



PROCEDURE

SO107

Student and Staff Safety - Personal Protective Equipment and Physical Intervention Techniques

Board Received: February 24, 2020

Review Date: March 2024

Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – All other non-physical interventions have been unsuccessful up to and including the use of personal protective equipment;
 - Implemented only when the student's behaviour presents an imminent risk of injury to self or others
 - Physical intervention presents less of a risk of injury than the inappropriate behaviour.

Background

Occasionally there are students who may direct intentional or unintentional aggression towards staff and students that may result in injury. The Board has a duty to respect the rights and ensure the safety and dignity of students and staff. The Grand Erie District School Board's Accessibility Plan requires "the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to enhance accessibility for individuals who work, learn and participate in the School Board community and environment".

The Occupational Health and Safety Act requires employers to take all precautions reasonable in the protection of a worker. This protection may include the implementation and use of personal protective equipment as part of a plan to increase employee safety. **The Act also provides a duty to workers to use or wear protective devices or clothing as required by their employer.**

In the event of student aggression, regardless of whether it has resulted in an injury, administrators should refer to Procedure HR107 Maintaining Employee Safety While Working with Students. The following process should be followed for the implementation and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for increasing employee safety.

Process

A. Implementation of PPE

1. When an incident occurs that results or may result in injury, the employee promptly notifies the Principal and the Health and Safety site representative and the union Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) Representative.
2. The Principal contacts the appropriate Teacher Consultant - Special Education who will contact the Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Coordinator to issue the appropriate equipment.
3. The Teacher Consultant – Special Education, Lead Educational Assistant or ABA Coordinator will deliver PPE equipment to the school and distribute to the appropriate staff member(s) to ensure proper fit and coverage. Records of the PPE distributed to the necessary staff member(s) will be maintained by the Special Education Department. It is the responsibility of the staff member using the PPE to return it to the appropriate Special Education – Teacher Consultant when it is deemed no longer necessary, or requires a replacement.
4. All appropriate staff will be provided with instruction and training on the care, use, maintenance and limitations of the protective equipment. Training will be coordinated

through the Health and Safety Officer and documentation of training will be kept in the health and safety office for as long as the equipment is issued to the employee.

5. The Teacher Consultant – Special Education coordinates the prompt involvement of the assigned Behaviour Counsellor, who will collaborate with the Principal and appropriate school employees to develop or revise Behaviour and/or BeSafe Plans, which include specific direction regarding the wearing of PPE.
6. All staff working with the student must read and understand the current Behaviour and/or BeSafe plan.
7. Staff in the classroom will record behaviour data and provide regular updates, as requested by the Behaviour Counsellor.

The Principal will ensure that there is a regular PPE update at Resource Team meetings in schools where equipment has been assigned. The Teacher Consultant Special Education will track and ensure the return of equipment to a central board location when it has been determined it is no longer necessary (see removal process below).

B. Adjustment or Removal of PPE

The Behaviour Counsellor, in consultation with the Principal, the Teacher Consultant – Special Education, Health and Safety Officer, union JOHSC representative, special education support staff and ALL classroom staff directly involved with the student, will participate in a meeting to discuss any proposed adjustment or removal of personal protective equipment being used. The Behaviour and/or BeSafe Plans must be revised to reflect any changes to the need for PPE if it occurs.

Before considering removal or adjustment of personal protective equipment the following needs to be in place and considered:

1. Staff members working directly with the student are trained and current in Behaviour Management Systems.
2. Behaviour plans and/or BeSafe plans are in place and being followed by all appropriate employees. These plans outline how to prevent and respond to the student's behaviour and what PPE, if any, is required.
3. Injury and behaviour data indicate that incidents of aggression are decreasing or are occurring at a low level (frequency and intensity) and staff members are confident that they can minimize injury through use of BMS strategies.
4. Injury and behaviour data will continue to be monitored and behaviour and/or BeSafe plans including PPE will be modified as needed following the process described above.

C. Steps to Adjustment or Removal of PPE

The removal of PPE should first occur in the student's classroom environment. Removal of PPE in other areas of the school should not begin until classroom staff are confident that they can manage behaviour in the classroom without equipment.

When possible, start the process of removing equipment by first having staff wear the prescribed equipment under clothing so it is not visible to the student (i.e. arm guards, shin pads) or have face guards on helmets raised.

Staff remove one piece of equipment at a time. Begin with equipment that, if removed, would result in the least amount of risk to staff if an aggressive incident occurred, i.e. wrist guards, arm guards, shin guards, body protectors, and then neck and head gear. All equipment must be easily accessible to staff if needed.

Staff members will consult with the Principal, the Teacher Consultant- Special Education and the Health and Safety Officer if incidents of injury decrease and student behaviour data indicates that behaviour incidents are decreasing or at a low level (intensity, frequency and duration). After consultation, staff members may begin to move outside of the classroom without the equipment. Equipment must continue to be accessible. Staff members will carry necessary equipment with them when they are out of the classroom. If it is not possible for staff to carry equipment, they must have two-way radios or cell phone with them to call for equipment if required.

