



## BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

### VERSION 5.0

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Responsible committee/Individual	Trust Board
Author	Operations Director
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## 1. Introduction

Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust is required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to develop plans to manage business continuity in the event of a range of disruptions to services. We also have a legal duty under Keeping Children Safe in Education to protect children and ensure their safety and welfare in the event of any emergency.

This plan should be read in conjunction with the other evacuation and emergency procedures held at each academy/UTC setting that deal with the immediate response to an emergency situation.

This plan deals with no-notice disruptions most likely to occur: loss of premises (through fire, flood etc); loss of utilities (electricity, gas, water); failure of IT and telephony; failure of supply; staff shortage; issues such as pandemic 'flu.

The impact of any serious disruption may manifest itself in terms of: delivery of education, safety/welfare, financial consequences; reputation damage; environmental consequences.

This plan should be reviewed annually.

## 2. Aim of plan

The plan is designed to achieve the following strategic objectives:

- To safeguard the safety and welfare of students, staff and visitors;
- To resume provision of education services at the earliest opportunity and, where possible, secure a continuation of learning;
- To maintain the community and identity of the academy/UTC;
- To return the academy/UTC to normality.

**Critical functions that must be supported during any emergency include:**

- **Safeguarding and protection of children and young people**, in line with statutory duties under *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, ensuring that pupils remain safe, supervised and protected throughout the incident.
- **First Aid and medical support**, ensuring trained staff, equipment and emergency response processes remain available to manage injuries, health needs and medical emergencies.
- **Support for pupils with SEND**, maintaining reasonable adjustments, access to specialist support, personalised provision and protection of vulnerable pupils whose needs may increase during disruption, including the review of the schools/UTC accessibility plans.
- **Management of examinations and assessments**, ensuring compliance with awarding body regulations, maintaining exam security, protecting assessment materials, and putting in place any JCQ-compliant contingencies needed to continue examinations safely.
- **Delivery of education**, including implementing alternative teaching and learning arrangements where the normal timetable cannot continue.
- **Communication with students, staff, parents, carers and external agencies**, ensuring clear, accurate and timely messaging.

- **Maintenance of essential site operations**, including building security, utilities, safe access, control of hazards, and continuity of essential services.
- **Protection and recovery of critical data and IT systems**, ensuring continuity of digital learning, communication and operational systems.
- **Compliance with statutory responsibilities**, including safeguarding reporting, health and safety requirements, data protection, and liaison with the DfE, local authority, emergency services and regulators.

### 3. Notification

During working hours, a site disruption is likely to become apparent to all staff and students very quickly: alarm activation, word-of-mouth etc.

Outside working hours, a site disruption may be notified by the emergency services or security call out services to the CEO, Headteacher, Principal, Deputy Headteacher, Admin Lead or another senior member of staff.

### 4. Plan implementation

The responsibility for implementing this plan lies with the CEO, Headteacher/Principal or, if not available, the most senior member of staff available.

### 5. Initial Actions and Evacuation File

Evacuation is dealt with in the academy/UTC's Emergency Evacuation Plan.

Upon activation of this plan, the Headteacher/Principal, or his/her nominated deputy, will form a School Emergency Response Team (SERT) with responsibilities as listed in section 7.

The primary objective of the SERT is to manage the developing situation and minimise harm and danger to:

- Students, staff and visitors
- Building, contents and other assets and
- Academy/UTC's ability to provide education.

An emergency file (Grab Bag) will be stored in the Headteacher/Principal's and Business Manager's office. A copy of this should also be stored off site by the Headteacher/Principal

The Grab Bag should contain the items listed on Appendix 12 of the School Emergency Plan.

The Grab Bag should be taken out of the academy/UTC building by the nearest person, only if safe to do so.

The Grab Bag will be checked termly for accuracy of information by the Headteacher/Principal, supported by their respective business and site teams.

Documents will be stored on the school network shared area for all staff to access.

