

PUBLIC SCHOOLS — RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

1885. Hon Alison Xamon to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the use of restrictive practices like restraint and seclusion in Western Australian public schools, and I ask:

- (a) has the department undertaken any audits to investigate whether staff are aware of and adhering to regulations around the use of restrictive practices;
- (b) if yes to (a):
 - (i) when was the most recent audit undertaken;
 - (ii) what were the results of the audit; and
 - (iii) will the Minister please table any findings or reports produced; and
- (c) if no to (a), why not?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

Seclusion is not referenced in the *School Education Act 1999* or the School Education Regulations 2000 and the Department of Education's *Student Behaviour in Public Schools Policy and Procedures* refers to protective isolation, rather than seclusion.

- (a) No.
- (b) (i)–(iii) Not applicable.
- (c) Rather than rely on an audit of practice, the Department takes a proactive approach to ensure its policy on the use of protective isolation facilities is adhered to. This is done through a rigorous process for the approval and use of a protective isolation room or facility. Regional Executive Directors must approve the implementation of protective isolation, and every student behaviour support plan that includes the potential use of protective isolation must be reviewed and approved by the Regional Executive Director each term. A record of all such active plans is held centrally.

In addition, the *Physical Contact with Students* guidelines clarify the Department's expectations of staff in situations that potentially require the use of restraint. All schools have access to training in de-escalation and positive handling techniques, including restraint. This training provides school staff with skills to defuse a situation and apply appropriate intervention in incidents where physical contact may be necessary to protect students, staff or others from harm.