

Remedicare Education Services

Social Media, Digital Communication and Online Engagement Policy

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1. Introduction

Remedicare Education Services recognises that digital communication and social media play an important role in modern education, communication and partnership working.

Technology allows us to:

- communicate effectively with parents/carers,
- share important information,
- celebrate learner achievements,
- support staff collaboration,
- enhance learning opportunities.

However, digital communication also presents safeguarding risks, including:

- inappropriate contact,
- breaches of confidentiality,
- sharing of personal information,
- online bullying,
- misuse of images,
- inappropriate relationships,
- reputational risks.

As an Alternative Provision provider, Remedicare has a responsibility to ensure that all communication involving learners, families and staff is safe, professional and appropriate.

This policy sets out expectations for the use of social media, messaging platforms and digital communication.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote safe and professional digital communication.
- Protect learners, families and staff.
- Ensure confidentiality and data protection requirements are followed.

- Provide clear expectations regarding WhatsApp, Signal and social media use.
- Support safeguarding responsibilities in digital environments.
- Ensure images, videos and learner information are managed appropriately.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees.
- Volunteers.
- Contractors.
- Visitors representing Remedicare.
- Any individual communicating on behalf of Remedicare Education Services.

This policy applies to:

- WhatsApp.
- Signal.
- Email.
- Social media platforms.
- Digital learning platforms.
- Messaging applications.
- Websites.
- Other online communication tools.

4. Professional Digital Communication

All digital communication must reflect Remedicare's values:

- Respect.
- Professionalism.
- Integrity.
- Care.

Staff must ensure communication is:

- Professional.
- Appropriate.
- Necessary.
- Respectful.

- Clear.

Staff must not:

- Communicate with learners through personal social media accounts.
- Use inappropriate language or humour.
- Share confidential information.
- Discuss learners in public online spaces.
- Engage in conversations that could blur professional boundaries.

5. Communication with Parents and Carers

Remedicare uses digital communication tools to maintain effective communication with parents/carers.

Approved communication methods may include:

- WhatsApp.
- Email.
- Telephone communication.
- Agreed digital platforms.

WhatsApp may be used for parent/carer communication where appropriate.

Examples include:

- Attendance updates.
- Transport communication.
- Daily arrangements.
- Practical information.
- Updates regarding provision.

WhatsApp Parent/Carer Communication Guidance

When using WhatsApp:

Staff must:

- Use professional language.
- Keep communication focused on the learner and provision.
- Avoid sharing unnecessary personal information.
- Ensure messages are sent during appropriate working hours wherever possible.

- Use group messages appropriately.

Staff must not:

- Create private messaging arrangements with learners.
- Share confidential safeguarding information through WhatsApp unless authorised.
- Send inappropriate images or content.
- Use WhatsApp as a replacement for formal safeguarding recording systems.

Any safeguarding concerns must always be recorded through Remedicare safeguarding procedures.

6. Internal Staff Communication – Signal

Remedicare uses Signal for internal staff communication and operational updates.

Signal may be used for:

- Daily operational communication.
- Staffing updates.
- Practical arrangements.
- Provision coordination.
- Urgent operational information.

Staff must remember that:

- Signal is not a safeguarding recording system.
- Safeguarding concerns must be recorded through the appropriate safeguarding system.
- Confidential learner information should only be shared where necessary and appropriate.

Staff must:

- Maintain professionalism.
- Avoid unnecessary sharing of learner information.
- Ensure messages remain relevant to operational needs.

7. Social Media Use

Official Remedicare Social Media Accounts

Only authorised staff may post on official Remedicare Education Services social media accounts.

All content must:

- Reflect Remedicare values.
- Be professional.
- Protect learner privacy.
- Have appropriate consent where required.

Personal Social Media Accounts

Staff are entitled to use personal social media accounts; however, they must ensure their online activity does not:

- Bring Remedicare into disrepute.
- Breach confidentiality.
- Impact professional relationships.
- Create safeguarding concerns.

Staff must not:

- Discuss learners online.
- Share learner information.
- Post images of learners without appropriate consent.
- Communicate with learners through personal accounts.

8. Photography, Videos and Media Consent

Remedicare Education Services recognises the importance of celebrating learner achievements and documenting learning experiences.

Photographs and videos may be used for:

- Recording learner progress.
- Documenting engagement and achievements.
- Learning records.
- Displays within Remedicare.
- Newsletters.
- Secure digital platforms.

With appropriate parental/carers consent, photographs and videos may also be used for:

- Remedicare Education Services website.

- Official social media channels.
- Marketing materials.
- Brochures.
- Newsletters shared externally.
- Local press coverage relating to Remedicare events.

Media Permission and Consent

Parents/carers will be asked to provide consent regarding the use of photographs, videos and learner images.

Remedicare will ensure:

- Learner dignity and safety remain the priority.
- Images are used only for agreed purposes.
- Images are stored securely.
- Images are not shared with unauthorised third parties.
- Learner names are not used alongside images unless additional explicit permission has been provided.

Parents/carers may withdraw consent at any time by contacting Remedicare.

9. Staff Use of Images and Recording

Staff must:

- Only use approved devices where required.
- Follow consent arrangements.
- Store images securely.
- Delete images when no longer required.

Staff must not:

- Use personal phones to photograph learners.
- Share learner images through personal accounts.
- Upload learner images to unauthorised platforms.

Any breach must be reported immediately.

10. Safeguarding and Online Concerns

Digital communication can create safeguarding risks.

Staff must report concerns involving:

- Online bullying.
- Harmful content.
- Grooming.
- Exploitation.
- Inappropriate communication.
- Sharing of images without consent.
- Online harassment.

Concerns must be reported to the DSL/DDSL team and recorded in line with Remedicare safeguarding procedures.

11. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Digital Tools

Remedicare recognises that AI tools are increasingly used in education and communication.

Staff must ensure:

- Learner confidentiality is protected.
- Personal information is not entered into public AI systems.
- AI-generated information is checked for accuracy.
- Professional judgement remains central.

AI must not be used to:

- Create inappropriate content.
- Replace safeguarding decision-making.
- Process confidential learner information without approval.

12. Data Protection and Confidentiality

All digital communication must comply with:

- UK GDPR.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- Remedicare confidentiality procedures.

Staff must:

- Share information only with appropriate individuals.
- Protect passwords and accounts.
- Secure devices.
- Report data breaches immediately.

13. Breaches of this Policy

Failure to follow this policy may result in:

- Additional training.
- Management action.
- Disciplinary procedures.
- Safeguarding referral where appropriate.

Examples include:

- Sharing confidential learner information.
- Inappropriate communication.
- Breaching professional boundaries.
- Misusing images.
- Using social media in a way that creates safeguarding concerns.

14. Staff Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood the Remedicare Education Services Social Media, Digital Communication and Online Engagement Policy.

I understand:

- ☐ My responsibilities when using digital communication.
- ☐ Professional boundaries when communicating with learners and families.
- ☐ Expectations regarding WhatsApp, Signal and social media.
- ☐ My responsibilities regarding images and confidentiality.
- ☐ How to report online safeguarding concerns.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

