

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND CONTACT POLICY 2024 – 2027

APPROVED BY SELT ON 21 November 2024

Applies to:	
Harrogate College	✓
Keighley College	✓
Leeds City College	✓
Leeds Conservatoire	
Leeds Sixth Form College / Pudsey Sixth Form College	✓
Luminate Group Services	✓
University Centre Leeds	✓

CHANGE CONTROL

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Name of author:	Andrew Ottey	
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Contents

1. POLICY STATEMENT	4
2. POLICY AIMS/OBJECTIVES.....	4
3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK.....	4
4. USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND CONTACT	5
5. REPORTING AND FOLLOW UP PROCEEDURE	8
6. STAFF WELLBEING	9
7. STUDENT WELLBEING	9
8. STAFF TRAINING	9
9. REVIEW	10
10. Appendix 1 – Staff Contacts	11

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Luminate Education Group aims to transform lives through inspirational education, training and support and create learning environments where every student can reach their full potential. We apply a fair and consistent approach to behaviour and communication that is appropriate to the needs of students and their circumstances, as set out in the Relationships and Behaviour policy

This policy acknowledges that situations may occasionally arise in which it may be suitable for staff to implement risk reduction strategies, including physical intervention and contact, to manage potentially unsafe situations. The College does not support the routine use of physical intervention. The policy acknowledges that in serious situations where individuals may be at risk of harm, some use of appropriate, positive, physical contact with students can support a safe and friendly college. Government guidance refers specifically to 'reasonable force'; this document will continue to refer to physical intervention and contact.

The policy is for all Further Education colleges in the Luminate Education Group along with the University Centre Leeds and will be applied equitably: that means that not every student will be treated the same, but that our approach will acknowledge the different support needs and experiences of our students. It sets out the guidelines to support staff in making decisions regarding where physical intervention or contact may be appropriate and supportive. When referring to 'colleges' it refers to all Further Education colleges in the Luminate Education group and University Centre Leeds.

Note that this policy relates specifically to physical intervention and contact for non-medical reasons. Please refer to other related policies and guidance for other kinds of physical contact, including Personal Care.

2. POLICY AIMS/OBJECTIVES

This policy seeks to ensure that:

- Students and staff are safe from harm.
- Students are supported to re-regulate themselves through non-physical intervention wherever possible.
- Staff understand the legal framework for when they may use physical intervention and contact.
- Staff use the correct physical intervention and contact in accordance with the national guidance and the college ethos of restorative working.
- Staff and students understand the college's rights for searching for certain prohibited items.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- [The Education Act 2011](#)
- [The Children Act 2004](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)

This policy has due regard to the following guidance:

- DfE (2013) '[Use of reasonable force](#)'
- DfE (2023) '[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)'
- DfE (2024) '[Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)'
- DfE (2018) '[Searching, screening and confiscation 2022](#)'

4. USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND CONTACT

4.1 When physical intervention and contact may be used

Where a situation arises that puts individuals at risk, staff should always attempt to support the safety of staff and students. Initial intervention will always be without force; staff should utilise de-escalation techniques. These include:

- Keep calm and self-assured
- Speak with an even tone
- Remove others from the space
- Distraction and diversion

The decision to physically intervene during a situation is down to the professional judgement of the member of staff and always depends on the circumstances. Physical intervention and contact should be used as a protective measure and never as a punishment. The judgement on whether to use physical intervention and contact and what type to use should always depend on the circumstances of each case and (crucially in the case of learners with additional needs, including Social, Emotional, and Mental Health) information about the individual concerned. Consideration should be given to those learners who have support plans and/or Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs). Staff are responsible for being aware of the detail on these plans for students that they teach and/or support and should pay particular attention to personal de-escalation tactics identified on the plan.

Staff have no obligation to physically intervene in a situation where staff or students may be at risk but have a legal duty of care to take steps to support the safety of all. If staff are not comfortable to physically intervene, they should request support from other staff members and/or the police.

Staff should consider:

- the seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if physical intervention or contact is not used. The greater the potential for injury or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using physical intervention may be justified; and
- the relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

Help is likely to be needed in dealing with a student who is likely to be able to over-power others, where there are multiple students involved, or if the member of staff believes they may

be at risk of injury. In these circumstances they should take steps to remove other students who might be at risk and summon assistance from other staff and/or the police.

