

FORT LA BOSSE SCHOOL DIVISON

TITLE – **Safe and Respectful Schools Use of Seclusion in Schools** POLICY – **JKD**

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A. Guiding Principles

Fort La Bosse School Division is committed to fostering inclusion for all people. Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members while supporting mental health and wellbeing. Schools are expected to provide students with safe, caring and inclusive learning environments that contain a continuum of supports, services, and interventions for all students.

Fort La Bosse School Division supports the following principles regarding the use of seclusion in school settings:

- In promoting and guaranteeing the rights of children, as per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children should be free from all forms of physical or mental violence and be treated with dignity.
- In all decisions the best interests of the child should be the primary consideration.
- Schools are expected to engage in strengths-based practices that emphasize positive behavioural interventions and supports that make the need for seclusion unnecessary.
- Schools are aware of, and engage the assistance of, additional resources and supports that may be available in their community.

Teachers and other professionals have a responsibility to engage in ongoing professional development.

- Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are an integral part of the student support team.
- Seclusion is used only in exceptional circumstances when a student is engaging in intense violent behaviour that presents a significant and immediate risk to the student or others and should only be considered as a last resort.

B. Definitions

Behaviour

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

Calming Space

A calming space is any 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 preventative measure, proactively supporting a student's sensory needs and promoting self-regulation. The use of a calming space would be included in a student-specific plan if being used on a regular basis.



Challenging Behaviour

Behaviour can be described as challenging when it is of such an intensity, frequency or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and it is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion.

Isolation

Someone is in an area away from other people and on their own, but is not confined to that area.

Seclusion

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area where they are physically prevented from leaving. It is used in a situation where there is clear, significant and immediate danger to the student or others. Seclusion is a response not a room. Seclusion is not used to help students attain skills and knowledge and therefore not included in a student-specific plan.

Sensory Space

A sensory space is an umbrella term used to categorize a broad variety of therapeutic spaces (e.g., sensory modulation/integration room, snoezelen room, and multi-sensory room) . A sensory space is used proactively to 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.

Time-out

Time-out and seclusion, although often used interchangeably, are not synonymous. Time-out is used to reduce behaviour by removing access to reinforcement for a specified and limited period. Time-out does not necessarily require removal of a student to an isolated or secluded setting.

C. Procedure

The following procedures shall address the use, or potential use, of seclusion in school settings:

- Seclusion is only used:
 - o when a student is engaging in intense violent behaviour that presents a significant and immediate risk to the student or others
 - o and when all other less restrictive interventions have been tried and were unsuccessful
 - o and until the danger of serious harm to self or others has dissipated

- Seclusion is not used:
 - o as discipline, as a consequence, or to force compliance
 - o in the student-specific plan (e.g., a strategy in a behaviour intervention plan)
 - o as a substitute for appropriate educational programming



- Before the use of seclusion, schools must:
 - o be engaged in whole school planning for safety and belonging
 - o develop processes and supports that utilize a team approach for helping students with challenging behaviour
 - o ensure all school staff receive ongoing training and professional learning in strengths-based positive interventions and supports
 - o ensure specific school staff receive ongoing training and professional learning in conflict/crisis de-escalation strategies
 - o educate staff and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) about the use of seclusion
 - o include copies of procedures on the use of seclusion in teacher handbooks and the school crisis plan

- During the use of seclusion, it is critical that:
 - o school staff follow the school crisis plan
 - o risk of further harm to the student is minimized
 - o the student be treated with respect and dignity
 - o the parent of the student must be contacted as soon as reasonably possible
 - o any student in seclusion be continuously observed by an adult both visually and aurally for the entire period of seclusion - occasional checks are not acceptable
 - o internal and external locks on the door shall not be used; however, in student- specific cases, and in consultation with the Superintendent/CEO (or designate), locks may be considered
 - o school staff are able to communicate effectively with the student and are present at all times
 - o all health and safety policies and/or regulations related to Workplace Health and Safety Manitoba regulation (**M.R.** 217/2006) are followed

- After the use of seclusion:
 - o the incident must be reported to the principal, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), the Administrator of Student Services, and the Superintendent/CEO (or designate) on the day of the incident
 - o the incident must be documented (i.e., a written report that includes details and necessary and relevant information) and a copy placed in the pupil file (it is recommended this be done within 48 hours)
 - o debriefing(s) led by the principal (or designate) must occur to reflect upon the circumstances and impact of the seclusion and:
 - take place as soon as possible after the incident
 - include school staff, parent(s)/legal guardian(s), and student
 - be available to others in the school who may have been impacted
 - be noted in the pupil file
 - o the student support team must meet as soon as reasonably possible:
 - to examine what happened/what caused the incident and what could be changed
 - to review the need for the development or revision of a student-specific plan to prevent future incidences



- Fort La Bosse School Division will regularly review the use of seclusion, in conjunction with a review of its procedure, to:
 - o examine patterns and general trends
 - o update content and ensure consistency with any new developments



Reporting and Documentation:

Reporting:

Any event that involves the use of seclusion must be reported on the day of the event to the principal (or designate), parent(s)/legal guardians, the Administrator of Student Services and the Superintendent (or designate).

Documentation:

Each event of the use of seclusion must be documented to include, at a minimum, the following:

- student name
- where and when the event of seclusion occurred
- antecedents leading up to the situation
- witnesses
- a clear description of the student's behaviour
- a description of interventions used prior to the implementation of seclusion
- who was at risk of immediate serious physical harm that resulted in the use of seclusion
- name of staff member making the decision to use seclusion
- names of other staff members involved and their role in the seclusion event
- a chronology noting observations of the student's behaviour during seclusion
- a log that reports how the student was monitored during seclusion and by whom
- the duration of the seclusion
- any use of other restrictive measures (e.g., restraint).
- a description of any harm to students, staff, or others
- criteria for ending seclusion and how this was communicated to the student
- immediate post-seclusion actions
- details of contact with parent(s)/legal guardian(s), principal, divisional administrator of student services, and superintendent
- date of planned debriefing(s)
- date of planned student support team meeting(s)

A copy of the documentation must be placed in the pupil file and entered into the divisional student information system (recommended within 48 hours).

Fort La Bosse School Division will monitor evaluate and review data related to the use of seclusion. The data collected will enable Fort La Bosse School Division to understand the circumstances around the use of seclusion. 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.

At minimum, this includes 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 practices

