



# Seclusion

## Administrative Procedure 3.B.160

3.0 Programs and Services  
3.B Student Services

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**Board Governance Policy Cross Reference:** 1, 2, 3, 14

**Legal Reference:** *Public Schools Act, Education Administration Act, Safe Schools Charter, Appropriate Education Programming Regulations, Appropriate Disciplinary Consequences in Schools Regulation (92/2013), Provincial Code of Conduct (2014)*

**Related Administrative Procedure:** 1.A.30 Code of Conduct, 3.B.130 Student Discipline, 3.B.131 Extreme Behaviours – Prevention and Response

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**Professional References:**

- Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2021.
- Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2011.
- Towards Inclusion: From Challenges to Possibilities: Planning for Behaviour. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2001.

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**Date Adopted:** July 2024

**Date Amended:**

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The Evergreen School Division believes that all students have a right to appropriate educational programming in a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment. A positive whole-school approach to planning for safety and belonging is combined with a supportive response to meeting the safety needs of all persons in the school environment. These efforts facilitate a positive school climate and build a culture of trust and respect.

The Evergreen School Division recognizes that it has a responsibility to maintain safe and caring school environments for all students and employees. The Evergreen School Division emphasizes preventative and positive behavioral supports and every effort is made to use preventative approaches that decrease the need for the use of seclusion. The Evergreen School Division recognizes the use of emergency physical seclusion procedures may be necessary when a student presents imminent danger to themselves or others. Seclusion may only be used as a safety response when a student poses an immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others. Seclusion is used as a last resort after prevention strategies, de-escalation interventions, and less restrictive measures have been exhausted.

### Definitions and Terminology

**Seclusion:** When a student is involuntarily confined, alone, to a room or area. The student is not permitted to leave the room and may be physically prevented from leaving by means of a locked door or an adult acting as a barrier to the exit.

**Physical Restraint:** A personal restriction that immobilizes 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.

**Time Out:** When access to reinforcement is removed for a period of time following the occurrence of an identified problem behavior in order to reduce or stop that behavior. Time out may involve removing a student from sources of positive reinforcement as a consequence of a specific undesired behavior. It is not considered time out or seclusion if a student **chooses** to be alone in a room, space, or area and is free to leave at any.

**Regulation Spaces:** A private or semi-private room or area a student may use to self and/or co-regulate their behaviour. The use of a regulation space is not to be confused with the use of seclusion.

## Prevention

Evergreen School Division will provide opportunities for staff to increase their understanding of behaviour and learn to plan, manage, and respond to behaviour in ways that support a safe, caring, and inclusive school community.

Some students require student-specific outcomes in addition to, or instead of, the expected learning outcomes. These outcomes will be developed with the student's support team and documented in a Student-Specific Plan.

## Response

Principals have the responsibility and authority to address the conduct of a student. They must ensure that the interventions and responses used or implemented in carrying out duties to maintain order and safety in school are appropriate, given the frequency and severity of the event, and consider the student's state of development. The principal must ensure that all staff be made aware of the school's safety response procedures.

If a student's behaviour has escalated to the point where it poses an immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others, staff and people who have care and charge of the student should immediately call for assistance from the principal and those staff members who have adequate knowledge and training to de-escalate and manage the event. Stressors should be removed from the environment when possible.

Working as a team, staff should focus on protecting the safety of all students including the student at risk of causing immediate and serious physical or psychological harm to self or others. The goal is to secure and stabilize the situation in a calm, coordinated manner.

If necessary, other students in the vicinity should be moved in a calm, orderly manner to a safe distance. The student in crisis should not be left unsupervised. The environment should be scanned for potential dangers. Objects that could cause immediate serious physical harm should be removed if it is safe to do so. Attention should be given to procedures for safe evacuation.

Seclusion may need to be employed as a safety response as a last resort and only after proactive strategies, de-escalation interventions, and less restrictive measures have been exhausted. A person familiar with the student should assess the risk for injury when the student's behaviour is escalated.

If seclusion is used, it must be discontinued as soon as the immediate risk of serious physical harm to the student or others has dissipated. School staff must have clear criteria for discontinuation of seclusion and this must be communicated to the student.

If seclusion is used, procedures must ensure that:

- The student is safe

- Seclusion does not restrict freedom of movement in a manner that restricts the student's breathing or that physically harms the student
- Regard and respect for the student's dignity is maintained to the greatest extent possible
- The student can communicate their basic human needs and have those needs met to the greatest extent possible
- Staff observing the student are able to communicate effectively with the student at all times
- A staff member is assigned the role of observer and notetaker to record a factual account of the event
- Continuous visual and aural monitoring must be maintained for the entire period of seclusion
- Health and safety policies and/or regulations are followed
- Seclusion is discontinued as soon as the immediate risk of serious harm to self/others has dissipated
- School emergency response procedures are followed in the event that further safety measures are necessary

## Reporting

Every instance of seclusion is to be reported and documented.

Any event that involves the use of seclusion must be reported on the day of the event to the principal. The principal (or designate) must report every instance of seclusion on the day of the event to the:

- Parent(s)/legal guardian(s)
- Student Services Coordinator

## Documentation

Each seclusion event must be documented using **3.B.160A Seclusion Incident Reporting Form**.

Documentation must be:

- Completed and entered into the school's student information system within 48 hours
- Sent to the Student Services Coordinator

## Debriefing

If seclusion is used, the event must be debriefed to review and reflect upon the circumstances and its impact. Debriefing meetings are led by the principal (or designate) and will occur with the parent(s)/guardian(s), and at the discretion of the principal, the student, and other school staff involved in the event.

Debriefings should be in-person if possible and take place as soon as possible after the event.

Additional debriefing should be made available to others who were impacted physically and/or emotionally by the event.

Debriefings are led by the principal (or designate) and a summary of the debriefing(s) and any outcomes decided upon is placed in the pupil file and the divisional student information system.

The student support team must meet as soon as reasonably possible after the seclusion event to:

- Examine what happened

- Review and reassess precipitating factors
- Engage in the student-specific planning process to write or revise the Student-Specific Plan, identifying what needs to be changed to decrease the chance of the behaviour recurring
- Identify staff development or training needs and initiate a plan for addressing these needs
- Identify steps to reintegrate the student into the school community to restore a sense of safety and belonging

### Monitoring and Review

The Evergreen School Division will monitor, evaluate, and review data related to the use of seclusion. The data collected will enable the Evergreen School Division to understand the circumstances around the use of seclusion, facilitating the implementation of more effective strategies to support educational and behavioral programming. The use of seclusion as a safety response is an indication that further work needs to be done to ensure a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment.

This would include, at a minimum, a review of the following:

- Incident reports to identify any patterns or trends to inform decision making
- Harm incurred by students and staff
- Repeated use of seclusion for an individual student, multiple uses within the same classroom, or multiple uses by the same individual that would trigger a review by the school and the school division and may indicate a need for additional training and/or support
- Adherence to seclusion policies and procedures
- Staff professional support and training needs
- Environmental considerations
- The effectiveness of policies and procedures in decreasing seclusion using indicators established in consultation with the safety and health committee, parents/legal guardians, students, and community-based service providers
- The need to update the content of seclusion policies and/or procedures to ensure consistency with any new developments/or new practices