

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

**NAG 5
NO. 512**

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 behaviour management policies and procedures. This policy deals specifically with the use of physical restraint.

Guidelines

In February 2023, a new guide to understanding distress and minimising the use of physical restraint document was released by the Ministry of Education. Within 2023 and early 2024, new training modules will be released to Principals and Teachers. It is expected that this policy will be updated in line with any changes within these modules.

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 "Minimising the Use of Physical restraint in NZ schools and Kura"(MOE), 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.
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. Offer the parents/caregivers a separate debriefing as soon as practically possible, preferably within two days of the incident.

10. 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.
11. 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.