## 6. Assessment and Containment

As soon as practicable, the SERT will meet to consider what resources are available to continue normal business as far as possible. Potential resources are:

- Staff, vehicles, equipment still at the scene
- Staff, vehicles, equipment located elsewhere
- Nearby school premises for immediate needs
- Current IT and telephony capability

The meeting should be held at a location as near as possible to the main building. The CFO will arrange with the Bank for immediate access to funds / extended credit card facilities if this is deemed necessary dependent on the nature of the crisis.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

Functional roles include but are not limited to the following (*dependent on resources available, individuals may be called upon to fulfil more than one role*). Overall responsibility will pass to the most senior member of staff available.

### **Headteacher**

- Notify CEO and Central Trust Team
- Chair Team meetings
- Co-ordination of the response
- Liaise with Chair of Governors
- Allocate resources.
- Be prepared to answer questions from the media (after consultation with the CEO)
- Responsible for deciding whether or not staff should be sent home.

### **Admin Lead / Senior Administration Staff**

- Meet and greet emergency services as they arrive, with a floor plan of the building, if possible.
- Ensure all significant occurrences and decisions are recorded, together with reasons for decisions made.
- Provide clerical and practical assistance to the Headteacher

### **Deputy Headteacher supported by other senior staff**

- Marshalling of students, staff and visitors at the evacuation rendezvous point.
- Ensure all students, staff and visitors are safe and accounted for.
- Arranging for transfer of everyone to place of safety.

- Arrange for warm, dry shelter for everyone in the short term.
- Deal with immediate welfare matters: distress, injuries, domestic responsibilities, etc.
- Liaise with DFE/ LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)
- Co-ordinate the sending home of students and immediate care of those whose parents cannot be readily notified or whose parents / guardians reside a considerable distance away.
- Instruct staff not to leave the rendezvous point until told to do so.
- Liaison between SERT and staff.
- Imparting factual information to staff.
- Agree key information to be given to students by class teachers.

#### **Site Manager – premises issues**

- Building security.
- Turn off gas, electricity etc, if this can be done safely.
- Salvage of critical documents/equipment if this can be done safely. The nominated person should be in possession of a list of critical items.
- Signs and notices for doors/boundaries.
- Liaison with neighbours.
- Identification/transfer to alternative premises.

#### **Admin Lead/Site Manager - continuity and recovery**

- Arrange for opening up of alternative premises.
- Co-ordinate fitting out with furniture and equipment.
- Liaise with academy/UTC insurance company
- Liaise with DFE/ESFA as necessary

#### **Admin Lead/Trust ICT Manager - data recovery**

- Organise the retrieval and restore of data from back-up systems

## **8. Potential Disruptions**

### **Loss of Premises**

The loss of all academy/UTC buildings is extremely unlikely. In the event of fire the academy/UTC will follow the relevant procedure and the RPA informed as soon as possible.

### **Loss of hardware:**

#### **Computers:**

The school does not have a preferred supplier. In the event of replacement computers being required, the Admin Lead will liaise with the Trust ICT Manager, after having consulted with the insurance company, will obtain a variety of quotes and an emergency meeting of the Board of Trustees will be called to make a decision.

#### **Laptops:**

All staff taking laptops off site are responsible for the physical security and security of any data on the laptop. They have been warned not to save any sensitive data on such a device or other removable storage. Laptops are currently encrypted. Data Protection guidance must be observed.

#### **Network and Server Infrastructure:**

Some are maintained by external providers. Any disruption to service which cannot be immediately resolved in house will be resolved by bringing in the external providers.

Schools who have a remote back up facility should consult their provider to establish back up of systems.

#### **Cyber Attack / Ransomware:**

In the event of a cyber-attack or ransomware incident, the Trust ICT Manager must be notified immediately. Compromised systems should be isolated, external providers engaged as required, and data restored from secure backups in line with the Trust's Cyber Security Incident Response procedures.

#### **Internet Access:**

Schools should contact their provider to restore service. If the connectivity is sourced through a third party then the third party should be contacted.

#### **Loss of Data**

School servers are backed up remotely. In the event of loss of data schools should contact their remote back up provider or in the case that this is done in house the Trust IT Manager should facilitate this.

