

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Physical Restraint Policy is to ensure that staff at the College are informed about the appropriate use of restrictive interventions to protect the safety of a student and members of the school community.

2. Background

The use of physical restraint should only be exercised in an emergency or occur where there is an immediate risk of injury to persons, including the student, or an immediate risk of serious damage to property. Physical restraint is used to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of that person's body or part of their body, for the primary purpose of behavioural control. Physical restraint may only be used when there is no reasonable alternative to avoid the danger. This policy operates in alignment with My College's broader Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and obligations under Ministerial Order 1359.

All staff need to understand the rights and responsibilities of students and staff in these situations.

3. Policy Statement

The safety and wellbeing of all students is our highest priority at My College.

4. Implementation

When physical restraint or seclusion should NOT be used:

Physical restraint and seclusion should not be used unless immediately required to protect the safety of the student or any other person (see below).

Rooms or areas designed specifically for the purpose of seclusion or which are used solely or primarily for the purpose of seclusion are not permitted in Victorian government schools.

Restraint must not be included in a Behaviour Support Plan or be 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 student unless that destruction is placing any person at immediate risk of harm.

Any restraint which covers the student's mouth or nose, in any way restricts breathing, takes the student to the ground into the prone or supine position, involves the hyperextension of joints, or application of pressure to the neck, chest or joints, must not be used.

At My College the use of restraint does not form part of a Behaviour Support Plan or a Student Safety Plan and should not be identified as an appropriate intervention.

Effective support for students exhibiting complex and unsafe behaviour requires a holistic response which includes appropriate and targeted interventions, specialised support and the development and implementation of a Behaviour Support Plan and, if necessary, a Student Safety Plan.

This section on the use of restraint reflects the values of Islamic education in respecting the dignity of each person, building inclusive, supportive and caring relationships, fostering compassion and forgiveness, and promoting the practice of respectful behaviour.

It recognises that all students have a right to be safe and free from abuse. The information provided in this section draws substantially on the policies and guidelines of the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) Policy which can be found in the publication Guidance for Responding to Violent and Dangerous Student Behaviour of Concern. MYC endorses the direction outlined in the DET publication The Principles for Reduction and Elimination of Restraint and Seclusion in Victorian Government Schools (Victorian Department of Education and Training 2017).

When Physical Restraint Might Be Used

School staff may only use physical restraint on a student when there is an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to the student or others; and where such action (ie to physically restrain) would be considered reasonable in all the circumstances and there is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.

The decision about whether to use physical restraint rests with the professional judgment of the staff member/s involved, who will need to take into account both their duty of care to their students, their right to protect themselves from harm and obligations under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Mechanical restraint:

Mechanical restraints should never be used in schools to restrict a student's freedom of movement, unless the restraint is for a therapeutic purpose with written evidence of the prescription / recommendation, or if required to travel safely in a vehicle.

During restraints:

If applying physical restraint in the limited circumstances set out above, staff must:

- use the minimum force required to avoid the dangerous behaviour or risk of harm
- only restrain the student for the minimum duration required and stop restraining the student once the danger has passed.

Staff should ensure the type of restraint used is consistent with a student's individual needs and circumstances, including:

- the age/size of the student
- gender of the student
- any impairment of the student e.g. physical, intellectual, neurological, behavioural, sensory (visual or hearing), or communication
- any mental or psychological conditions of the student, including any experience of trauma
- any other medical conditions of the student
- the likely response of the student
- the environment in which the restraint is taking place.

Staff should monitor the student for any indicators or distress. Staff should talk to the student throughout the incident, making it clear to the student why the physical restraint is being applied. Staff should also calmly explain that the physical restraint will stop once it is no longer necessary to protect the student and/or others.

Actions After Restraint Has Been Used

This table explains the follow up actions that must be undertaken after a student has been physically restrained:

Action	Description
Reporting of the physical restraint	<p>The staff member(s) involved in the incident must immediately notify the Principal of the incident. A staff member should contact the student's parents and provide them with details of the incident as soon as possible.</p> <p>The incident may need to be reported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Security Services Unit (previously known as the Emergency Management Unit), see: Reporting (emergency and incidents) • Edusafe see: Report an Injury, Incident or Hazard - WorkSafe, see: WorkSafe Notification.
Providing supports for those involved	<p>Following the use of restraint on a student, appropriate supports must be offered to the following people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student who has been restrained or secluded and their parents/guardians. <p>This may include participation in decisions involving the student's behaviour management, Student Support Group meetings, the development of a student Behaviour Support Plan, and involvement of Student Support Services. For policy advice on the prevention of endangering behaviour and promoting positive behaviours see: Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other students and staff members who were involved in or witnessed the incident. This may include a debriefing in relation to the incident, and counselling support.

5.Roles & Responsibilities

- Applicants will be responsible for: providing truthful and complete information.
- Admissions Office will be responsible for: ensuring all applications are processed accurately and confidentially.
- Principal will be responsible for: overseeing the implementation of this policy, final decision on the outcome of enrolment and resolve disputes.
- School Board will be responsible for: reviewing this policy and monitoring compliance.

6.Related Policies & Legislation

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
 Disability Discrimination Act 1992
 Equal Opportunity Act 2010
 Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004

Child Safety Policy
 Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy

7.Communication of this Policy

This policy will be published on the school's website and intranet.

8.Policy Review

Approved by: Principal and School Board, April 2025

Next review: April 2027