4.2 What physical intervention and contact may be used

Guidance states that 'reasonable force' can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

*The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.*

Staff will always calmly communicate the reasons for their actions to the pupil and explain why it was necessary in a non-threatening manner.

Staff will never give the impression that they are acting out of anger or are punishing the pupil. Examples of forms of physical intervention and contact that may be used by staff:

- Guiding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- Leading a student by the hand or arm
- Physically stepping in between students

In more extreme circumstances:

- Holding
- Pushing
- Pulling
- Using more restrictive holds

Staff should always avoid actions that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example:

- holding a learner around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict ability to breathe
- slapping, punching, kicking or tripping up a learner
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- holding or pulling a learner by the hair or ear
- applying pressure to the neck, chest, abdomen or groin areas
- forcing a learner onto the floor or holding them face down on the floor
- using clothing or belts to restrict movement

4.3 Searching for prohibited items

Occasionally staff may be required to carry out a consensual search of a student to search for items prohibited by law, such as:

- Knives, bladed objects or other weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property

Searches will take place either as part of a pre-agreed risk assessment, or as the result of a dynamic risk assessment undertaken by a member of staff because of information at the time. Campus Principals and Heads of Departments should identify staff across their campus who are comfortable to support with consensual searches of students.

Campus Principals will make handheld metal detectors available for the staff who are involved in searches to limit physical contact with students where possible.

The Department of the students will make arrangements to ensure the following:

- The search takes place in a space away from other students
- The search is completed by two members of staff - one to carry out the search and one to witness and support.
- The search is, wherever possible, completed by a staff member of the same gender as the student. At least one member of staff should be the same gender as the student wherever possible.

If, in the case of a pre-agreed Safeguarding risk assessment, a student does not agree to a consensual search, there will need to be further discussions with the Head of Department and Deputy Director of Student Life, as they may not be able to continue their learning on campus.

If, in the result of a dynamic risk assessment, a student does not agree to a consensual search and there is reason to believe that a student has in their possession an item prohibited by law, the staff member should contact one of the Safer College Police Officers for advice. If they are available and onsite they will come and deal with the incident. If a Safer College Police Officer is not available, staff should call 999 or 101 depending on the level of risk. If a student is making any kind of threat the police should be called immediately on the 999 emergency number.

Whilst we can't hold a student on site against their will, all efforts should be made to safely keep the student in college until the police arrive. There may be cases where the police are called without informing the student, so they don't leave site or become triggered in way that would put staff, students or themselves at risk. On other occasions the student may be informed of the intention to call the Police, with the aim of this course of action being the prompt to make them reconsider and consenting to a search. Whether to inform the student or not is down to assessing the situation in the moment and deciding which option is likely to be safest.

If the student refuses a search they should be asked to leave site. Where the police have been called and the student leaves site then they should not be stopped against their will and the police should be informed, and any contact information shared with the Police to enable them to follow up.

5. REPORTING AND FOLLOW UP PROCEEDURE

A record of all incidents will be made where physical intervention involving the use of force against the will of a student has been necessary, or where a search has been required.

5.1 Reporting physical intervention and contact

Where physical intervention or contact has been used this should be recorded on Pro-Monitor under the 'physical intervention and contact' learner comment type. This should include:

- Date and time of intervention
- Details of the incident
- Details of the physical intervention or contact used
- Any injuries sustained to the staff or student
- Details of others involved or witnesses

The written record will be completed by the member of staff involved within 1 working day and discussed with the Head of Department.

Where a student comes under the following categories it may be necessary to also involve other Heads of Department/Leads:

- Care experience student
- Has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- Other vulnerable groups, including those supported by the Safeguarding Team.

In line with the College's commitment to working with Parent/Carers, they will also inform Parent/Carers of Students under the age of 18 or for those with an EHCP up to the age of 25 and discuss with them the implications of the situation as appropriate and in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where physical intervention or contact is used with a student who has an EHCP the Local Authority must be informed. Staff should speak to the SENDCO or SEND Support Lead for the student so that they can arrange this.

