# Policy No. OP8

# Policy Name: Child Protection Policy

# Procedures for: De-escalation and use of physical restraint

# Date adopted: 5 March 2018

Purpose

To provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students and staff. Physical restraint is a serious intervention and in all cases, an alternative must be used where possible. Physical restraint can only be used under The Act[[1]](#footnote-1) when:

* The teacher or staff member reasonably believes that the safety of the student or of any other person is at serious and imminent risk; and
* The restraint used is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances

Definitions

Physical restraint is using physical force to prevent, restrict, or subdue the movement of a student’s boy or part of the student’s body.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Procedures for De-Escalation:

* Preventative and de-escalation techniques should be used to avoid the use of physical restraint.
* De-escalation techniques include:
  + Creating space and time by removing other students from the classroom, giving the student physical space, and naming the emotion in a calm even voice, ‘I can see that you are very frustrated…’, using wait time
  + Communicating calmly: talk quietly (even when the student is loud), remain calm and respectful, monitor your own body language and allow the student time to move out of the situation with dignity, focus on communicating respect and your desire to help, keep verbal interaction respectful, when appropriate give the student clear choices and/or directions to help them feel more secure and regain control.
* Think ahead in case the situation escalates: move further away, make sure you have an exit plan, constantly reassess the situation, send for help if necessary.
* Be aware that doing the following may escalate the behaviour: threatening the student, arguing or interrupting, contradicting what the student says – even if they are wrong, challenging the student, trying to shame the student or showing them disrespect.

Procedures if you have to use physical restraint

* Never use physical restraint that:
* Inhibits a student’s breathing, speaking, or method of communication (example sign language)
* Places a student prone (face-down)
* Uses pressure points or pain holds
* Uses tackling, sitting, lying or kneeling on a student
* Pressure on chest or neck
* Hyperextension (bending back of joints)
* Headlocks
* Uses force to drag or take a resisting student to another location
* Monitor well-being throughout the application of physical restraint both physically and emotionally for both student and staff member for the rest of the school day, even after the situation has deescalated. Watch for shock, possible unnoticed injury and delayed effects.
* Notify parents or caregivers the same day the incident occurred so they can monitor the student’s wellbeing at home.
* Reflect on why the incident occurred and what could be done in future to prevent a repeat occurrence.
* For good practice following an incident follow the debriefing guide. [[3]](#footnote-3)
* Use reporting templates including physical restraint form.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Key relevant documents

Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2017

<http://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/School/Supporting-students/Students-with-Special-Needs/2017-Physical-Restraint-Rules-2017.pdf>

Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint:

<http://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/School/Managing-and-supporting-students/Guidance-for-New-Zealand-Schools-on-Behaviour-Mgmt-to-Minimise-Physical-....pdf>

1. Section 139AE, Education Act 1989 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Pg 4, Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint, August 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Pg 10, Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint, August 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Pg 15, Appendix 1, Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint, August 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)