

Mildura Christian College

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Restraint of Students Policy

Definition of Restraint

Restraint is the use of physical force to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of a student's body or part of their body. Students are not free to move away when they are being restrained. In some limited circumstances, restraint may also include restraining a student from imminent dangerous behaviours by secluding them in an area where such action is immediately required to protect the safety of the student or any other person.

Seclusion is the solitary confinement of a student in a room or area (e.g. a garden) from which their exit is prevented by a barrier or another person. When used by a staff member in immediate response to behaviours of concern, seclusion may also include situations where a student is left alone in a room or area and reasonably believes they cannot leave that room or area even if they would physically be able to, i.e. it is not locked.

Prone restraint involves holding a student face down and is not permitted at the College.

Supine restraint involves holding a student face up and is not permitted at the College.

The College Policy

It is the College's policy that:

- restraint and seclusion must only be used as a last resort in an emergency where there is an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to the student or others
- every instance of restraint or seclusion is reported and recorded through our Safety Incident Form
- in every instance of restraint, the breathing of the student should be visually monitored
- in every instance of seclusion must visually monitored throughout the incident by a staff member to ensure that the seclusion is justified, time limited and that the student, and other students and staff are safe
- restraint or seclusion is not used except in situations where:
 - a. the student's behaviour poses an imminent threat of physical harm
 - b. or danger to self or others
 - c. where such action would be considered reasonable in all the circumstances
 - d. where there is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances
 - e. restraint or seclusion should be discontinued as soon as the imminent danger has dissipated.

When Restraint Should Not Be Used

Restraint and seclusion should not be used as part of a behaviour support plan for a student, or used as a routine behaviour management technique, to punish or discipline a student or to respond to:

- a student's refusal to comply with a direction, unless that refusal to comply creates an imminent risk to the safety of the student or another person
- a student leaving the classroom/school without permission, unless that conduct causes an imminent risk to the safety of the student or another person
- verbal threats of harm from a student, except where there is a reasonable belief that the threat will be immediately enacted
- property destruction caused by the students unless that destruction is placing any person at immediate risk of harm.

Mechanical restraints should never be used unless the device is for a therapeutic purpose with written evidence of the prescription or recommendation of use, or if the restraint is required for safe travel in a vehicle.

When Restraint May Be Used

Staff may only use restraint or seclusion of student when there is an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to the student or others, and where such action would be considered reasonable in all the circumstances and there is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.

It should only be used as a last resort and the decision about whether to use restraint or seclusion should be made in accordance with the staff member's own professional judgment.

When applying restraint, staff must use the minimum force required to avoid the dangerous behaviour or risk of harm to others and only restrain the student for the minimum duration required and stop restraining the student once the danger has passed.

The type of restraint used must be consistent with a student's individual needs and circumstances including their age, size, gender, and any physical, mental or psychological conditions or impairments.

Documentation

All instances of restraint or seclusion are recorded by creating an incident.

Last Updated: May 2021