Movement to activities in the community without safety equipment should be considered with caution. Staff members need to feel confident that they can prevent injury and manage student behaviour in a community setting. In the Behaviour and/or BeSafe plan there should be a clear plan for managing behaviour if the student's behaviour escalates in the community (access to equipment and transportation if needed etc.).

Physical Intervention Techniques

Staff members are expected to use early prevention and intervention strategies whenever possible in order to respond to a situation well before it escalates to the point where physical intervention techniques would be required. Early intervention includes the recognition of a student's early symptoms of anxiety or agitation. During this phase a supportive and empathetic approach by staff may defuse or de-escalate the potential crisis.

Students whose behaviour escalates beyond the anxiety or agitated level may display defensive behaviour or a loss of rational control. During this phase staff should maintain a controlled and professional manner while setting behavioural limits that are clear, concise and enforceable, and allow the student time to respond.

Approaches such as these may reduce the likelihood that a student will demonstrate behaviour that is unsafe toward themselves or others which may require a physical containment.

The use of physical intervention techniques, as outlined in the principles of Behaviour Management Systems (BMS), may be required on some occasions as a short-term solution to immediate danger to people. Occasions could include situations when:

- staff are required to intercede in a physical dispute between students;
- a student requires assistance in following directions from staff to release an object in his/her possession (i.e., in danger of harming themselves or others);
- staff are required to intervene in an attempt to minimize personal injury to themselves, other staff or students when a student is being physically aggressive;
- staff are required to intervene when a student is harming themselves

For students that exhibit regular episodes of behavior that impact the safety of themselves or others, early prevention and intervention strategies, as well as appropriate responses during escalated situations (e.g. the use of physical containment), will be documented in the student's Behavior and/or BeSafe plan.

Guidelines for Physical Containment (Physical restraint)

1. “Behaviour Management Systems” (BMS) is used in Grand Erie as the primary means of behaviour management support. This program has been developed by educators through the Ontario Education Services Corporation and is sanctioned by the Ministry of Education. Training in BMS is offered by trained Grand Erie employees.
2. Physical containment (physical restraint) is a safety procedure approved by BMS and employed to protect staff and students.
3. Physical containment strategies are developed as short term, brief interventions that are employed by trained staff members.
4. To ensure that these techniques are used in a visibly constructive manner, the staff members need to maintain personal self-control and composure throughout the application.
5. Staff may counsel students to help them understand how their actions could escalate to a containment situation. However, the use of a containment must not be used as threat.
6. Other students must not be involved in the application of a physical containment and should be removed from the situation when possible. Every attempt should be made to remove other students from the immediate area.
7. During any physical intervention, staff should reassure the student that the intervention is being used for reasons of safety until the immediate safety risk has passed. Under circumstances where such communication could intensify the student’s unsafe behaviour, the staff may choose to reassure the student after self-control has been recovered.
8. Appropriate follow-up and debriefing should occur with all staff and students involved subsequent to the use of physical containment in an effort to resolve conflict and avoid the need to utilize physical containment in the future.
9. The school principal must consider if disciplinary action is appropriate with regard to the student.

Reporting Procedures

1. Parents must be informed in the circumstances where a physical containment could be a possibility (e.g., Strategies classes). This information must also be included in the student’s Behaviour and/or BeSafe plan.
2. When a physical containment has been employed, the parents/guardians of the student must be notified. Notification may be in person, by phone, using the daily communication log, or by any mutually acceptable means. A copy of the completed “Physical Containment Report” will be sent to parents by regular mail and/or email as soon as possible following the incident.
3. The Physical Containment Report will be maintained in the Ontario Student Record,

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**PHYSICAL CONTAINMENT REPORT
 STUDENT INFORMATION**

NAME:		DOB: yr/mo/day	CURRENT AGE:
ADDRESS: (Street/Town/Postal Code Lot Con.)		TELEPHONE:	SEX: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
PARENT/GUARDIAN: (Mr./ Mrs./ Ms./ Miss/ Mr. & Mrs.)		SCHOOL:	GRADE/PROGRAM:

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

Date:	Time:	Location:
Staff Member(s) Involved:		
Witnesses (if any):		
Prior Events and Circumstances:		
Containment Employed and Duration:		
Resolution:		
Description of any Injuries or Damage:		
Follow-up Strategies:		

Report Completed by: _____	Date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian Notified	Person Notifying Parent: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> telephone <input type="checkbox"/> meeting <input type="checkbox"/> letter <input type="checkbox"/> other	Date: _____

Principal's Signature: _____ Date _____

cc: Student OSR
 Superintendent of Education
 Parent/Guardian

Filed in OSR

Retention: E + 3 Yrs

(E = no further appeal + 3 years for adults or if student is under the age of 21, kept until 21st birthday)