

Remedicare Education Services

Lockdown and Invacuation Policy

Applies to: All Remedicare Education Services staff, learners, visitors, contractors and other persons present at Remedicare premises or participating in Remedicare activities

Approved: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and proportionate framework for responding to situations where remaining inside a Remedicare setting is considered safer than evacuating.

A lockdown or invacuation may be necessary where there is an immediate or potential threat to the safety of learners, staff or visitors, including an intruder, serious violence, a dangerous individual in the vicinity, civil disturbance, a police operation or another external threat.

Remedicare recognises that emergency situations may have a significant impact on children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Particular consideration must therefore be given to:

- communication needs;
- AAC, PECS and other communication systems;
- sensory sensitivities;
- anxiety and distress;
- co-regulation and emotional regulation;
- mobility and physical access;
- medical needs;
- medication and emergency healthcare arrangements;
- visual impairment or hearing impairment;
- cognitive understanding;
- the need for familiar adults and predictable routines;
- children who may respond to an emergency through flight, fight, freeze, shutdown or other behaviours;
- children who may not understand or be able to follow verbal instructions independently.

The purpose of the procedure is not to require a single response in every emergency. Staff must use professional judgement and follow the safest available option based on the circumstances at the time.

2. Scope

This policy applies whenever a person is present under Remedicare's responsibility at:

- Remedicare centres;
- Alpine House;
- future Remedicare centres, including Newbury;
- outdoor or forest provision;
- outreach locations;
- community settings;
- educational visits and activities;
- work-related learning or placements where Remedicare has responsibility for the learner;
- transport or transition arrangements where Remedicare staff are responsible for learners;
- any other location where Remedicare is delivering provision.

The policy applies to:

- learners;
- Remedicare staff;
- visitors;
- volunteers;
- contractors;
- agency staff;
- external professionals;
- parents/carers or other visitors present during an incident.

Where provision is delivered away from a Remedicare centre, staff must adapt the response to the environment and follow the emergency arrangements of the host setting where appropriate.

3. Definitions

3.1 Lockdown

A lockdown is a procedure used where people are already inside a building and need to remain in a secure location because leaving the building may increase the risk of harm.

3.2 Invacuation

Invacuation is the movement of people from an outdoor or less secure area into a safer, more secure location.

Invacuation may be appropriate where a threat exists outside the building but it is safer to move inside.

3.3 Evacuation

Evacuation is the process of leaving a building or location because remaining inside is unsafe.

Evacuation is normally associated with hazards such as fire, smoke, gas or another internal danger, but may also be necessary during a lockdown if remaining inside becomes more dangerous.

3.4 All Clear

The all-clear is the confirmed instruction that the immediate threat has passed or that emergency services have authorised the building to return to normal operation.

Staff must not assume that an incident has ended because the environment appears quiet.

4. Principles

Remedicare will apply the following principles during a lockdown or invacuation:

- 1. Life safety comes first.**
2. Staff should remain calm and provide clear, concise instructions.

3. Staff should use professional judgement based on the circumstances.
4. Staff must not place themselves or learners at unnecessary risk.
5. Staff should follow instructions from the police or other emergency services.
6. Safeguarding responsibilities continue throughout an emergency.
7. The needs of individual learners must be considered.
8. Communication should be accessible to the learner wherever possible.
9. Staff should avoid unnecessary movement, noise or exposure.
10. No member of staff should be expected to physically intervene with a dangerous individual unless this is necessary to protect life and is reasonably practicable.
11. A lockdown is not automatically safer than evacuation. The safest option depends on the circumstances.
12. Staff must not delay an appropriate evacuation because a lockdown has previously been initiated.

5. Circumstances That May Require a Lockdown or Invacuation

A lockdown or invacuation may be considered where there is:

- an intruder or unauthorised person whose behaviour presents a risk;
- a serious threat of violence;
- a dangerous individual in the immediate vicinity;
- a police incident near the setting;
- serious civil disorder or disturbance;
- a weapon-related threat;
- a significant external security threat;
- a suspected terrorist-related incident;
- an individual attempting to enter the premises who presents an immediate risk;
- information from police or another trusted emergency service indicating that people should remain inside;
- another circumstance where remaining inside a secure location is considered safer than leaving.

The list is not exhaustive.

The decision to initiate a lockdown should be based on the information available at the time. Staff should not wait for absolute certainty if there is a reasonable and immediate concern for safety.

