

Red River Valley School Division
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE G14
SECLUSION AND/OR PHYSICAL RESTRAINT



The Red River Valley School Division (RRVSD) recognizes that it has a responsibility to maintain safe and caring school environments for all students and employees. RRVSD emphasizes preventive and positive behavioural supports and every effort is made to employ preventative approaches that impede the need for the use of seclusion and/or physical restraint.

RRVSD recognizes the use of emergency seclusion and/or physical restraint procedures may be necessary when a student presents imminent danger to themselves or others. Seclusion and/or physical restraint may only be used as a safety response when a student poses an immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others. Seclusion and/or physical restraint is used as a last resort after prevention strategies, de-escalation interventions, and less restrictive measures have been exhausted.

In accordance with the document provided by Manitoba Education (2021) Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion, all students in Manitoba have a right to appropriate educational programming (Manitoba, AEP Regulation) in a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment (Manitoba, Public Schools Act and Safe Schools Charter). In Manitoba, a positive whole-school approach to planning for safety and belonging (Manitoba Education & Training, Whole-School Approach; Manitoba Education, Supporting Positive Behaviour; Manitoba Education, Training & Youth, From Challenges to Possibilities) is combined with a supportive response to meeting the safety needs of all persons in the school environment (Manitoba, Education Administration Act). In Manitoba, all schools are expected to engage in preventative practices as opposed to those that are punitive and reactive (Manitoba Education & Training, Code of Conduct). These efforts facilitate a positive school climate and build a culture of trust and respect.

Definitions and Terminology:

Behaviour

All behaviour is a form of communication. When a student is unable to communicate their needs verbally, they may use their behaviour to tell us they are stressed, distressed or that there is a problem that needs to be resolved.

Seclusion

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area where the student cannot freely exit or is physically prevented from leaving.

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Physical Restraint

Physical restraint refers to a personal restriction that immobilizes 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.

Time Out

Time out occurs when access to reinforcement is removed for a period of time following the occurrence of an identified problem behavior in order to reduce or stop that behavior. Time out may involve removing a student from sources of positive reinforcement as a consequence of a specific undesired behavior. If a student chooses to be alone in a room, space or area, and is free to leave at any point, this is not considered to be time out or seclusion.

Sensory/Regulation/Calming Spaces

Sensory spaces is a term that encompasses a broad variety of therapeutic spaces (eg. Calming space, sensory modulation/integration room, multi-sensory room). The use of a sensory/regulation space is not to be confused with the use of seclusion. A sensory space is used proactively to meet a student's needs and promote self-regulation.

Guiding Principles:

Prevention:

RRVSD will provide opportunities for staff to increase their understanding of behaviour and learn to plan, manage, and respond to behaviour in ways that support a safe, caring, and inclusive school community.

If students require specific skill and strategy instruction to meet their needs, students will work with the student services team and parents/guardians to develop a student-specific plan. The team will work together to identify the student's needs by trying to understand what the student is communicating through their behaviour. This information will help inform the selection of effective teaching strategies, environmental adjustments, ways to help students manage their own behaviour, pro-social skills, replacement behaviours, and appropriate response strategies.

Response:

Principals have the responsibility and authority over the conduct of a student. They must ensure that the interventions and responses used or implemented in carrying out duties to maintain order and safety in school are reasonable and appropriate, given the frequency and severity of

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the event, and take into account the student's state of development. The principal must ensure that all staff be made aware of the school's safety response procedures.

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 and those staff members who have adequate knowledge and training to de-escalate and manage the event. Stressors should be removed from the environment when possible.

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.

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

Seclusion and/or physical restraint 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.

If seclusion and/or physical restraint is used, 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 seclusion and/or physical restraint and this must be communicated to the student.

If seclusion and/or physical restraint is used, procedures must ensure the following:

- The student is safe.
- Seclusion and/or physical restraint does not restrict freedom of movement in a manner that restricts the student's breathing or that physically harms the student.
- Regard and respect for the student's dignity is maintained to the greatest extent possible.
- The student can communicate their basic human needs and have those needs met to the greatest extent possible.
- Staff observing the student are able to communicate effectively with the student at all times.
- A staff member is assigned the role of observer and notetaker to record a factual account of the event.

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- Continuous visual and aural monitoring must be maintained for the entire period of seclusion and/or physical restraint.
- Health and safety policies and/or regulations are to be followed.
- Seclusion and/or physical restraint is discontinued as soon as the immediate risk of serious harm to self and others has dissipated.
- School emergency response procedures are followed in the event that further safety measures are necessary.

Reporting:

Every instance of seclusion and/or physical restraint is to be reported and documented. Any event that involves the use of seclusion and/or physical restraint must be reported, on the day of the event, to the principal. The principal (or designate) must report every instance of seclusion and/or physical restraint, on the day of the event to the:

- Parent(s)/legal guardian(s);
- Superintendent (or designate)
- Student Services Administrator

Documentation:

Each event of the use of seclusion and/or physical restraint must be documented using the divisional Seclusion and/or Physical Restraint Incident Reporting Form. Documentation must be:

- placed in the pupil support file
- provided to Superintendent Department and Student Services Administrator
- completed within 48 hours

Debriefing

If seclusion and/or physical restraint is used, the event must be debriefed in order to review and reflect upon the circumstances and its impact. Debriefing meetings will occur with the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), the student, and the school staff involved in the event. Debriefings should be in-person if possible and take place as soon as possible after the event. Additional debriefing should be made available to others who were impacted physically and/or emotionally by the event.

Debriefings are led by the principal (or designate) and a summary of the debriefing(s) and any outcome(s) decided upon is placed in the pupil support file, and a copy is provided to the Superintendent Department and the Student Services Administrator.

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The student services team must meet as soon as reasonably possible after the seclusion and/or physical restraint event to:

- examine what happened
- review and reassess the functions of the student's behaviors, and any other precipitating factors
- engage in the student-specific planning process to review or revise the student-specific plan, identifying what needs to be changed to decrease the chance of the behaviour recurring
- identify staff development or training needs and initiate a plan for addressing these needs
- identify steps to reintegrate the student into the school community to restore a sense of safety and belonging

Monitoring and Review

RRVSD is responsible to ensure regular policy & procedure review and evaluation of the Seclusion and/or Physical Restraint Procedure.

RRVSD will monitor, evaluate, and review data related to the use of seclusion and/or physical restraint. The data collected will enable RRVSD to understand the circumstances around the use of seclusion and/or physical restraint, facilitating the implementation of more effective strategies to support educational and behavioural programming. The use of seclusion and/or physical restraint as a safety response is an indication that further work needs to be done to ensure a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment.

This would include, at a minimum, a review of the following:

- incident reports to identify any patterns or trends to inform decision making
- harm incurred by students and staff
- repeated use of seclusion and/or physical restraint for an individual student, multiple uses within the same classroom, or multiple uses by the same individual that would trigger a review by the school and the school division and may indicate a need for additional training and/or support
- adherence to Seclusion and/or Physical Restraint Procedures
- staff professional support and training needs
- environmental considerations
- the effectiveness of policies and procedures in decreasing seclusion and/or physical restraint using indicators established in consultation with the safety and health committee, parents/legal guardians, students, and community-based service providers

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- the need to update the content of seclusion policies and/or procedures to ensure consistency with any new developments/or new practices

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