



PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

OUR WHY (RATIONALE)

Wesley College's board is committed to reducing student distress and the use of physical restraint by school staff. The board acknowledges that the policy for managing concerns and complaints supports this policy and makes this policy along with all health and safety policies available on the school website.

The Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the use of Physical Restraint (the guidelines) are issued by the Secretary for Education under section 100 of the Education and Training Act 2020. The board acknowledges that these guidelines will be used to strengthen good practice and minimise the need to use physical restraint.

The board delegates to the principal the responsibility to provide school staff with advice about safe ways to manage potentially dangerous situations and include preventative or de-escalation techniques to avoid the need to physically restrain a student, options for managing behaviour, and alternative methods if prevention or de-escalation does not work. The guidelines also make it clear that under the legislation seclusion is prohibited and must not be used in New Zealand schools.

The board also acknowledges that student and staff wellbeing come first and physical restraint affects the wellbeing of both the student and the staff member who applies it. It is associated with injury and increased emotional trauma to them both. These guidelines focus on staff and student safety and wellbeing. They provide staff with generic techniques for preventing and de-escalating potentially dangerous situations. For more information schools can request the Understanding Behaviour – Responding Safely training.

OUR HOW (IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS)

(These are the guidelines [Aramai He Tētēkura – A guide to prevent distress and minimise the use of physical restraint \(education.govt.nz\)](#))

The board, through the principal must ensure that:

The following documents are available to the school community:

- the guidelines issued by the Secretary for Education under section 101 of the Act;
- the names and positions of any authorised staff members; and
- the school's policy on reducing student distress and the use of physical restraint (Rule 4)

The principal must keep written records of every instance of physical restraint of a student and any record must be kept for a minimum period of 10 years from the date of last action.

Every employer must ensure a support plan for preventing student distress and de-escalating crisis situations is put in place for any student:

- who the employer identifies as having a high likelihood of being involved in a crisis situation where physical restraint may be used on them; or
- who is subject to the use of physical restraint more than once in a term; or
- at the request of the student's parents or caregivers.

Every employer must ensure the student's parents or caregivers provide written informed consent if a section on physical restraint is appended to the student's support plan.

Every employer must ensure that when a student has been physically restrained, the student's parents or caregivers are:

- notified as soon as possible about the incident of physical restraint; and
- provided with a reasonable opportunity to actively participate in a debrief about the incident, including how it was managed with regard to the guidelines, within three working days of the incident or later by mutual agreement.

Every employer must take reasonable steps to ensure that:

- any student who has been physically restrained; and
- any staff member who has used physical restraint, has their physical and psychological wellbeing monitored so that appropriate support can be provided if adverse impacts from the restraint occur.

Every employer must ensure that the records kept under Rule 7 are analysed so that trends including increased use of physical restraint can be identified, and appropriate responses to minimise restraint developed.

Every employer must report every incident of physical restraint to the Ministry of Education, including the information in Appendix 1, using the online form, their Student Management System, or by completing and emailing the form attached to these Rules as Appendix 1. Complete the form via the Community Portal or email it to the Ministry of Education at physicalrestraint.change@education.govt.nz. Provide a copy to the employer (school board or manager of a private school) and the parent or caregiver. Note: The information in this form may be the subject of requests made under the Privacy Act 2020 and the Official Information Act 1982.

Every staff member who uses physical restraint must complete a staff physical restraint incident report.

The employer must place a copy of the form in the student's file and provide a copy to the student's parents and/or caregivers.

Every employer must ensure that:

- from 7 February 2024, teachers and authorised staff members have completed the online module on the content of the Guidelines issued under section 101 of the Act;
- from 7 February 2025, teachers and authorised staff members are supported and trained in identifying stress triggers, understanding unmet needs and preventing, minimising and responding to student distress;
- teachers that the employer identifies as having a high likelihood of needing to use physical restraint are trained in appropriate physical holds by accredited physical restraint practitioners;
- every authorised staff member (who is not a teacher) has been trained in appropriate physical holds by accredited physical restraint practitioners prior to their authorisation.

Relevant legislation and guidelines

Education and Training Act 2020, section 101 of the Act

Human Rights Act 1993

[Aramai He Tētēkura – A guide to prevent distress and minimise the use of physical restraint \(education.govt.nz\)](https://www.education.govt.nz/physical-restraint/)

New Zealand Bill of Rights 1990

Official Information Act 1982

Privacy Act 2020

Relevant School Documents

[Concerns and Complaints Policy](#)

Staff induction and training

[Expectations and Information for Students and Whaanau - Booklet](#)

The Wesley College School Board approved this policy August 2023.

This policy will be reviewed on / before the August meeting 2026.


PRESIDING MEMBER

24 August 2023
DATE