

## **SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR – PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION**

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

#### **Prevention:**

As per policy [JICDAA](#), Pembina Trails School Division recognizes that it has a responsibility to maintain safe and caring communities for all students and employees. Pembina Trails emphasizes the use of positive and preventative interventions and supports, and every effort shall be made to employ preventative approaches in order to mitigate the need for physical restraint or seclusion. Pembina Trails School Division acknowledges the use of emergency restraint and/or seclusion procedures may be necessary when a student presents imminent danger to themselves or others. Whenever possible, physical restraint is to be carried out by staff trained and knowledgeable in proactive management strategies and restraint techniques such as low arousal strategies, the NVCi® (Nonviolent Crisis Intervention model) and/or the WEVAS model (Working Effectively with Violent and Aggressive States).

#### **Response:**

Safe and Caring Schools A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion defines seclusion as “...the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area where the student cannot freely exit or is physically prevented from leaving...” “...This generally occurs in a room with a door that has a lock that is engaged, or if not engaged, the door is otherwise blocked or held shut.” (p.5)

“The use of seclusion as a safety response differs from a variety of associated practices such as sensory/regulation interventions or time out. While these practices may share some properties of seclusion, they do not constitute seclusion as understood within these guidelines.” (p.6)

“Seclusion is used as a last resort after prevention strategies, de-escalation interventions, and less restrictive measures have been exhausted.” (p.1) Seclusion is NOT a teaching strategy and should not be part of a student-specific plan.

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Seclusion is often, but not always, used in association with physical restraint. Physical restraint refers to a personal restriction that limits the ability of a student to move their torso, arms, legs, or head freely in order to secure and maintain the safety of the person or the safety of others.

## Intent:

This protocol is intended to assist schools in creating and maintaining learning environments that are as safe as possible for all students and adults. School staff are to be familiar with alternative proactive and reactive responses to student behaviour and to plan for the elimination of the use of physical restraint and or seclusion wherever possible. Please see [Safe and Caring Schools A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion](#) for additional information.

## Criteria:

Policy JICDAA, this regulation, JICDAA-E-1 and JICDAA-E-2 will inform procedures on the use of restraint and seclusion as a safety response when a student poses an immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others.

If physical restraint and or seclusion is used, student safety is paramount, and the following is required:

- a. it is used only in situations when a student poses an immediate risk of physical harm to them self or others.
- b. the student is safe.
- c. physical interventions should not exceed what are reasonable or proportionate actions warranted under the circumstances.
- d. physical restraint and/or seclusion does not restrict freedom of movement in a manner that restricts the student's breathing or that physically harms the student. Physical restraint should not be used to transport students in stairwells.
- e. respect for the student's dignity is maintained.
- f. the student can communicate their basic human needs and have those needs met.
- g. staff observing the student are able to communicate effectively with the student at all times.
- h. a staff member is assigned the role of observer and notetaker to record a factual account of the event. Video/photo recordings are forbidden.
- i. Continuous visual and aural monitoring must be maintained for the entire period of physical restraint and/or seclusion; occasional checks are not acceptable.
- j. Health and safety policies and/or regulations related to [The Workplace Safety and Health Act](#) and [Workplace Health and Safety Regulation](#) (M.R. 217/2006) are to be followed.
- k. physical restraint and/or seclusion is discontinued as soon as the immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others has dissipated.

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I. school and divisional emergency response procedures are followed in the event that further safety measures are necessary.

## Protocol:

### 1. Call for Assistance

If a student's behaviour has escalated to the point where it poses an immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others, staff and people who have care and charge of the student should immediately call for assistance from the principal (or designate) and those staff members who have adequate knowledge and training to de-escalate and manage the event.

### 2. Secure Student Safety in the Environment

Working as a team, staff should focus on protecting the safety of all students including the student at risk of causing immediate serious physical harm to self or others. The goal is to secure and stabilize the situation in a calm, coordinated manner.

- a. Stressors should be removed from the environment when possible.
- b. If necessary, other students in the vicinity should be moved in a calm, orderly manner to a safe distance.
- c. The student in crisis should not be left alone.
- d. The environment should be scanned for potential dangers.
- e. Objects that could cause immediate serious physical harm should be removed if it is safe to do so.
- f. Attention should be given to procedures for safe evacuation.

