

Business Continuity Plan

1.0 Purpose and scope of the Business Continuity Plan

The Academy Trust Handbook 2025 requires Consortium Trust (“the Trust”) to manage risks to ensure its effective operation:

“The trust’s management of risks must include contingency and business continuity planning” (2.36).

The Business Continuity Plan sets out the procedures to be followed in the event of a situation that could have a significant impact on the Trust’s ability to continue its operations.

The chief objectives of the Business Continuity Plan (“BCP”) are the safeguarding of the health and welfare of pupils, staff and visitors, continuity of education and the security of the Trust’s financial position. The Trust has adopted a Critical Incident Plan, which sets out the immediate actions to be taken in the event of a non-routine incident. The Business Continuity Plan complements the Critical Incident Plan by setting out the further steps to be taken to return the Trust, or one or more of its settings, to a situation where it can continue to pursue its educational objectives.

2.0 Activation of the Business Continuity Plan

The Business Continuity Plan will be activated in the event of any incident that can be expected to cause significant disruption to the Trust’s ability to provide education at its schools and settings. In practice, the Business Continuity Plan is likely to be activated whenever the Critical Incident Plan is activated. The types of incidents that may lead to activation may include:

- An incident that threatens the health or wellbeing of one or more pupils, staff or visitors
- The loss of key people, e.g. through illness
- The loss of premises, e.g. through fire, severe weather
- The loss of key resources, e.g. IT system, power, catering supplier
- Major injuries
- Serious assaults
- Fatality
- Allegations or knowledge of abuse
- Pollution incidents or other civil emergencies
- Suspected or actual terrorist or other criminal activity

The decision to activate the Business Continuity Plan is taken by the CEO or, in their absence, any member of the Critical Incident Team.

3.0 Notification of Activation of the Business Continuity Plan

When the decision is taken to activate the Business Continuity Plan, the CEO will notify the Board of Trustees via the Chair of Trustees. The CEO will consider which other key stakeholders should be notified. These may include parents of children at one or more of the schools, the local authority and the Regional Director.

4.0 Business Continuity Team (“BCT”)

The Business Continuity Plan will be implemented by a team comprising:

- CEO
- Director of Finance and Resources
- Director of Primary Education

- Head of Service: People
- Head of Service: Facilities and Compliance
- The Academy Head(s), as appropriate
- The Chair of Trustees (or representative of the Trust Board)
- Such other employees as the circumstances demand

5.0 Critical Incident Plan

The Business Continuity Team will check that the Incident Action Plan drawn up by the Critical Incident Management Team is being carried out.

6.0 Keeping a log

It is imperative that available evidence is preserved, and appropriate records are kept. All decisions taken by the BCT must be documented and additional expenditure recorded. The CEO will nominate a member of the Business Continuity Team to keep a log of the key decisions and actions taken by the Team. This will include all extra expenditure incurred as a result of the incident.

7.0 Communications strategy

The CEO will nominate a member of the Business Continuity Team to oversee the Trust's communications with stakeholders and the wider public. This will include keeping members of staff, Trustees, Members and Locality Committees informed of developments.

Information relating to specific pupils will be communicated to the registered parental or carer contact in a timely and sensitive manner.

The CEO will approve the timing and wording of communication with those parents whose children are not directly affected by the incident.

Only the CEO, or a member of staff authorised by the CEO, may make any statement to the press.

In the event of a major, serious incident the CEO will seek advice from the Police or other appropriate external agency regarding communication with the press.

With all communication it is important that no one from the Trust does or says anything that may be construed as an admission of liability.

All communication will be made with due regard to the Trust's responsibilities under GDPR and other provisions relating to data security, confidentiality and privacy.

8.0 Monitor wellbeing of staff and pupils

It is important that staff are supported during a difficult time and that appropriate pastoral care is offered to pupils.

In the event of a very serious incident, it may be necessary to offer counselling to staff and/or pupils and volunteers.

The staff wellbeing package offers valuable support for such circumstances.

9.0 Risk Protection Arrangement

An incident that triggers the implementation of the Business Continuity Plan may lead to a claim under the Risk Protection Arrangement ("RPA") or other insurance that may be in place.

Topmark Claims Management Ltd handles claims on behalf of the RPA, acting as Third Party Administrator (“TPA”). They should be informed of urgent incidents by email (rpa@topmarkcms.com) or by phone (03300 585566). Non-emergency claims should be made via the [online portal](https://www.rpaclaimforms.co.uk/make-a-claimv2/): <https://www.rpaclaimforms.co.uk/make-a-claimv2/>

The rules regarding the Risk Protection Arrangement can be obtained from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68a43680246cc964c53d2992/Risk_protection_arrangement_for_academy_trusts_-_membership_rules.pdf

In order to make a claim it will be necessary to log on to the RPA portal using the Trust’s details. These will be stored securely off-site.

The Trust is obliged to inform the TPA of an urgent incident as soon as reasonably practicable. Prior approval from the RPA should be obtained before further costs are incurred as a result of the incident.

The Trust is obliged to provide all reasonable levels of co-operation with the TPA in such areas as, but not limited to, the provision of information and documentation, access for investigation, and support for litigation.