6. Who Can Initiate a Lockdown?

A lockdown may be initiated by:

- the Centre Manager;
- Service Director;
- DSL/DDSL where appropriate;
- designated person in charge;
- another member of staff who reasonably believes that immediate protective action is necessary.

A member of staff must not delay protective action while attempting to obtain authorisation if doing so could place learners or others at risk.

Where possible, the Centre Manager or person in charge should assume the role of Lockdown Coordinator.

If the Centre Manager is unavailable, responsibility passes to the most senior or appropriately trained member of staff present.

7. Lockdown Communication

Where safe and practicable, the lockdown instruction should be communicated clearly using the agreed site communication system.

The standard message is:

"Attention. We are now in lockdown. Please follow lockdown procedures."

The exact wording may be adapted if necessary.

The person initiating the lockdown should communicate:

- that a lockdown has been initiated;
- the immediate action required;
- any known information about the location or nature of the threat;
- any subsequent instructions.

Information should be kept factual and proportionate.

Staff should avoid sharing unconfirmed information or speculation with learners, parents/carers or colleagues during the incident.

8. Immediate Staff Actions

On receiving a lockdown or invacuation instruction, staff should:

1. Remain calm.
2. Bring learners into the nearest appropriate secure area where possible.
3. Move away from windows, external doors and areas visible from outside.
4. Close and secure doors where this can be done safely.
5. Close blinds or curtains where available and appropriate.
6. Keep learners and staff quiet where possible.
7. Silence mobile phones and other devices where practicable, unless they are required for emergency communication.
8. Avoid unnecessary movement.
9. Do not open doors to people unless instructed to do so by emergency services or the Lockdown Coordinator.
10. Account for the learners and adults in the immediate area.
11. Report any missing person, additional person or known concern to the Lockdown Coordinator when safe to do so.
12. Maintain supervision and support for learners.
13. Follow instructions from emergency services.

Staff should not leave a secure area to locate another person unless instructed to do so by emergency services or it is clearly necessary to prevent immediate harm.

9. Lockdown Areas

Each Remedicare site must identify appropriate lockdown areas through its site-specific emergency risk assessment.

Lockdown areas should, where practicable:

- have a lockable or securable door;
- provide protection from external visibility;
- be away from obvious lines of sight from outside;
- provide sufficient space for the people using the area;
- allow staff to support learners with SEND;
- allow reasonable access to essential communication and medical equipment.

Where possible, staff should position learners away from windows and external doors.

Site-specific arrangements must identify areas that may be unsuitable because of:

- glass walls or doors;
- extensive windows;
- inadequate door security;
- restricted accessibility;
- hazardous equipment;
- inadequate capacity;
- other identified risks.

10. Supporting Learners with SEND

Remedicare recognises that traditional lockdown instructions may not be accessible to all learners.

Staff must use the learner's existing communication and regulation strategies wherever possible.

This may include:

- AAC devices;

- PECS;
- visual timetables;
- visual lockdown cards;
- first/then language;
- social stories;
- objects of reference;
- Makaton or other agreed communication systems;
- gesture;
- simplified language;
- repetition;
- modelling;
- familiar staff;
- co-regulation;
- sensory resources;
- headphones or other agreed sensory equipment.

Staff should use the learner's Individual Learning Journey, EHCP information, risk assessment, behaviour support plan and healthcare information where relevant.

Staff should avoid giving lengthy explanations during the immediate incident.

Where appropriate, a simple message such as:

"We are staying here. You are safe. Stay with me."

may be more effective than a detailed explanation.

11. Learners Who May Attempt to Leave

Some learners may not understand the reason for remaining inside or may respond to stress through flight or attempts to leave.

Staff should:

- use familiar communication approaches;
- reduce verbal demands;
- use co-regulation strategies;

- position themselves appropriately to support safety;
- avoid unnecessary confrontation;
- seek additional staff support where available;
- consider the learner's individual risk assessment and behaviour support plan.

Staff must not place themselves at significant risk by physically preventing a learner from moving unless intervention is necessary, lawful, proportionate and consistent with Remedicare's approved behaviour and restrictive practice procedures.

Any significant incident must be recorded and reviewed in accordance with Remedicare procedures.

12. Medical Needs and Essential Equipment

Where reasonably practicable, staff should ensure that essential learner equipment remains available.

This may include:

- prescribed emergency medication;
- individual healthcare plan information;
- communication devices;
- glasses;
- hearing equipment;
- mobility aids;
- continence equipment;
- sensory regulation equipment;
- other essential personal equipment.

