

# **Behaviour management and restraint work programme update**

**30 July 2015**

## Introduction

The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) is committed to providing a secure estate that ensures safety for both young people and staff. We are clear that restraint should only ever be used as a last resort where it is absolutely necessary and where no other form of intervention is possible or appropriate.

The YJB is also committed to driving improvements to restraint-related practice, through continued research and by applying learning, to help minimise the use of restraint across the secure estate.

This update covers:

- the Minimising and Managing Physical Restraint (MMPR) implementation programme
- the MMPR secure escort syllabus
- the publication of the [latest data on the use of MMPR](#) in the three secure training centres (STCs) and two under-18 young offender institutions (under-18 YOIs) currently using the system
- body-worn video equipment
- the views of young people about MMPR
- research to examine alternative ways to hold the head during restraint.

## MMPR implementation update

A significant milestone in the MMPR implementation programme was reached when training commenced at Feltham YOI earlier this month. Feltham is expected to start using MMPR in early 2016.

Cookham Wood YOI went live with MMPR on 29 June 2015, and Werrington YOI on 18 May 2015. MMPR has been in place for some time now across the three STCs (Rainsbrook, Oakhill and Medway), and at Wetherby YOI.

Plans are in place to begin training Serco staff in the MMPR secure escort syllabus in September (Serco is the YJB's secure escort contractor, with responsibility for journeys to and from STCs and secure children's homes (SCHs) – see below for more details).

Parc YOI is expected to start training in December. Parc will be the final under-18 establishment to implement MMPR.

## MMPR escort syllabus

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has developed a version of MMPR tailored specifically for secure escort custody officers who are responsible for escorting young people to and from court, and to STCs and SCHs. These officers are currently using the Physical Control in Care (PCC) system of restraint.

The MMPR secure escort syllabus is tailored specifically to provide secure escort custody officers with the skills and knowledge to manage the behaviour of young people under escort, and to safely and effectively use force when it is deemed to be required as a last resort. The MMPR secure escort syllabus has undergone a rigorous medical risk assessment by NOMS' independent medical advisor and the serious injury and warning signs (SIWS) medical panel.

Secure escort custody officers will be trained to understand and respond to the particular communication needs of the youngest age range (and those older children who might have under-developed communication skills). The officers will receive detailed medical advice on the physiological aspects of the youngest age range to make sure that the use of force is minimised, used only when necessary, and, when it is used, that the risk of injury to young people is minimised.

The government's policy on restraint will continue to apply, including the circumstances in which pain-inducing techniques can be used – only when there is an immediate risk of serious physical harm. The use of force by escort custody officers will be closely monitored locally via the provider's governance arrangements, and nationally by YJB and NOMS officials, to ensure it is consistent with legal, policy, ethical and training requirements.

The syllabus introduces a waist restraint belt, a cloth belt that goes round the waist with velcro straps for the wrists. The belt is an alternative to using handcuffs on a young person if an incident occurs in a moving escort vehicle. The belt is considered to have a number of advantages over the use of handcuffs and has been positively risk assessed by NOMS' independent medical advisor and medical panel.

## **MMPR data collection system**

Since the introduction of the MMPR data collection system, the YJB has received data on every use of force carried out under this system. The data includes, among other things, details on the technique used, the reason for the use of force, protected characteristics of the young people involved, and any injuries. The data collection system has been designed to enable understanding of how MMPR is being used by secure establishments.

The publication of the latest verified [six months of data on the use of MMPR, April 2014 – September 2014](#), reflects our commitment to greater openness and transparency by improving the quality and frequency of communication with stakeholders on restraint-related issues. It presents analysis of data from Rainsbrook, Oakhill, and Medway STCs, and Wetherby and Hindley under-18 YOIs, from April 2014 to September 2014.

The Statistical Notice published alongside the data aims to:

- provide statistical analysis of the data
- help readers to understand and contextualise the statistics
- explain the processes in place for the monitoring and scrutiny of use of force incidents
- explain what factors can influence reported levels of use of force

- highlight any disproportionate levels of use of force for particular groups of young people.

## Body-worn video cameras

The YJB and NOMS have worked jointly to pilot the use of body-worn video cameras at Feltham YOI. In addition, as part of a wider NOMS initiative, body-worn video cameras are also in use at Cookham Wood and Wetherby YOIs. Another YJB pilot will start soon at Rainsbrook STC.

The pilots will facilitate an evaluation of body-worn video cameras as a tool to help improve behaviour management and restraint practice, aid the review of restraint incidents, and provide coverage in areas where there are no CCTV cameras (e.g. classrooms, bedrooms, etc.). It is also recognised that the introduction of body-worn video cameras will help local MMPR coordinators with tasks such as quality assuring incidents and addressing staff training needs.

## The views of young people about MMPR

The YJB considers it important to obtain young people's views on MMPR independently of existing practices, such as post-incident restraint debriefs. We therefore commissioned the Barnardos advocacy service to lead on conducting one-to-one interviews and focus groups with young people across STCs and under-18 YOIs to obtain young people's views. These particularly focused on capturing young people's thoughts on their experiences of being restrained under MMPR and the support they received during post-incident restraint debriefs.

The process was completed at Rainsbrook, Medway and Oakhill STCs, and Werrington and Wetherby YOIs. The importance of positive relationships between staff and young people was highlighted by a number of young people. Many young people felt that incidents are better dealt with by members of staff they have good relationships with. Young people were of the view that time is needed for these relationship to be built, and that it is important to have settled staff teams to enable this to happen. Overall, the Barnardos advocacy service concluded that positive relationships, effective communication and a fair approach to working with young people were the three key things that young people felt were important when being managed by staff during incidents.

The advocacy service has produced written reports of their findings to the YJB. These will be shared with individual establishments, including an evaluation of the key findings across both sectors and any planned action to address the issues identified.

There are a number of benefits of obtaining young people's views on MMPR. From a training perspective, any issues they raise that are considered pertinent to the safety and effectiveness of MMPR (i.e. the use of particular techniques) will help inform the ongoing development of the syllabus and the delivery of training. Any learning achieved through this work will also help to improve restraint-related practice at individual establishments. By consulting regularly, we will be able to monitor changes in young people's views and the impact of any changes to local practice and training.

## Head-hold research

In response to recommendations given in the Restraint Advisory Board's 2011 MMPR assessment report, the YJB commissioned and published a piece of [research to examine alternative ways to hold the head during restraint](#). The research was conducted by Coventry University. It examined the impact of four head-hold restraint techniques (including the technique used in MMPR), with a view to identifying the lowest risk approach. The research was carried out in laboratory setting on a sample of university students (systematic testing in 'real-world' situations not being feasible).

The study found that the restraint positions did not cause any statistically significant reductions in lung function. The changes observed were considered to be consistent with those that people might encounter in their normal lives.

Changes in cardio-vascular variables were also small and, while some statistically significant results were obtained, these were deemed by the authors to be within the variation which might be expected during normal life.

The YJB has worked in close partnership with NOMS (as owners of the MMPR syllabus) throughout the research project. As a result of the findings, NOMS has made appropriate alterations to the way in which the MMPR head-hold technique is taught. These changes have been approved by the independent medical advisor to NOMS and the MMPR medical panel, which reviews restraint incidents reported to it and offers advice in relation to the MMPR syllabus.

NOMS and the YJB will continue to monitor use of this head-hold technique, to assess whether the revised teaching minimises the risks of misapplication.

## Feedback and suggestions

We welcome feedback on any aspect of this update and any suggestions for future updates. Please [submit your feedback by email](#).