

Port Ahuriri School

Reducing Student Distress and Use of Physical Restraint Policy

- The Board is committed to a supportive and caring school environment where all students and staff are kept safe from harm and treated with dignity.
- Except as authorised under this policy, no staff member may use any form of physical restraint on our students.
- The principal, teachers, and board-authorized staff members will only physically restrain a student where:
 - the use of physical restraint is **necessary to prevent imminent harm to the student or another person**,
 - there is a **reasonable belief** that there is no other option available in the circumstances to prevent the harm, and
 - the physical restraint is **reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances**.

Delegations

The board delegates to the principal responsibility for:

- developing and implementing procedures and practices to prevent, plan for, and respond to student distress that meet the requirements of the Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2023 and its amendments (“the 2023 Rules”), and
- recommending eligible non-teaching staff to the board for authorisation to use physical restraint according to requirements of the 2023 Rules.

Only the board can authorise non-teaching staff members to use physical restraint.

Expectations

All staff subject to this policy are trained to confidently apply prevention and de-escalation strategies, limiting the need to restrain a student physically according to the 2023 Rules and the relevant guidelines.

Principal

The principal shall ensure:

- the implementation and compliance of this policy, including the completion of best practice training by all staff who are authorised to use physical restraint,
- operational compliance with the Education and Training Act 2020 and the 2023 Rules,
- all physical restraint incidents are immediately reported at the next board meeting,
- the board is informed of all relevant information (risks, trends, and impacts), and
- all non-teaching staff who may use physical restraint on a student have been authorised by the board.

Monitoring

The Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2023, require reporting of physical restraint incidents.

Reporting will be completed on MoE online form through the community portal or e mailed to physicalrestraint.change@education.govt.nz

A copy will be provided to both the employer and parent/caregiver

The principal or delegate will monitor the use of physical restraint and collate information about any incidents. Information on the reporting form may be subject to requests made under the Privacy (2020) and Official Information (1982) Acts.

The principal shall report to the board:

- on compliance, or the actions being taken to ensure compliance with this policy, the legislation, and the 2023 Rules on reducing student distress and use of physical restraint, and
- at every board meeting, all incidents, matters, or risks relating to this policy, ensuring that the non-identification and privacy of individual students is maintained.

The board shall monitor the use of physical restraint, looking for trends and any action that could be taken at the governance level to support reducing such incidents.

Prevention Techniques

A support plan for preventing student distress and de-escalating crisis situations is put in place for any student identified as having a high likelihood of being involved in a situation where physical restraint may be required.

We will incorporate physical restraint into an Individual Education Plan (when required) to include parents/caregivers. The plan will detail the students needs and the plan for managing the student's behaviour as agreed.

Support Plans

We will follow '**Aramai He Tetekura: A guide to understanding distress and minimising the use of physical restraint**', which provides a practical approach to recognising and responding to student distress as well as restoring a healthy learning environment after a challenging situation.

A support plan may identify physical restraint as a last resort, and to be included after all possible strategies have been explored. We require informed consent from parents/caregivers if physical restraint is included in the plan. The school will notify the MoE if physical restraint is part of the plan.