



**Westbridge Residential School  
and Halswell Residential College**

**Combined Board of Trustees**

**BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT POLICY**



The schools recognise that students and staff have the right to be in a safe working and learning environment.

The schools meet the needs of their students, many of whom have histories of complex and challenging behaviours and may not previously have been engaged in education. The schools' behaviour management system is designed to address the students' behavioural needs and to assist them with strategies to support and maintain change. Good behaviour management is an essential part of changing the behaviour of the students, who must feel safe and valued, in order that they can make positive change.

### **1. Principles for Behaviour Support**

The key principles that underpin the schools' behaviour management system:

- 1.1. It is built on the foundation that positive behaviour can be learnt, and difficult and disruptive behaviour can be replaced.
- 1.2. It moves away from seeing individual students as a 'problem', and towards proactively changing the environment around them to support positive behaviour.
- 1.3. It recognises that punitive and exclusionary approaches to behaviour do not bring about long-term and sustainable changes.
- 1.4. It supports the school-wide application of evidence-based programmes and frameworks that work.
- 1.5. It recognises that there are no quick fixes. It takes a long-term view to ensure that changes in behaviour are sustained.

### **2. Restorative Practice**

Restorative practice/justice is applied at the schools and is a key element of behaviour management.

### **3. Functional Behaviour Analysis and Assessments (FBAs)**

While staff are skilled in a variety of strategies for dealing with a wide range of student behaviours, in some cases students habitually present extreme behaviours that negatively impact on other students.

Functional Behaviour Analysis is a way of attempting to determine what motivates and maintains the extreme behaviour and to develop strategies that will support behaviour change.

#### **4. Safe Crisis Management (SCM)**

Situations of imminent risk may arise in the school from time to time. These situations may, for example, involve two or more students or a student and a staff member. All elements of practice in the school are designed to create a safe and respectful environment for all people, and in so doing to minimise the likelihood of situations of imminent risk arising.

Training and regular refresher training is provided for most staff in Safe Crisis Management. The largest focus of this professionally developed programme is on de-escalation of situations of imminent risk. Most of these situations are resolved through de-escalation where the staff member's focus is on calming the party/parties involved in the conflict. SCM is a trauma-sensitive approach with an emphasis on building positive relationships. The programme is made up of positive prevention, positive behavioural interventions, proven de-escalation techniques, and a last resort safe physical intervention system.

A very small percentage of these situations of imminent risk may not be able to be resolved by de-escalation. It is in these situations that authorised staff members may need to use physical restraint to achieve a resolution of the matter. Only staff members trained and approved in SCM are permitted to use physical restraint. The training for SCM has a focus on the safety of all parties when physical intervention is employed.

The Education and Training Act 2020 limited the use of physical restraint by teachers or authorised staff members in schools to situations where "it is necessary to prevent imminent harm to health, safety or wellbeing of a child, young person or to another person, and the teacher or staff member reasonably believes there is no other option available in the circumstances. Any restraint must be reasonable and proportionate for the circumstances."

In addition to fulfilling the reporting requirements of physical restraint to the Ministry of Education, any use of physical restraint but be reviewed by senior staff and reported to the Board of Trustees. The board and principal are working towards the elimination of physical restraint in the school.

**Prepared by:** Combined Board of Trustees

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