, and counselling support.

### **Maintain records of the incident:**

A written record of the incident and the restraint used must be made by the principal as soon as practicable. This record must detail:

- the name of the student involved
- date, time and location of the incident
- names of witnesses (staff and other students)
- the behaviour of concern that necessitated the action
- any other strategies used or attempted
- an outline of the physical restraint used
- the student's response and the outcome
- any injuries or damage to property
- actions taken after the incident.

The principal should also arrange for all staff who were involved/present at the incident to prepare a statement / record of their involvement or observations of the incident.

### **Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed every year as part of the School's three year review cycle.