



## **Physical Restraint and Seclusion Policy**

### **Rationale**

At Tauranga Special School we aim to ensure the safety of our students and staff. Sometimes safety can be compromised when a student becomes anxious and that anxiety escalates into physical aggression and violence.

### **Purpose**

In line with the supplementation of the Education Act in May 2017 this policy is to ensure our expected school practice is clear to all staff and our student's parents/caregivers.

### **Guidelines**

Tauranga Special School will follow the "Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint" August 2017. However, the Board recognises that a 'no touch policy' in the context of working with students is not only unrealistic and undesirable but also illegal when staff are prevented from exercising their proper duty of care in respect of our students.

### **Physical Restraint**

The Education Act's definition of physical restraint is when physical force is used to prevent, restrict, or subdue the movement of a student's body or part of the student's body.

Only teachers or authorised staff members are allowed to use physical restraint and only when there is serious and imminent risk of personal safety. Any restraint used should be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

Physical intervention is always a last resort when all other attempts to assist the child (e.g. allowing space, talking, reasoning and persuasion) have failed. In some circumstances immediate intervention may be necessary and common sense has to be used to assess these situations.

### **Understanding Behaviour, Responding Safely (UBRS)**

All of our school staff have training in understanding behaviour and how to safely respond without any need for physical intervention.

The training covers understanding how the behaviour of the adult can influence the behaviour of the student. It puts the onus on the adult to best manage escalating situations, to identify when

a student might become anxious, or is becoming anxious and how to change that to make the student more relaxed and ready to learn.

The preventative and de-escalation techniques include:-

Knowing your student well

Being respectful of our students

Always maintaining dignity

Safety - give space and time

Communicate clearly and calmly

Think ahead

### **Individual Behaviour Plans**

Unfortunately even with the best efforts to keep students calm, events can occur which compromise safety.

As a whole school we are investigating current records - happiness audit, behaviour plans, student profiles etc to bring together one document that could be used to ensure we have all relevant information regarding our students written down for visiting therapy staff or relief staff to make sure we are all doing what we need to do to ensure our students are calm and in the best place for their learning.

In the meantime, those students who may have high risk behaviour will have an Individual Behaviour Plan. The plan has four areas:-

Green - when all is well

Yellow - when anxieties begin

Red - when there is danger

Blue - when the danger is over and we re-establish our relationship with the student.

The class teams are responsible for developing the Individual Behaviour Plans which may include MOE MAPA (Managing Anger and Potential Aggression) procedures on how best to manage a potential physical situation. Training would then be given to the class team by our school MAPA accredited trainers. Following the MAPA training, those trained school staff are then deemed authorised to use those specific methods with the students when all other methods of de-escalation have been unsuccessful and there is an imminent serious safety risk. As part of the team around the student, the parents or caregivers are invited to contribute to the plan and once it is complete they sign it off.

This plan should be reviewed after any incident involving the student and on a regular basis and updated accordingly.

### **Incidents**

At times we have incidents in school where students have been at risk of hurting themselves, or have hurt themselves and/or others. These incidents are written up on the school incident form and submitted to the Leadership Team.

Following an incident, a debrief with the staff concerned may happen depending on the nature of the incident, as per the MOE Guidelines August 2017.

Incidents are analysed so we can learn from the events to help ensure future safety. A referral to our school Psychologist may be made or further advice and support from our therapy team may be sought as a result.

Following any incident the class team will review the current individual behaviour plan and consider if any changes need to be made. If there is not a current individual behaviour plan the class team will consider if one needs to be written, or the Leadership Team may suggest that one is written or a running log kept. A running log records low risk repetitive behaviours and seeks to find reasons why that behaviour is happening.

If physical restraint is ever used it has to be reported initially to the Leadership Team who will let the parents or caregivers know and then to the Ministry of Education. There is a necessary and detailed investigation into any use of physical restraint.

### **Seclusion**

Seclusion rooms are prohibited by law. There are no seclusion rooms at Tauranga Special School.

Ratified by Board: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 20 February 2019 \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signed for B.O.T.

Date

Date

Signed for B.O.T.