Katikati College
Reducing Student Distress and Use of Physical Restraint Policy

RATIONALE:
This 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.

Our principal, teachers, and board-authorised staff members can only physically restrain a student as a last resort, 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.

DEFINITIONS:
As defined in the Education and Training Act 2020:

- **Physical restraint** is using physical force to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a student's body or part of the student's body against the student's will.
- **Imminent harm** means an immediate threat that a person will cause and/or suffer harm which jeopardises the health and safety or wellbeing of themselves or others if protective action is not taken immediately.
- **Significant emotional distress** means harm that is caused by the intentional acts of one person that significantly affects the emotional wellbeing of another person, to such an extent that they need intensive support to cope or recover.
- **Authorised staff member** means an employee of a registered school who is trained and authorised by the employer to use physical restraint in accordance with Section 99 of the Act.

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 Physical Restraint Guidelines 2024 and the Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2024, and
- recommending eligible non-teaching staff to the board for authorisation to use physical restraint according to requirements of the 2024 Rules and Guidelines.

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 2024 Rules and the relevant guidelines.

Board
The board requires:

- compliance with the 2024 Rules and Physical Restraint Guidelines, and
- an evidence-based assurance from their principal that this policy is being followed**.**

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 2024 Rules and Guidelines,
- 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 and have undertaken appropriate training as required by Rule 12.

MONITORING:
The principal shall report to the board:

- on compliance, or the actions being taken to ensure compliance with this policy, the legislation, and the 2024 Rules and Guidelines 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.

LEGISLATION:
Education and Training Act 2020 (Sections 99-101)
Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2024
physical Restraint Guidelines (Gazette notice, 17 December 2024)
Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

THIS POLICY IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE BOARDS:

- Health and safety policy
- Child protection policy
- Privacy policy
- Emergency procedures
- Concerns and complaints process

PROCEDURES/SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

The Ministry of Education's Physical Restraint Guidelines, Dec 2024

Appendix 1 of the Rules

Katikati College procedures on physical restraint that cover:

- the authorisation process
- reducing and de-escalating student distress
- training and support for staff
- notifying and reporting on instances of physical restraint
- monitoring the use of physical restraint

Reviewed and approved - September 2025