

Remedicare Education Services

Emergency Evacuation and Centre Closure Procedure

Effective Date: September 2026

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Policy Owner: Remedicare Education Services

1. Purpose

Remedicare Education Services will make every reasonable effort to keep our centres open and operating safely. However, there may be circumstances where a centre must be evacuated or closed at short notice.

The safety and welfare of our learners, staff, visitors and contractors is always our priority.

This procedure sets out what staff must do in the event of an emergency evacuation or where a centre needs to close unexpectedly.

This procedure should be read alongside the relevant **Fire Risk Assessment, Fire Safety Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Business Continuity arrangements and individual learner evacuation plans/PEEPs where applicable.**

2. Circumstances That May Require Closure or Evacuation

An emergency evacuation or closure may be required because of:

- fire or suspected fire;
- smoke or activation of the fire alarm;
- gas leak;
- explosion or suspected explosive device;
- serious security incident;
- serious accident or medical emergency;
- serious assault or significant incident;
- loss of heating or essential utilities;
- burst water pipes or flooding;
- serious weather conditions;
- structural damage or unsafe building conditions;
- significant loss of power;
- death or serious illness affecting the safe operation of the centre;
- instruction from the emergency services or other relevant authority;
- any other situation where remaining in the building is considered unsafe.

The Centre Manager or most senior member of staff present will make decisions regarding closure where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Emergency services instructions must always be followed.

3. Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- familiarise themselves with the emergency exits for the centre;
- know the designated fire assembly point;
- know how to raise the alarm;
- know the location of fire extinguishers and other relevant fire safety equipment;
- follow the instructions of Fire Wardens and the Centre Manager;
- know which learners they are responsible for during an evacuation;
- be aware of any learner who requires additional support to evacuate;
- never put themselves or others at unnecessary risk;
- never re-enter the building until authorised to do so.

Staff must ensure that emergency routes and exits are kept clear and accessible.

4. Fire Wardens

Remedicare Education Services has designated Fire Wardens who are trained and appointed to support the safe evacuation of the centre.

Fire Warden Identification

All designated Fire Wardens will wear their Fire Warden lanyard during working hours.

The Fire Warden lanyard provides clear identification so that staff can easily identify who has responsibility for supporting the evacuation.

The Fire Warden lanyard should be worn visibly and must not be removed during an emergency evacuation.

Fire Warden responsibilities include:

- supporting an orderly evacuation;
- directing staff and learners towards safe exits;
- checking allocated areas where it is safe to do so;
- checking toilets and other appropriate areas where possible;

- supporting learners and staff who may require additional assistance;
- reporting hazards or concerns;
- supporting the Centre Manager during an emergency;
- assisting with accountability at the assembly point.

Fire Wardens must never place themselves at risk or delay their own evacuation in order to check an area.

Fire Wardens must not re-enter the building once evacuated unless specifically authorised by the emergency services.

5. Fire Alarm Testing and Evacuation Drills

Fire evacuation drills will be completed **at least termly**, unless the Fire Risk Assessment or another competent person identifies a different frequency.

The fire alarm/building fire system will be tested at **2:00pm every Wednesday**, in accordance with the centre's fire safety arrangements.

Staff should be made aware of planned alarm tests where appropriate so that the alarm is not mistaken for an emergency.

Any concerns identified during a fire drill or alarm test must be reported to the Centre Manager and recorded appropriately.

6. If the Fire Alarm Sounds

When the fire alarm sounds, all staff must treat it as a genuine emergency unless they have been specifically informed that it is a planned test.

Staff must:

1. Remain calm.
2. Stop activities immediately.
3. Safely gather the learners they are responsible for.
4. Leave using the nearest safe emergency exit.
5. Follow the instructions of Fire Wardens.
6. Go directly to the designated assembly point.
7. Remain with their learners.
8. Report to the person responsible for the register.
9. Do not return to the building.

Staff must **not**:

- collect personal belongings;
- stop to finish an activity;
- use lifts where this would be unsafe or contrary to the fire evacuation arrangements;
- return to the building;
- attempt to fight a fire unless appropriately trained and it is safe to do so;
- put themselves or a learner at unnecessary risk.