Staff must not leave a secure location simply to retrieve non-essential equipment.

Medication must only be administered in accordance with Remedicare's **First Aid and Administration of Medicines Policy**, individual healthcare plans and staff competency arrangements.

13. Communication Devices

Mobile phones, radios or other communication systems may be used to communicate with the Lockdown Coordinator or emergency services.

Staff should:

- keep communications brief;
- provide factual information;
- avoid unnecessary calls or messages;
- keep devices on silent where possible;
- continue monitoring official instructions.

Where there is a safeguarding or immediate safety concern, staff should communicate this as soon as it is safe to do so.

14. Contacting Emergency Services

Where there is an immediate threat to life or serious risk of harm, **999 should be called**.

Information provided to emergency services should include, where known:

- the Remedicare site/location;
- the nature of the threat;
- whether the threat is inside or outside;
- whether anyone is injured;
- whether anyone is missing;
- the number of people believed to be present;
- any relevant information about accessibility or significant medical needs.

Staff should follow the instructions of the emergency services.

Where possible, the Lockdown Coordinator should maintain communication with emergency services.

15. Fire During a Lockdown

A lockdown does not override fire safety.

If a fire, smoke, gas leak or other internal hazard makes remaining in the building unsafe, staff must follow the safest available evacuation procedure.

Staff should:

- assess the immediate danger;
- evacuate if remaining inside is unsafe;
- use the nearest safe exit;
- avoid moving towards the identified threat;
- follow the Fire Safety and Evacuation arrangements;
- take the register/accountability information where this can be done safely.

Staff must never remain in a building simply because a lockdown has been initiated if there is an immediate and significant risk from fire or another internal hazard.

16. Evacuation During a Lockdown

If evacuation becomes necessary, staff should use the safest available route.

The usual fire evacuation route may not be appropriate if the threat is located near that route.

Staff should consider:

- the location of the threat;
- alternative exits;
- whether emergency services have provided instructions;
- accessibility;
- the needs of individual learners;
- whether moving or remaining in place presents the lower risk.

Site-specific emergency arrangements must identify alternative evacuation routes wherever reasonably practicable.

17. Accountability

Once learners and staff are in a secure location, staff should account for the people in their immediate area.

The Lockdown Coordinator should seek to establish:

- which learners are present;
- which staff are present;
- whether anyone is missing;
- whether anyone is injured;
- whether anyone is known to be elsewhere;
- whether visitors or contractors are unaccounted for.

Staff should **not leave a secure location simply to complete a physical search** unless instructed by emergency services or it is necessary to prevent immediate harm.

Attendance information and registers should be used where available.

18. Visitors and Contractors

Visitors and contractors present at the time of an incident are included within the lockdown procedure.

Reception or the designated person responsible for visitors should provide visitor information to the Lockdown Coordinator when safe to do so.

Visitors should follow staff instructions and must not attempt to leave or investigate the incident unless instructed by emergency services.

19. Learners Off-Site

Where learners are undertaking outreach, community, outdoor or other off-site provision, the member of staff responsible must follow the emergency arrangements applicable to that location.

Staff should consider:

- whether to remain where they are;
- whether to move into a secure building;
- whether to evacuate the immediate area;
- local emergency instructions;
- the learner's individual needs;
- communication and mobility needs;
- transport arrangements;
- contact with the Centre Manager or designated person.

Where a host venue has its own emergency or lockdown procedure, Remedicare staff should follow that procedure unless doing so would place the learner or staff member at greater risk.

20. Learners in Transport

Where a lockdown or security incident occurs while a learner is being transported:

- the driver/staff member should prioritise immediate safety;
- the vehicle should be moved away from danger where safe and practicable;
- staff should follow police/emergency-service instructions;
- learners should remain supervised;
- the Centre Manager/designated person should be informed as soon as safely possible.

Staff should not return to a site that is subject to an active security incident unless instructed by emergency services.

21. Parents and Carers

Parents/carers should not be contacted during the immediate response unless doing so is safe and appropriate.

Unnecessary communication may:

- distract staff from the emergency;
- create inaccurate information;
- increase anxiety;
- interfere with emergency response.

Once the immediate risk has been managed, Remedicare will communicate with parents/carers as appropriate.