The Trust must not:

- i) admit liability;
- ii) act in a way that may be construed as an admission of liability;
- iii) repudiate or settle any claim or legal proceeding; or
- iv) waive any rights of recovery
without the prior written consent of the TPA.

The terms of other insurance should be reviewed and followed.

10.0 Loss of Premises

Partial loss of premises will require short-term alterations to the curriculum and class structure. If the available premises are unable to accommodate all of a setting’s pupils it will be necessary to secure short-term alternative accommodation.

In the short-term, teaching staff may implement remote learning via email communication with parents or other media.

Loss of catering facilities will require alternative provision. This may involve the use of community facilities.

In the medium-term, it may be appropriate to hire portable structures to be situated on school grounds.

Once the BCP enters the business resumption phase, any work to replace or repair school buildings will be undertaken in co-ordination with the relevant local authority and/or the Department for Education.

In the event of loss of Central Office premises, relevant staff will work from home or from school premises while the situation is assessed.

11.0 Loss of Staff

The response to a loss of staff due to resignation will be covered by the Trust's key staff succession planning.

Staff shortages caused by individuals' sickness will be covered by the use of teaching assistants, rearrangement of the timetable and by agency staff or by the redeployment of existing staff

In the event that mass staff illness is caused by a pandemic or similar emergency, it is unlikely that agency staff will be available. Furthermore, the CEO may take the decision that it is in the interests of pupils and staff that pupils remain at home.

12.0 Loss of Services

The Central team should maintain a list of suppliers of services such as telephony, IT, catering, transport and utilities. The list should include contact and account details.

If a contractor becomes temporarily or permanently unable to provide a service to one or more schools, the Central Team will seek to implement alternative provision.

13.0 Loss of IT:

In the event of IT loss, the relevant contractor should be contacted:

IT provider: JC Computer Technologies Ltd, email office@jccomtech.com, telephone number 01603 810343.

14.0 Back up

In the event of data loss, the Director of Finance and Resources will access the last back up, which is cloud-based. Pupil data is stored on Arbor and finance data on Sage. Staff and other data are stored on Every, Edupay and on Microsoft 365.

Business Continuity Plan – Action points

Phase 1: Activation of the BCP

Purpose: To ensure that the BCP is activated when necessary.

Actions:

1. News of incident is received by CEO from a member of staff or third party such as the emergency services.
2. CEO considers whether there is immediate threat to the safety or welfare of pupils, staff or visitors. If so, the Critical Incident Plan is implemented. If not, the CEO monitors the situation.
3. The CEO considers whether the incident is likely to threaten the Trust's ability to carry out its critical activities. If so, the Business Continuity Plan is implemented. If not, the CEO monitors the situation.
4. The CEO mobilises the Business Continuity Team and informs the Chair of Trustees.
5. In the absence of the CEO, these actions are taken by the Director of Education or Finance and Resources.

Phase 2: Management of the incident

Purpose: To limit, as far as is practicable, the impact of the incident on the business of the Trust.

Actions:

1. The CEO monitors delivery of the Critical Incident Plan to promote the safety and welfare of pupils, staff and visitors.
2. The CEO makes an initial assessment of the incident's likely impact on the business of the Trust.
3. The CEO nominates a member of the Business Continuity Team to keep a log of the key decisions and actions taken by the Team. This will include all extra expenditure incurred as a result of the incident.
4. The CEO nominates a member of the Business Continuity Team to oversee the Trust's communications with stakeholders and the wider public. This will include keeping members of staff, Trustees and Members informed of developments.

Phase 3: Maintaining business continuity

Purpose: To enable the critical activities of the business to resume or continue.

Actions:

Managing a loss or shortage of key staff

1. Seek temporary cover from other Trust schools.
2. Seek temporary cover from agency staff.
3. Make temporary changes to lesson plans or classes to reflect availability of staff.

Managing a loss of premises

1. Seek short-term arrangements with other Trust settings.
2. Seek short-term arrangements with community premises.
3. Make temporary changes to school timetable to facilitate shared use of facilities.

Managing an IT loss

1. Contact IT contractor.
2. Use back-up systems.
3. Revise lesson plans to reflect loss of facilities.
4. Contact suppliers to restore Central provisions.

Managing a loss of a key partner or supplier

1. Contact alternative suppliers.
2. Make use of arrangements at other Trust settings.

Phase 4: Restoring the business

Purpose: To return the business, as near as is practicable, to its state before the incident.

Actions:

1. Decide the actions required to enable the resumption of normal working practices and agree timescales and responsibilities. This may involve the commissioning of remedial works and the processing of claims under the Risk Protection Arrangement.
2. Respond to any ongoing and long-term support needs of staff and pupils. This may involve the use of counselling services. Each Academy Head will be responsible for the welfare of the pupils at their school.
3. When the CEO is satisfied that normal working has been achieved, he will inform relevant stakeholders that the Business Continuity Plan has been completed.
4. The CEO will nominate a member of the Business Continuity Team to carry out a review of the incident and the Trust's response to it with the aim of improving the Critical Incident and Business Continuity Plans and learning any other relevant lessons. This review should be presented to the Board of Trustees.
5. Make any necessary changes to the Critical Incident and Business Continuity Plans and communicate them to the relevant parties.