7. Emergency Services

Where appropriate, the Centre Manager, Fire Warden or nominated member of staff will contact the emergency services by calling **999**.

The person contacting the emergency services should provide:

- the name of the centre;
- the full address;
- details of the emergency;
- whether anyone is injured or missing;
- any information about learners or staff requiring additional assistance.

Staff must follow instructions provided by the emergency services.

8. Evacuation Route

Learners and staff must use the **nearest safe emergency exit**.

The designated evacuation route must always be kept clear.

Staff must not use an exit if it is affected by fire, smoke, obstruction or another hazard.

If the usual route is unsafe, staff should use an alternative safe route and follow the instructions of the Fire Wardens.

9. Assembly Point – Across the Road

The designated fire assembly point for the centre is **across the road from the centre**.

Once safely outside the building, staff and learners should proceed to the designated assembly point when it is safe to do so.

IMPORTANT

Because the assembly point is across the road:

- staff must **not rush or run across the road**;
- Fire Wardens will support the movement of staff and learners;
- staff must remain alert to traffic and other hazards;
- learners must remain supervised at all times;
- additional support must be provided to learners who may have difficulty safely crossing the road;
- staff must follow the direction of Fire Wardens and the Centre Manager;
- if crossing the road is temporarily unsafe, staff must remain in the safest available location and follow emergency-service instructions.

The safety of learners and staff takes priority over reaching the assembly point immediately.

The Centre Manager should ensure that the location and arrangements for the assembly point are included in staff induction and regularly communicated to staff.

10. Register and Accountability

The Centre Manager or nominated member of staff will ensure that the appropriate registers are available where this can be done safely.

This should include, where applicable:

- learner register;
- staff register;
- visitor register;
- contractor/visitor information;
- relevant emergency contact information.

At the assembly point:

- learners will be accounted for;
- staff will be accounted for;
- visitors and contractors will be accounted for;
- any missing person will be reported immediately.

No person should put themselves at risk to retrieve a register or other document.

If the register is not immediately available, staff should use the most reliable available information to account for everyone.

11. Missing Person

If a learner, staff member or visitor is believed to be missing:

1. The Centre Manager/Fire Warden must be informed immediately.
2. The emergency services must be informed.
3. Staff must provide any known information about the person's last known location.
4. Staff must **not re-enter the building or conduct an unsafe search**.
5. The emergency services will take responsibility for any search or rescue operation.

12. Learners Requiring Additional Evacuation Support

Remedicare recognises that some learners may require additional support to evacuate safely due to:

- physical disabilities;
- mobility needs;
- PMLD or complex learning needs;
- communication difficulties;
- sensory needs;
- anxiety or distress;
- behavioural or emotional needs;
- medical conditions;
- the need for specialist equipment.

Where required, an individual evacuation plan, PEEP or other appropriate risk assessment should be in place.

Relevant staff must be aware of the arrangements and know what support they are expected to provide.

The plan should identify:

- the learner's evacuation route;
- the level of assistance required;
- equipment required;
- staff required;
- communication strategies;
- how the learner is likely to respond during an emergency;
- any specific risks or considerations.

13. Supporting Learners During an Evacuation

Staff should use calm, clear and familiar communication.

Where appropriate, staff should use:

- visual prompts;
- symbols;
- AAC;
- Makaton/signing;
- simple instructions;
- familiar staff;
- reassurance and predictable language.

Staff should avoid unnecessary delay and should not return to collect communication aids or personal belongings if doing so would create a risk.

Where a learner becomes distressed, staff should prioritise their immediate safety and follow their individual risk/positive support arrangements where appropriate.

14. Visitors and Contractors

Visitors and contractors must follow staff instructions during an emergency.

Where possible, the visitor signing-in system should be taken to the assembly point so that visitors can be accounted for.

Visitors must not re-enter the building until authorised by the emergency services or Centre Manager.

15. Personal Belongings

Staff, learners and visitors must **not stop to collect personal belongings** during an evacuation.

This includes:

- phones;
- bags;
- coats;
- laptops;
- teaching resources;
- personal possessions.

Personal belongings can be collected only once the building has been declared safe.

16. Re-Entry to the Building

No person may re-enter the building following an evacuation until permission has been given by the emergency services or the person responsible for the building's fire safety.