#### **Staff Shortage**

The most likely scenarios involving a significant loss of staff are:

Outbreak of disease (e.g., influenza pandemic)

Fuel Shortage

Industrial action

In all of these events, there is likely to be a period of notice in which arrangements may be made to mitigate the effects:

#### **Epidemic/Pandemic -**

An influenza pandemic or similar occurrence may jeopardise staffing levels, directly through staff illness, or indirectly through fear of infection or through caring responsibilities for sick relatives. The office staff are most likely to identify if the school is being affected by such an occurrence and will report this to the Headteacher/Principal when several absences become apparent. The Headteacher/Principal should report this immediately to the CEO of the Trust who will liaise with external agencies including the Department for Education and Public Health to determine whether school closure is necessary. In all instances the Central Trust Team will monitor all communications from Central or Local Government and follow any directives issued. Levels of absence for both staff and pupils will be collated centrally to establish the extent that the Epidemic/Pandemic is having across the Trust.

The office staff will ensure that information is disseminated about how to identify symptoms of the illness in question and what to do in the event of a member of staff becoming ill with the suspected illness. The latest information for schools to prevent the spread of infection and in what circumstances they might need to close is likely to be available from official government and public information websites. The office staff will also be responsible for informing the

Headteacher/Principal of the probability of such an outbreak effecting the academy/UTC in order that a plan can be established and put in place to enable the academy/UTC to continue to function.

In the event that widespread school closures are necessary, each school should take steps to provide alternative methods of study for pupils. This may include hard copy work books being distributed or access to online learning resources. The method used will largely be dependent on the phase of school

concerned and the year groups within. Schools should be mindful of examination periods pending and this should inform the type of home learning and access to online learning relevant at the time.

If partial closure is an option available to schools due to limited staff numbers available, the decision will be made by the CEO as to which year groups should be requested to remain in school – this will take into account any pending assessments or examinations.

Each school will take steps to keep parents, carers and other agencies updated with the current status of the school. This should be done quickly and be reactive to latest Public Health or Government directives. The most efficient methods are communications via text messaging, email or website notices. Where an Epidemic/Pandemic is affecting all schools within the Trust, any communications issued should be directed by the CEO to maintain consistency of information throughout the family of schools.

### **Fuel**

In the event of a widespread fuel shortage, options will include:

- Increased use of public transport
- Car sharing
- Walking or cycling

When information indicates that a fuel shortage is expected, a list of staff living remotely from their place of work and with particular difficulties in accessing any of the above options will be compiled.

### **Industrial Action**

As far as possible, without attempting to influence staff members' legal right to take industrial action, managers should try to estimate the proportion of staff that may be available to attend work in order to plan work in accordance with priorities.

### **Telephony**

In the event of a serious incident resulting in the loss of telephone communication the alternate means of direct communication for key personnel will be via personal mobile phones or email as detailed in the Emergency Plan for each individual school setting.

## **9. Recovery**

Long-term recovery may be affected by decisions made during the assessment/ containment phase, so recovery issues should be taken into account by the SERT/CEO from the outset. Dependent on the nature of the incident, recovery may take months or even years to achieve (for instance if a full rebuild is required after a fire, or if injuries or deaths occur) and will include ways of keeping the academy/UTC community together during any period of dispersion, or commemorating the event on anniversaries.

### **Psychological Support and Bereavement Care:**

Where an incident has the potential to cause emotional or psychological distress, the school should ensure access to appropriate support, including psychological first aid, wellbeing support for staff and pupils, and bereavement guidance where required.

## **Business Continuity Plan Version 5 Agreed at Trust Board 25 March 2026**

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Agenda for first School Emergency Response Team meeting**

1. Background and Situation Report as known (Chair/Headteacher/Principal)
  
2. Updates and actions:
  - Premises
  - Current state
  - Critical items recovered/still in situ
  - Estimate of return
  - Welfare (staff, students, visitors)
  - Confirm all persons accounted for
  - Current arrangements for retaining staff
  - Arrangements for accompanying casualties to hospital (if applicable)
  - Outstanding welfare issues
  - Communications
  - Message given out to staff
  - New contact number for public
  - Public message via Local Authority media team
  - Collect contact numbers for team members.
  - Continuity and Recovery
  - Critical services affected
  - Options to work around disruption
  - Resources shortfall
  - Alternative premises identified (if applicable)
  
3. Time of next meeting