Communication will be factual and proportionate and will take account of:

- police advice;
- safeguarding considerations;
- confidentiality;
- the wellbeing of the learner;
- the need to avoid sharing unconfirmed information.

Parents/carers should not attend the setting to collect a learner during an active incident unless instructed by Remedicare or emergency services.

22. Reunification

Where learners cannot immediately return home or normal transport arrangements cannot operate, Remedicare will work with relevant parents/carers, commissioners, schools, emergency services and other agencies to establish safe arrangements.

A reunification location may be identified by Remedicare or emergency services depending on the circumstances.

The location should not be publicly shared while an incident remains active.

Learners should only be released to an appropriately authorised adult in accordance with Remedicare's safeguarding and collection arrangements.

23. Ending a Lockdown

The lockdown should only be considered ended when:

- the Lockdown Coordinator has received reliable information that the immediate threat has passed; or
- police/emergency services have provided an all-clear or further instruction.

The standard all-clear message is:

"The lockdown is now over. Please remain where you are and await further instructions."

The wording may be adapted according to the circumstances.

Staff must not assume that a lockdown has ended because the area appears quiet.

24. After the Incident

Once it is safe to do so, Remedicare will:

- confirm the safety and whereabouts of learners and staff;
- provide first aid or medical assistance where required;
- contact parents/carers as appropriate;
- notify relevant commissioning schools or professionals where required;
- notify safeguarding partners where necessary;
- notify the Local Authority or other relevant agencies where required;
- consider whether the incident meets any reporting requirements;
- record the incident;
- preserve relevant information or evidence;
- provide appropriate support to affected individuals.

25. Safeguarding Following a Lockdown

A lockdown may itself be a safeguarding incident or may expose additional safeguarding concerns.

The DSL/DDSL must be informed where appropriate, particularly where:

- a learner has been injured;
- a learner has disclosed something during or following the incident;
- a learner has experienced significant distress;
- there are concerns about an individual's behaviour;
- there is suspected violence, exploitation or abuse;
- police or other emergency services have attended;
- a person has attempted to enter the setting without authorisation;
- there are concerns about a learner's safety following the incident.

Relevant safeguarding information should be recorded on CPOMS in accordance with Remedicare's safeguarding procedures.

Staff must not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

26. Staff and Learner Wellbeing

Emergency incidents can have an emotional or psychological impact.

Following an incident, Remedicare will consider appropriate support for:

- learners;
- staff;
- visitors;
- other individuals affected.

Support may include:

- individual check-ins;
- familiar adult support;
- additional regulation opportunities;

- communication with parents/carers;
- supervision;
- occupational health or employee support;
- referral to appropriate professional services;
- safeguarding or mental health support where required.

Learners should not be required to participate in a group discussion about an incident if this is likely to increase distress.

27. Debrief and Lessons Learned

A proportionate debrief should take place following a lockdown or significant security incident.

The debrief should consider:

- what happened;
- what triggered the response;
- whether the lockdown was initiated appropriately;
- how communication worked;
- whether staff understood their roles;
- whether learners were adequately supported;
- whether individual SEND needs were met;
- whether communication systems worked;
- whether there were difficulties with mobility or access;
- whether medical needs were appropriately managed;
- whether accountability was effective;
- whether emergency services were contacted appropriately;
- whether parent/carers communication was effective;
- what worked well;
- what needs to change.

Actions should be recorded and allocated to an identified person.

Where appropriate, the site risk assessment and this policy should be updated following the review.

28. Lockdown Drills and Exercises

Remedicare will use proportionate training and exercises to ensure staff understand the lockdown procedure.

Lockdown exercises should be planned carefully and must take account of the needs of learners with SEND.

Remedicare will avoid unnecessary distress or trauma.

Exercises may include:

- staff tabletop exercises;
- scenario-based discussion;
- walk-throughs of procedures;
- communication testing;
- checking secure areas;
- testing emergency contact arrangements;
- testing accountability procedures.

A full learner-facing lockdown drill should only be undertaken where it has been risk assessed and is considered appropriate for the learners present.

Lockdown exercises must never involve deliberately creating the impression that a genuine intruder or violent attack is taking place.

Staff should be informed of the purpose and boundaries of any planned exercise.

29. Staff Training

Relevant staff will receive information and/or training covering:

- lockdown and invacuation procedures;
- emergency communication;
- site-specific secure areas;

- emergency exits;
- accountability;
- supporting learners with SEND;
- communication needs;
- sensory and regulation needs;
- safeguarding during emergencies;
- first aid and medical arrangements;
- incident reporting;
- post-incident support.

