



Restrictive practices fact sheet

Clinical holding

This fact sheet supports principals and school staff to understand clinical holding as defined in the *Restrictive practices* procedure. This document should be read in conjunction with the *Restrictive practices* procedure.

Clinical holding is a planned restrictive practice that occurs when staff employ, when necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods (of physical restraint) that are necessary and in the best interests of the student, based upon an assessed need and agreed in advance in order to provide essential healthcare or personal care.

Clinical holding occurs in very rare circumstances and is used to provide necessary care to a student who has additional and complex healthcare needs. Clinical holding is always planned in advance and a lot of information will be gathered to help inform the decision that it is necessary to use clinical holding. Sometimes planned clinical holding is only required for a short period of time, e.g. to provide essential healthcare to a student who is recovering following surgery who is well enough to return to school.

Clinical holding will only happen in circumstances:

- where there is no alternative for safely completing the essential healthcare procedure;
- following advice from a departmentally employed qualified healthcare practitioner or therapist (e.g. state schools registered nurse, occupational therapist, and/or physiotherapist);
- when it is carefully planned and the decision includes the involvement of the student's parents, school staff and other relevant people.

School staff who undertake clinical holding will be provided with specialist training from an appropriately qualified health professional or specialist training provider. The trained school staff will adhere to a plan that explains why clinical holding is used, how it will be used and the specific circumstances in which clinical holding will occur. So far as possible and when safe to do so, the use of clinical holding will be reduced over time with the aim to be ceased.

Clinical holding is **not to be used** to provide routine non-essential healthcare to students who are unwilling to cooperate with the task or who refuse to consent to a routine non-essential medical treatment, this includes the provision of routine immunisations on school premises.