Staff must not assume that the building is safe because:

- the alarm has stopped;
- there is no visible smoke;
- the fire appears to be extinguished;
- the situation appears to have resolved.

17. Emergency Centre Closure

There may be circumstances where the centre does not need to be evacuated but cannot safely remain open.

The Centre Manager or senior leader will assess the situation and, where appropriate, make arrangements for the centre to close.

Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable.

Communication should provide:

- the reason for closure where appropriate;
- collection arrangements;
- where learners should be collected from;
- any alternative arrangements;
- when further information will be provided.

18. Collection of Learners

Learners will remain supervised by Remedicare staff until they are safely collected or an alternative arrangement has been formally agreed.

Parents/carers should be contacted using the emergency contact information held by Remedicare.

Learners should only be released to:

- their parent/carer;
- an authorised person identified by the parent/carer;
- another person formally authorised in accordance with Remedicare's safeguarding procedures.

Learners must not routinely be taken home by Remedicare staff.

If a parent/carer cannot be contacted, staff must continue to supervise the learner and follow the Centre Manager's safeguarding and emergency arrangements.

Where there is a safeguarding concern about collection or a learner cannot safely be released, the DSL/DDSL must be contacted.

19. Safeguarding During an Emergency

Emergency situations can increase safeguarding risks.

Staff must continue to follow Remedicare's safeguarding procedures.

Any safeguarding concern, including:

- an unexplained injury;
- a missing learner;
- an inappropriate adult response;
- a disclosure;
- a concern about a parent/carer collecting a learner;
- an allegation involving a member of staff;
- a learner becoming separated from staff;

must be reported to the **DSL/DDSL** as soon as it is safe to do so.

20. Communication With Parents and Carers

The Centre Manager or nominated member of staff will coordinate communication with parents/carers.

Staff should not provide conflicting information or speculate about the situation.

Where a centre closure is required, parents/carers should be informed as soon as reasonably practicable using the agreed Remedicare communication method.

21. After an Emergency

Following an emergency or significant evacuation, the Centre Manager will ensure that:

- all learners and staff are accounted for;
- any injuries are appropriately dealt with;

- safeguarding concerns are reported;
- parents/carers are contacted where required;
- relevant records are completed;
- the incident is reviewed;
- any necessary risk assessments are updated;
- staff are offered appropriate support following a significant incident;
- the building is only reopened once it has been confirmed safe to do so.

Where appropriate, the incident should be reviewed with the DSL, Centre Manager, Pathway Manager and/or senior leadership.

22. Staff Training and Awareness

All staff must receive appropriate information regarding:

- emergency evacuation procedures;
- fire exits;
- assembly point;
- fire alarm arrangements;
- Fire Warden identification;
- their responsibilities during evacuation;
- learner-specific evacuation arrangements;
- safeguarding arrangements during emergencies.

New staff must receive this information as part of their induction.

Staff must immediately report any concerns about fire exits, alarms, emergency lighting, signage, access routes or other fire safety arrangements.

23. Responsibilities

Centre Manager

The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring that:

- emergency arrangements are communicated to staff;
- evacuation drills are completed;
- fire safety concerns are escalated;
- appropriate records are maintained;
- learner-specific evacuation arrangements are identified;

- parents/carers are contacted where required;
- the centre does not reopen until it is safe to do so.

Fire Wardens

Fire Wardens are responsible for supporting safe evacuation, checking allocated areas where safe, assisting learners and staff and reporting hazards.

Fire Wardens must wear their designated **Fire Warden lanyard** so they can be easily identified.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- knowing the emergency procedures;
- following Fire Warden instructions;
- supporting learners;
- maintaining supervision;
- attending the assembly point;
- reporting concerns;
- never putting themselves or others at unnecessary risk.

24. Related Documents

This procedure should be read alongside:

- Fire Risk Assessment;
- Fire Safety Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Business Continuity Plan;
- First Aid Policy;
- Lone Working Policy;
- Behaviour/Positive Support Policy;
- Individual Evacuation Plans / PEEPs where applicable;
- Learner Risk Assessments;
- Staff Emergency Contact Procedures.

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