

**Remedicare Education Services**  
**Social media and communication policy**  
**November 2024**  
**Review: November 2025**

**Purpose**

This policy provides guidelines for using social media and digital communication tools, including WhatsApp, to ensure the safe and responsible use of online platforms when interacting with students, families, and staff. Remedicare Education Services is committed to protecting the privacy, safety, and well-being of all individuals and maintaining compliance with relevant legal and ethical standards.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and any affiliated individuals who communicate on behalf of Remedicare Education Services or participate in communications related to our services. The platforms covered include, but are not limited to, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media or messaging applications.

**General Social Media Guidelines**

- **Professional Use Only:** All social media interactions should be strictly professional. Personal accounts should not be used to communicate with students or families on behalf of Remedicare.
- **Respect and Professionalism:** All communications must be respectful, culturally sensitive, and align with Remedicare's values and mission.
- **Content Approval:** Only authorized personnel may post content on official Remedicare Education Services social media accounts. Content related to students must have prior consent from the child's parent or guardian.
- **Confidentiality and Privacy:** No confidential, sensitive, or personally identifiable information about students, families, or staff may be shared on social media.

**Use of WhatsApp for Communication**

WhatsApp will be used as the primary channel for communication related to students. Given the sensitivity of this platform, all team members must adhere to strict guidelines to ensure privacy, confidentiality, and the protection of personal data.

### **WhatsApp Communication Guidelines**

- **Closed Groups:** Only private, closed groups should be used for group communication involving multiple students, families, or staff members. These groups should include only relevant, authorized individuals.
- **Parental Consent:** Written parental consent is required for using WhatsApp to communicate directly with or about a child.
- **Appropriate Hours:** All communications should take place during agreed-upon hours unless there is an emergency or immediate concern affecting a child's welfare.
- **Message Content:** Communications should be limited to necessary, professional, and relevant information. Messaging students directly is not permitted unless there is a documented agreement from a parent or guardian.

### **Data Security and Confidentiality**

To ensure the safety and privacy of students, families, and staff, Remedicare Education Services employs the following measures:

#### **1. WhatsApp Security Measures**

- **End-to-End Encryption:** WhatsApp provides end-to-end encryptions for all messages. However, additional care should be taken to avoid sharing sensitive information.
- **Two-Step Verification:** All staff members must enable two-step verification on their WhatsApp accounts used for work purposes to add an extra layer of security.
- **Device Security:** Staff should ensure that their devices are password-protected and should not use public or unsecured Wi-Fi networks when accessing sensitive communication.
- **Data Retention:** Conversations and documents shared on WhatsApp will be retained only as long as necessary and should be deleted as per Remedicare's data retention policy.

#### **2. Social Media Data Security**

- **Account Security:** All official social media accounts must be protected with strong passwords and two-factor authentication where available.
- **Personal Information Sharing:** Personal information or images of students should not be shared publicly without explicit written consent from a parent or guardian.
- **Third-Party Apps:** Staff should avoid using third-party applications that may request access to the social media accounts or WhatsApp data related to Remedicare.

### **Safeguarding Measures**

Remedicare prioritizes child safety and well-being in all interactions, online and offline. To ensure this:

- **Regular Training:** Staff will receive regular training on safe online practices, data protection, and safeguarding to stay up to date with best practices.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** All WhatsApp and social media groups must have at least two designated administrators who can monitor group activities for any inappropriate behaviour or content.
- **Reporting Concerns:** Any concerns regarding inappropriate communication or potential breaches in data protection must be reported immediately to a manager or safeguarding officer.

### **Compliance with Laws and Regulations**

Remedicare is committed to adhering to all relevant data protection regulations, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) where applicable, and any child protection laws in force. This includes ensuring that all information shared via WhatsApp and social media is managed in compliance with these regulations.

### **Policy Violations**

Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Legal action may be pursued in cases of severe data protection breaches or where student's safety is compromised.

### **Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or as necessary, to remain in compliance with new legal regulations, social media changes, or organizational needs.

### **Acknowledgement**

All staff, volunteers, and contractors are required to read, understand, and acknowledge this social media and Communication Policy as part of their induction and ongoing training.

By establishing clear guidelines for social media and WhatsApp use, we aim to protect the privacy and safety of all students, families, and staff involved with Remedicare Education Services.