### 3. Assess Risk

Physical restraint and/or seclusion may need to be employed as a safety response as a last resort and only after proactive strategies, de-escalation interventions, and less restrictive measures have been exhausted.

A person familiar with the student should assess the risk for injury when the student's behaviour is escalated.

### 4. Authorization, Use and Discontinuation of Physical Restraint and/or Seclusion

If physical restraint and/or seclusion is deemed absolutely necessary, it must be discontinued as soon as the immediate risk of serious physical harm to the student or others has dissipated.

School staff must have clear criteria for discontinuation of physical restraint and/or seclusion, and this must be communicated to the student.

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If physical restraint and or seclusion is used, student safety is paramount, and the following is required:

- a. it is used only in situations when a student poses an immediate risk of physical harm to them self or others.
- b. the student is safe.
- c. physical interventions should not exceed what are reasonable or proportionate actions warranted under the circumstances.
- d. physical restraint and/or seclusion does not restrict freedom of movement in a manner that restricts the student's breathing or that physically harms the student. Physical restraint should not be used to transport students in stairwells.
- e. respect for the student's dignity is maintained.
- f. The student can communicate their basic human needs and have those needs met.
- g. staff observing the student are able to communicate effectively with the student at all times.
- h. a staff member is assigned the role of observer and notetaker to record a factual account of the event. Video/photo recordings are forbidden.
- i. Continuous visual and aural monitoring must be maintained for the entire period of physical restraint and/or seclusion; occasional checks are not acceptable.
- j. Health and safety policies and/or regulations related to [The Workplace Safety and Health Act](#) and [Workplace Health and Safety Regulation](#) (M.R. 217/2006) are to be followed.
- k. physical restraint and/or seclusion is discontinued as soon as the immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others has dissipated.
- l. School and divisional emergency response procedures are followed in the event that further safety measures are necessary.

## 5. Reporting

Any event that involves the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion must be reported on the day of the event to the following:

- principal (or designate)
- parent(s)/legal guardian(s)
- division-based person(s) responsible for student support services
- superintendent (or designate)

The **Pembina Trails School Division clevr™ Report Form for Physical Restraint and Seclusion Events** must be completed, and a physical copy placed in the pupil file within 48 hours. Exhibit JICDAA -E-2 provides an example of the sample form.

## 6. Debriefing

Physical Restraint/Seclusion can have a detrimental impact on the student. Schools will provide supports for students who have experienced physical restraint/seclusion to help them re-integrate into the school community and to restore a sense of safety and belonging.

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The event must be debriefed in order to review and reflect upon the circumstances and its impact. Understanding the reason physical restraint/seclusion took place and having the opportunity to talk about the intervention with others has been found to help individuals come to terms with the experience of physical restraint and/or seclusion.

Administration and members of the School Support Team must meet as soon as possible after the seclusion event to:

- a. examine what happened
- b. conduct a function-based assessment to learn more about the purpose of the behaviour and precipitating factors
- c. engage in the student-specific planning process to write or revise the student-specific plan identifying what needs to be changed to decrease the chance of the behaviour recurring (e.g., changes to environment, changes to positive behaviour strategies, alternative responses to the student's behaviour)
- d. identify staff development or training needs and initiate a plan for addressing these needs

It is also expected that debriefing meetings will occur with parent(s)/legal guardian(s), the student (whenever possible and developmentally appropriate), and school staff involved in the seclusion event. The student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and the student may have the opportunity to be accompanied and assisted by a person of their choosing during the debriefing. Debriefings should be in-person where possible and take place as soon as possible after the event. Additional briefings should be made available to others in the school who were impacted physically and/or emotionally by the event.

Debriefings are led by the principal (or designate) who has training/experience in leading a debriefing process. The debriefing should focus on how the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion could have been prevented and should identify what can be done to avoid seclusion if a similar event occurs in the future. A summary of the debriefing(s) and any outcomes decided upon is placed in the pupil file.

## 7. Monitoring and Review

Pembina Trails staff will regularly review clevr™ reports in order to:

- identify patterns or trends to inform decision-making;
- to review incidents of harm and implement further harm reduction strategies for students and staff;
- to further support staff professional development and training;
- to monitor effectiveness of policies and procedures in reducing physical restraint and/or seclusion, and;
- to update policy and procedures to ensure alignment with any new developments, practices or provincial regulations.

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