USEFUL CONTACTS	NAME	PHONE
TRUST OFFICE	Consortium Trust	01473 355452
School 1	St Edmund's Primary School	01379 668283
School 2	Mendham Primary School	01379 852520
School 3	Glebeland Primary School	01502 677354
School 4	Yoxford & Peasenhall Primary School	01728 668291
School 5	Middleton Primary School	01728 648251
School 6	Barnby and North Cove Primary School	01502 476230
School 7	Henley Primary School	01473 833092
School 8	Southwold Primary School	01502 723137
School 9	Rendlesham Primary School	01394 462190
School 10	Winterton Primary School	01493 393218
School 11	Helmingham Primary School	01473 890267
School 12	Riverwalk School	01284 764280
School 13	Warren School	01502 561893
School 14	Reedham School	01493 700271
Nursery	Kirkley Nursery	01502 273118
UAP	The Link	Mobile phone of senior teacher
CEO	Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	XX
Director of Primary Education	Debbie Thomas	XX
Director of Finance and Resources	Lisa Jones	XX
HoS People	Liz Frere-Smith	XX
HoS Facilities	Robin Chew	XX
Academy Head 6 & UAP	Simon Lea	XX
Academy Head 3	Emma Davies	XX
Academy Head 4, 5 & 8	Katy Last	XX
Academy Head 9	Hannah Woodruffe	XX
Academy Head 7 & 11	Steph Powley	XX
Academy Head 12	Lukasz Rumanowski	XX
Academy Head 13	Kelly Bland	XX
Academy Head 10	Jemima Williams	XX
Academy Head 1 & 2	Henry Huxtable	XX
Chair of Trustees	Steve Martin	XX
Safeguarding Trustee	Sue Child	XX
Suffolk Police Headquarters	Martlesham	01473 613500

Emergency Services	Emergency calls (all services) Non-emergency calls to the Police	112 101
Fire Service	Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (non-emergency) Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (non-emergency)	(01473) 260588 0300 123 1669
NHS	Advice on an urgent medical problem	111
Hospital	James Paget Hospital (Gorleston)	(01493) 452452
	Ipswich Hospital	(01473) 712233
	West Suffolk Hospital (Bury St Edmunds)	(01284) 713000
	Eye Health Centre	01379 870689
	Fressingfield Medical Centre	01379 586456
Local Doctors	Harleston Medical Practice-4465	01379 853217
	Chet Valley Medical Practice (Loddon)	01508 520222
	Yoxford Branch Surgery	01728 830526
	Beccles Medical Centre	01502 712662
	Cutlers Hill Surgery (Halesworth) Including minor injuries service	01986 874618
	Barham and Claydon Medical Centre	01473 832832
	Sole Bay Health Care, Southwold	01502 722326
	Rendlesham / Wickham Market Medical Centre	01728 747101
	Debenham Group Practice	01728 860248
	Hemsby Medical Centre	01493 730449
Bus Companies	Simmonds Coaches, Diss	01379 647300
	Belle Coaches, Lowestoft	01502 574669
	Whincop Coaches	01728 660233
Press and Media contacts	East Anglian Daily Times	(01473) 230 023
	Eastern Daily Press	(01603) 628311
	BBC Radio Suffolk	(01473) 250 000
	BBC Radio Norfolk	(01603) 619 331
	BBC Look East	03457 630630
	ITV Anglia	08448 816900

Suffolk County Council	Adult Social Care Children's Social Care	0800 917 1109 0808 800 4005
Norfolk County Council	To report concerns about an adult or child	0344 800 8020
Debris removal	Clear Thinking Property Solutions Suez	01508 470 163; 07789 732340 01473 839149
Glazier	Norwich Glass Company Waveney Glass	01603 407071 01502 584267
Locksmith	Timpson	01502 441310 01394 548748
Toilet hire	Premier Toilet Hire Toilets To Go	01728 638999 01493 722711
Portable buildings	Wernick Hire Cabins and Containers	0800 970 0231 0845 498 9198

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended By	Details of Change
5	12/01/2022	Robin Chew	Annual Review
6	28/02/2023	Robin Chew	Annual Review
7	27/02/2024	Robin Chew	Annual Review
8	24/01/2025	Robin Chew	Annual Review
9	11/02/2026	Robin Chew	Annual Review

Approval

Name	Job Title	Signed	Date
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	Principal/CEO	Electronic signature	03/03/2022
Dawn Carman-Jones	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	03/03/2022
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	Principal/CEO	Electronic signature	02/03/2023
Dawn Carman-Jones	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	02/03/2023
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	CEO	Electronic signature	07/03/2024
Dawn Carman-Jones	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	07/03/2024
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	CEO	Electronic signature	27/02/2025
Steve Martin	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	27/02/2025
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	CEO	Electronic signature	26/02/2026
Steve Martin	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	26/02/2026

This policy will be reviewed annually by Head of Service Facilities or as required by changes in legislation.

At every review, this policy will be approved by the Finance & Resources Committee.

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