



Nelson Park School

Term 2 2022


Physical Restraint

Nelson Park School has procedures in place for managing **student behaviour** and guidelines around the **care and management of students**. The key point is to safeguard the wellbeing of students, staff, and others whenever behaviour management issues arise.

Staff use de-escalation techniques (see the Ministry guidelines below) if a student's behaviour is becoming out of control and/or poses a danger to themselves or others. However, in an emergency situation, it may be necessary to use physical restraint. This is a serious intervention that may cause physical or emotional harm to the student and the person using physical restraint. Physical restraint is a last resort and only used when directly necessary to protect the health, safety, or wellbeing of the student or another person. It may be necessary to move people out of the area to de-escalate the situation and keep them safe. In some cases, it may be necessary to involve the police.

All teaching staff are authorised to apply restraint. Non-teaching staff can apply restraint if they have been authorised, in writing, by the board. Physical restraint applied by an unauthorised staff member is not covered by the Education and Training Act. In this case, other legislation or common law may apply.

Guidelines on the use of physical restraint

The Ministry of Education's **Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint**  offer useful techniques for preventing and/or de-escalating behaviour problems before they reach a critical point. The guidelines also provide clear guidance on how to use physical restraint if prevention and de-escalation are unsuccessful, as well as outlining what types of physical restraint must be avoided, and incident forms.


If physical restraint is warranted, the level of restraint should be proportional to the level of risk the student or their behaviour poses, and should end as soon as the safety of everyone involved is assured. The student's physical and psychological state should be monitored during the restraint. The student, and the person who applied the physical restraint, should be monitored for signs of distress or shock in the aftermath of the incident.

The school holds a debrief after the incident, examining the events leading up to it, the interventions used, and what could have been done differently. The Ministry of Education, and the board, is notified of any incident involving physical restraint.

Parents/caregivers whose child was involved in the incident should be notified as soon as practically possible. They should be invited to offer suggestions to avoid the use of restraint in the management of their child's behaviour. Any complaints from parents should be dealt with through the school's **complaints process**, and the Ministry of Education contacted for advice, if necessary.

Students with high-risk behaviours should have an Individual Behaviour Plan in place. Key staff members and parents/caregivers are involved in the development of the plan. All staff working with the particular student are fully briefed on the agreed protocols in the plan, and all staff are made aware that there is an Individual Behaviour Plan in place for the student.

Monitoring the use of physical restraint

The Ministry of Education requires all incidents of restraint to be reported using an **incident of physical restraint form** .

The principal, or delegate, monitors the use of physical restraint and collates information about any incidents. The principal shares this information with the board through the principal's report at board meetings (in a public-excluded session).


Physical restraint forms and debriefs

The Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint includes reporting and debriefing forms. See **Physical Restraint Forms and Debriefs**  for more information and links to the forms.

Legislation

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Children's Act 2014
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Crimes Act 1961

Resources

- Ministry of Education: **Support for schools to manage challenging student behaviour**
- Ministry of Education: **Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint** 

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