

Our division's seclusion & restraint "policy"

PRSD students have a right to appropriate educational programming in a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment as mandated by Manitoba Education (2021) [Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion.](#)

PRSD schools have a responsibility to provide a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment by implementing a positive whole-school approach for student safety and student belonging in the school environment.

PRSD schools have a responsibility to engage in preventative and positive practices as opposed to those that are punitive and reactive. Preventative and positive measures facilitate a positive school climate and build a culture of trust and respect.

In order to ensure that schools maintain safe and caring school environments for all students and employees, PRSD recognizes that schools may need to use seclusion when a student is engaging in intense violent behavior that presents a significant and immediate risk to the student or others.

Seclusion is always the last resort. Prevention strategies, de-escalation interventions, and less restrictive measures must have been exhausted with the student before any form of seclusion implementation.

Definitions and Terminology

Behaviour

The way in which a student acts in response to a particular situation or stimulus and may be a way to communicate need or a way to cope with stress/stressors.

Calming Space

A designated space that provides opportunities for students to experience a reduction in sensory input. It may include specific activities or tools to calm the nervous system. A calming space when used appropriately serves as a preventive measure. The use of a calming space would be included in a student-specific plan if being used on a regular basis.

Seclusion

The involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area where the student cannot freely exit.

Seclusion should only be used in **exceptional circumstances** when a student is engaging in intense violent behavior that presents a significant and immediate risk to the student or others and should only be considered as a last resort.

How do we define "reasonable"?

Physical Restraint

Untrained & inexperienced staff will believe they are at a "last resort" simply because they don't know what else to do.

Personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces 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.

Terms need to be better defined and guidelines need to be much more specific. These are dangerously and unconscionably vague.

Read more at twoemb.medium.com

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Time Out

A strategy to reduce student behavior by removing the student for a specified and limited period. Time-out does not necessarily require removal of a student to an isolated or secluded setting.

Sensory Spaces

A broad variety of therapeutic spaces (eg. an identified calming space, sensory modulation/integration room, multi-sensory room) to proactively meet a student's sensory needs and promote self-regulation. The use of a sensory space would be set up and monitored in consultation with an occupational therapist and would be included in a student specific plan.

Seclusion Procedures

PRSD will only support the use of seclusion when schools have fully addressed the following requirements:

- A whole school plan for safety and belonging that ensures a team approach for helping students with challenging behavior is in place.
- All school staff receive ongoing training and professional learning in strengths-based positive interventions and supports.
- Specific school staff receive on-going training and professional learning in conflict/crisis de-escalation strategies.
- The school's emergency response plan defines seclusion protocols.

A large group of PRSD staff attended Dr. Ross Greene's 3-day workshop in Winnipeg and ESE EAs received training directly from the division's school psychologist, yet inappropriate, harmful, and psychologically traumatizing behaviour from PRSD staff continued, even after these training sessions. It's not enough to provide training, these policies lead staff to believe this is okay. It's not.

School-based seclusion procedures must ensure the following:

- Students are treated with respect and dignity. Not possible if students are secluded or restrained.
- An adult continuously observes the student for the entire period of seclusion – occasional checks are not acceptable.
- The parent/guardian is contacted as soon as reasonably possible. How do we define "reasonable"?

When my son was locked in the gym by the phys ed teacher, at age 6, then hurt his hand trying to get out, I was not contacted until well after this had all occurred.

Reporting

The principal and/or designated must report any event that involves the use of seclusion to the parents/legal guardians and the Superintendent/CEO on the day of the event.

Documentation

Each event of the use of seclusion must be documented and reported to the Superintendent/CEO within 48 hours.

Principals and/or designates are to complete the "Student Seclusion Event Report".

A copy of "Student Seclusion Event Report" is to be filed in the pupil file and entered into the school's student information system.