



Policy: Reducing student distress, and use of physical restraint

Purpose

This Board is committed to a supportive and caring school environment where all students and staff are kept safe from harm and treated with dignity. Discipline will be fair, firm, consistent, predictable and restorative with the Gospel values of compassion, forgiveness and respect for the individual underpinning all decision making.

Except as authorised under this policy, no staff member may use any form of physical restraint on our students.

Our principal, teachers, and board-authorised staff members can only physically restrain a student as a last resort, where:

- the use of physical restraint is necessary to prevent imminent harm to the student or another person,
- there is a reasonable belief that there is no other option available in the circumstances. to prevent the harm, and
- the physical restraint is reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

Definitions

As defined in the Education and Training Act 2020:

Physical restraint is using physical force to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a student's body or part of the student's body against the student's will.

Harm means harm to the health, safety, or well-being of the student or another person, including any significant emotional distress suffered by the student or the other person.

Authorised staff member means an employee of a registered school who is trained and authorised by the employer to use physical restraint in accordance with Section 99 of the Act.

Delegations

The Board delegates to the Principal responsibility for:

- developing and implementing procedures and practices to prevent, plan for, and respond to student distress that meet the requirements of the Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2023 and its amendments ("the 2023 Rules"), and
- recommending eligible non-teaching staff to the board for authorisation to use physical restraint according to requirements of the 2023 Rules.

Only the Board can authorise non-teaching staff members to use physical restraint.

Expectations

All staff subject to this policy are trained to confidently apply prevention and de-escalation strategies, limiting the need to restrain a student physically according to the 2023 Rules and the relevant guidelines.

Board

The Board requires:

- compliance with the 2023 Rules, and
- an evidence-based assurance from the Principal that this policy is being followed.

Principal

The Principal shall ensure:

- the implementation and compliance of this policy, including the completion of best practice training by all staff who are authorised to use physical restraint,
- operational compliance with the Education and Training Act 2020 and the 2023 Rules,
- all physical restraint incidents are immediately reported at the next board meeting,
- the Board is informed of all relevant information (risks, trends, and impacts), and
- all non-teaching staff who may use physical restraint on a student have been authorised by the Board.

Monitoring

The Principal shall report to the Board:

- on compliance, or the actions being taken to ensure compliance with this policy, the legislation, and the 2023 Rules on reducing student distress and use of physical restraint, and
- at every board meeting, all incidents, matters, or risks relating to this policy, ensuring that the non-identification and privacy of individual students is maintained.

The Board shall monitor the use of physical restraint, looking for trends and any action that could be taken at the governance level to support reducing such incidents.

Ratified by Board: Signed for Board



Signature

Date: 22 May 2024

Responsibility: Board of Trinity Catholic College

Reviewed: May 2024

Next review date: May 2025

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Associated legislation

Education and Training Act 2020 (Sections 99-101)

Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2023

Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Board's:

- Health and safety policy
- Child protection policy
- Privacy policy
- Emergency procedures
- Reporting and monitoring policy and procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Managing challenging behaviour policy
- The College EOTC policy and procedures

Procedures/supporting documentation

The Ministry of Education's Physical Restraint Guidelines

Appendix 1 of the Rules