New staff should receive information about emergency procedures as part of induction.

Where a staff member works across more than one Remedicare site, they must understand the site-specific arrangements applicable to each location.

30. Site-Specific Lockdown Arrangements

Each Remedicare site must maintain a site-specific emergency plan or risk assessment identifying, where appropriate:

- secure lockdown areas;
- alternative secure areas;
- external doors and access points;
- communication systems;
- emergency contact arrangements;
- emergency services access;
- staff responsibilities;
- visitor arrangements;
- evacuation routes;
- alternative evacuation routes;
- accessibility considerations;
- locations of emergency equipment;
- arrangements for learners with mobility needs;
- arrangements for learners with significant communication needs;
- arrangements for medication and essential healthcare equipment;

- arrangements for outdoor provision.

These arrangements must be reviewed when there are significant changes to:

- the building;
- staffing;
- learner needs;
- room use;
- access arrangements;
- security arrangements;
- emergency equipment.

31. Security and Prevention

Lockdown arrangements form part of Remedicare's wider approach to safeguarding, health and safety and site security.

Remedicare will seek to maintain appropriate preventative measures including:

- appropriate visitor procedures;
- controlled access to buildings;
- staff awareness of security concerns;
- appropriate management of keys/access systems;
- reporting of suspicious or concerning behaviour;
- appropriate site risk assessments;
- liaison with relevant landlords, building management or security providers where applicable;
- liaison with emergency services where appropriate.

Staff should report concerns about security to the Centre Manager, Service Director or designated person.

32. Terrorism and Protective Security

Remedicare recognises the importance of preparedness for terrorism and other serious security incidents.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 has received Royal Assent and Government guidance has been published. The substantive legal requirements are not yet in force; Remedicare will monitor commencement arrangements and review its security and emergency planning accordingly.

Remedicare may use relevant Government, National Protective Security Authority and emergency-planning guidance to inform its preparedness.

Where Remedicare premises fall within the scope of future legislation, the organisation will take the necessary steps to meet applicable legal requirements when they come into force.

33. Recording and Reporting

Following a lockdown or significant security incident, an appropriate record should be completed.

Records may include:

- date and time;
- location;
- reason for lockdown;
- information received;
- actions taken;
- staff present;
- learners present;
- visitors present;
- injuries;
- emergency services involvement;
- safeguarding concerns;
- parent/carers communication;
- commissioner/school communication where relevant;

- actions arising from the debrief.

Records must be factual and avoid assumptions.

Safeguarding concerns must be recorded through CPOMS where appropriate.

Health and safety incidents must be recorded in accordance with Remedicare's Health and Safety and Accident/Incident Reporting procedures.

34. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information relating to a security incident should only be shared with people who need the information to protect learners, staff or others or to fulfil a legitimate organisational, safeguarding or legal responsibility.

Staff must not:

- post information about an incident on social media;
- share photographs or recordings;
- speculate about the cause of an incident;
- share confidential learner information;
- communicate unverified information externally.

Information may be shared with emergency services, safeguarding agencies, commissioners, parents/carers and other relevant organisations where necessary and lawful.

35. Equality, Accessibility and SEND

Remedicare will ensure that emergency planning takes account of individual needs and does not disadvantage learners or staff because of disability or other protected characteristics.

Emergency procedures will be adapted where reasonably practicable to support:

- physical disabilities;
- sensory impairments;
- communication needs;

- cognitive disabilities;
- neurodivergence;
- medical needs;
- anxiety and emotional regulation;
- other identified individual needs.

Individual risk assessments, EHCP information, healthcare plans and support plans should inform emergency planning where relevant.

36. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedures;
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines Policy;
- Individual Healthcare Plans;
- Behaviour and Regulation Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Staff Concerns and Conduct Protocol;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Educational Visits/Off-Site Activities procedures;
- Transport procedures;
- Equality and Inclusion Policy;
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy;
- Incident Reporting procedures.

37. Policy Monitoring and Review

The Service Director will oversee the implementation and review of this policy.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- there is a significant incident;
- a lockdown exercise identifies concerns;

- there are changes to legislation or Government guidance;
- there are significant changes to Remedicare premises;
- there are significant changes to learner needs;
- emergency services provide updated advice;
- risk assessments identify a need for change.

Lessons identified from incidents and exercises will be used to improve Remedicare's emergency planning.