

Restraint of Students Policy



Rationale:

The physical restraint of a student is a matter often clouded in misinformation. The physical restraint of a student by staff can (and sometimes should) occur in certain circumstances, but is generally a measure of last resort to prevent an individual harming themselves or others.

Aim:

To clarify misconceptions relating to the restraint of students, and to identify the circumstances by which the restraint of a student is the proper course of action.

Implementation:

- Regulation 15 of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 states: “A member of the staff of a Government school may take any reasonable action that is immediately required to restrain a student of the school from acts or behaviour dangerous to the member of staff, the student or any other person.”
- The regulation authorises ‘reasonable’ action which is ‘immediately’ required to ‘restrain’ a student.
- In less serious cases, the reasonable action would involve a warning or instruction to the student not to proceed.
- In more serious cases where a person faces an imminent threat of injury due to the student, the reasonable action could involve the physical restraint of the student.
- The object of the restraint is to avert the danger to some person. It should therefore be measured (i.e. reasonable in the circumstances) and removed once the danger has passed.
- It is not uncommon that parents will threaten legal action if ever their child is touched by a staff member. Such threats or the possibility of such threats should not prevent staff members from carrying out their duty of care and behaving consistent with Regulation 15 as stated above.
- In a normal school setting, it is likely that the restraint of a student may involve follow-up disciplinary action or counselling. Parents and guardians would usually be notified of such actions, including the fact that the student had to be restrained.
- It is recognised that some students with intellectual or physical disabilities may at times have difficulty controlling their bodies, and therefore may need to have flailing limbs etc guided or restrained by staff as a normal procedure.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.