

Physical Restraint

Use physical restraint only when the teacher or authorised staff member reasonably believes that the safety of the student or of any other person is at serious and imminent risk.

- The physical restraint response must be reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances:
- Use the minimum force necessary to respond to the serious and imminent risk to safety.
- Use physical restraint only for as long as is needed to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

Teachers and authorised staff members will need to use their professional judgement to decide what constitutes "a serious and imminent risk to safety". Some examples are:

- A student is moving in with a weapon, or something that could be used as a weapon, and is clearly intent on using violence towards another person.
- A student is physically attacking another person, or is about to.
- A student is throwing furniture, computers, or breaking glass close to others who would be injured if hit.
- A student is putting themselves in danger, for example running onto a road or trying to harm themselves.

Acceptable Physical Contact Staff may need to physically support students. The following situations involving physical contact to support students happen in schools every day:

- Temporary physical contact, such as an open hand on the arm, back or shoulders to remove a student from a situation to a safer place.
- Supporting a student to move them to another location, or help them to get in a vehicle or use the stairs.
- The practice of harness restraint, when keeping a student and others safe in a moving vehicle, or when recommended by a physiotherapist or occupational therapist for safety or body positioning.
- Younger students, especially in their first year of school, sometimes need additional help. For example, you may "shepherd" a group of younger students from one place to another.
- Staff may hold the hand of a young student who is happy to have their hand held for a short time. » Staff may pick a student up to comfort them.
- Assisting a student with toileting, including changing a nappy.

If you have to use physical restraint.

- Physical restraint should only be applied by teachers and authorised staff. There may be situations when an unauthorised staff member intervenes and physically restrains a student, for example when there are no teachers or authorised staff nearby.

- If teachers and authorised staff members do not have the skills or confidence to safely restrain a student, call for help.
- Call the police when a student cannot be managed safely and the imminent danger to students, staff or themselves remains, after all alternatives have been explored.
- The physical and psychological state of the student being restrained should be continuously monitored by the person performing the restraint and other people present.
- Apply physical restraint only for the minimum time necessary and stop as soon as the danger has passed. Monitor the physical and psychological wellbeing of both the student and the staff member who applied the restraint for the rest of the school day. Watch for shock, possible unnoticed injury and delayed effects.

Reporting and documenting the incident

- The principal must be informed immediately and the principal or principal's delegate will inform parents.
- Staff must complete an [incident report](#) and also record the event on our School Management System.
- The staff members involved in the physical restraint should sign the incident report, as well as the Principal or Principal's delegate.
- Put the completed forms on the student's file, and make them available to the student's teacher and parents or caregivers.
- All incidents of physical restraint must be reported to the Ministry of Education and the employer.