A restorative meeting should be arranged with the student(s) involved to discuss the incident, how those involved were impacted, and what steps need to be taken next to repair the relationship. This can be supported by the Restorative Practice Champion if needed.

Complaints following a dispute about the use of physical intervention by a member of staff should, if an informal resolution is not possible in the first instance, be referred through the official complaints process.

Should a member of staff allege that a student has assaulted them the 'Relationships and Behaviour' will be followed and a full investigation into the circumstances of the allegation will take place.

5.2 Recording searches

Where a search has been agreed as part of a Safeguarding Risk Assessment, the document will be discussed with the student and uploaded to CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) for reference and shared only with relevant staff.

Where a search has taken place because of a dynamic risk assessment the Safeguarding Team should be alerted to assess any ongoing risks and safeguarding concerns. This will be recorded as per the Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy.

6. STAFF WELLBEING

The college acknowledges that where staff have been in a situation where they have had to use physical intervention and contact, they may require time and space to debrief. They will discuss with their line manager or Head of Department to ensure appropriate support is available where required.

For support with staff wellbeing, please contact a Wellbeing Champion. They're trained to have wellbeing conversations, signpost to available support and resources and promote wellbeing events and initiatives.

Staff can also access the Employee Assistance Programme for support. An EAP is a confidential employee benefit designed to help you deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting your home life or work life, health and general wellbeing. Simply access the Health Assured Online Portal, and use the unique code MHA266016 to log in, or call the FREE 24 hour Confidential Helpline on 0800 028 0199.

7. STUDENT WELLBEING

The act of having to search a student, confiscate items or make a physical intervention, whilst necessary to keep staff and students safe, could negatively impact on the wellbeing of the student, therefore wellbeing support should be offered from the pastoral team within the department.

Following a search, confiscation or physical intervention a welfare check should be made with the student by a member of staff within the department. Where support with wellbeing is required beyond pastoral support from within the department a referral can be made by agreement with the student into the college wellbeing service.

<https://sites.google.com/leedscitycollege.ac.uk/studentlifeinfohub/mental-health-and-wellbeing>

8. STAFF TRAINING

Training is available to staff on restorative practice and managing conflict in a restorative way.

Where need is identified coaching, mentoring and or departmental training can be offered by the Advanced Practitioner in residency to support the staff team along with the Relational Practice Lead relationalpractice@luminare.ac.uk

Heads of individual departments, such as the Inclusive and SEND provision, will give special thought to appropriate and supportive training for their teams based on the needs of their students. Specific staff members will be trained in restricted intervention techniques such as Team-teach, which they will use to de-escalate medium or high-level incidents when required.

9. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Deputy Director of Student Life and the Relational Practice lead.

The Relational Practice Lead will review the number of incidents requiring restrictive intervention

Every four months to analyse the frequency of occurrence and determine what further measures could be taken to prevent these situations from reoccurring.

10. Appendix 1 – Staff Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Details
Deputy Director of Student Life	Andrew Ottey	Andrew.ottey@luminate.ac.uk Tel: 07710138460
Director of Inclusive Provision and SEND	Christopher Thornton	christopher.thornton@luminate.ac.uk
Deputy Director of Inclusive Provision and SEND	Sarah Simpkins	sarah.simpkins@leedscitycollege.ac.uk
Head of Wellbeing and Relational Practice	Gemma Williams	gemma.williams2@leedscitycollege.ac.uk Tel: 07591 861029
Relational Practice Lead	Jane Hinchcliffe	jane.hinchcliffe@leedscitycollege.ac.uk Tel: 07814 818763
Care Experience Outcomes Coordinator	Katie Ball	katie.ball@leedscitycollege.ac.uk Tel: 07920 201925
Safeguarding Team Leader	Bhavna Gupta	bhavna.gupta@leedscitycollege.ac.uk Tel: 07827 829389
College Police Officer	Leon Ricketts	leon.ricketts@leedscitycollege.ac.uk Tel: 07590357171
College Police Officer	Jason Hughes	jason.hughes@leedscitycollege.ac.uk Tel: 07590357210