

 <p>DIVISION SCOLAIRE LOUIS RIEL SCHOOL DIVISION</p>	<p>Safe and Caring Schools: Use of Seclusion</p>
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE PROTOCOL Effective Nov. 16, 2021</p>	<p>Supporting Policy JK</p>

This protocol will inform procedures on the use of seclusion as a safety response when a student poses an immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others.

Seclusion is defined as “the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area where the student cannot freely exit or is physically prevented from leaving. It generally occurs in a room with a door that has a lock that is engaged, or if not engaged, the door is otherwise blocked or held shut.” [Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion](#) (Manitoba Education, 2021).

The use of seclusion as a safety response differs from a variety of associated practices such as sensory/regulation interventions or time out. While these practices may share some properties of seclusion, they do not constitute seclusion as understood within these guidelines.

Seclusion is used as a last resort after prevention strategies, de-escalation interventions, and less restrictive measures have been exhausted. This protocol is intended to assist schools in creating and maintaining learning environments that are as safe as possible for all students and adults. School staff are to be familiar with alternative proactive and reactive responses to student behavior and to plan for the elimination of the use of seclusion wherever possible. Please see [Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion](#) (Manitoba Education, 2021) for additional information.

Protocol:

1. Call for Assistance

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.

2. Secure Student Safety in the Environment

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

- a. Stressors should be removed from the environment when possible.
- b. If necessary, other students in the vicinity should be moved in a calm, orderly manner to a safe distance.
- c. The student in crisis should not be left alone.
- d. The environment should be scanned for potential dangers.
- e. Objects that could cause immediate serious physical harm should be removed if it is safe to do so.
- f. Attention should be given to procedures for safe evacuation.

3. Assess Risk

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.

4. Authorization, Use and Discontinuation of Seclusion

If seclusion is authorized and 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, student safety is paramount, and the following is required:

- a. Seclusion does not restrict freedom of movement in a manner that restricts the student's breathing or that physically harms the student.
- b. Regard and respect for the student's dignity are maintained.
- c. The student can communicate their basic human needs and have those needs met.
- d. Staff observing the student are able to communicate effectively with the student at all times.
- e. A staff member is assigned the role of observer and notetaker to record a factual account of the event (see documentation requirements). Video/photo recordings are discouraged.
- f. Continuous visual and aural monitoring must be maintained for the entire period of seclusion; occasional checks are not acceptable.
- g. Health and safety policies and/or regulations related to [The Workplace Health and Safety Act](#) and [Workplace Health and Safety Regulation](#) (M.R. 217/2006) are to be followed.
- h. Seclusion is discontinued as soon as the immediate risk of serious physical harm to self or others has dissipated.
- i. School and divisional emergency response procedures are followed in the event that further safety measures are necessary.

5. Reporting

Any event that involves the use of seclusion must be reported on the day of the event to the following:

- principal (or designate)
- parent(s)/legal guardian(s)
- divisional administrator responsible for student support services
- superintendent (or designate)

The [LRSD Report on the Use of Seclusion Tyler EForm](#) must be completed, and a physical copy placed in the pupil file a within 48 hours.

6. Debriefing

Seclusion can have a detrimental impact on the student. Schools will provide supports for students who have experienced seclusion to help them re-integrate into the school community and to restore a sense of safety and belonging.

The event must be debriefed in order to review and reflect upon the circumstances and its impact. Understanding the reason seclusion took place and having the opportunity to talk about the intervention with others has been found to help individuals come to terms with the experience of seclusion.

Administration and members of the School Support Team must meet within 48 hours after the seclusion event to:

- a. examine what happened
- b. conduct a function-based assessment to learn more about the purpose of the behaviour and precipitating factors
- c. 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 (e.g., changes to environment, changes to positive behaviour strategies, alternative responses to the student's behaviour)
- d. identify staff development or training needs and initiate a plan for addressing these needs

It is also expected that debriefing meetings will occur with parent(s)/legal guardian(s), the student, and school staff involved in the seclusion event. The student's parent(s)/ legal guardian(s) and the student may have the opportunity to be accompanied and assisted by a person of their choosing during the debriefing. Debriefings should be in-person where possible and take place as soon as possible after the event. Additional debriefings should be made available to others in the school who were impacted physically and/or emotionally by the event.

Debriefings are led by the principal (or designate) who has training/experience in leading a debriefing process. The debriefing should focus on how the use of seclusion could have been prevented and should identify what can be done to avoid seclusion if a similar event occurs in the future. A summary of the debriefing(s) and any outcomes decided upon is placed in the pupil file.