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SCHOOL

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

PLAN

**Guidance Document**

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**Document Change History**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Author | Date | Change Details |
| 1.1 | Rick Thornton | Nov 2012 | First Draft |
| 1.2 | Nick Wilding | December 2015 | Minor corrections, pending full review |
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Purpose

The objective of a business continuity plan is to maintain or recover a school’s critical services and activities in the event of a major disruption.

It is also to ensure that:

* The school’s immediate response is effective.
* There is good communication with all parties.

The business continuity plan compliments (and does not replace) the existing guidance from Suffolk County Council on Managing Critical Incidents.

A fundamental principle of this plan is that the more you put into it in preparation, the less you will have to make up on the day of the incident. The drawback is that it needs to be kept up to date (e.g. by annual review).

It is recommended that each school identifies a member of staff to act as Business Continuity Coordinator and who is responsible for preparing and maintaining this plan.

The plan should be created using this guidance document. If further advice is required, you can contact the Senior Infrastructure Officer (Capital) of the Suffolk County Council Children and Young People's Services Senior Management Team (01473 264644).

Furthermore:

* You should inform those staff that have a key role in the implementation of this plan (such as the Incident Management Team) that this plan exists, where it can be found in an emergency and what their roles are likely to be.
* This plan should be reviewed on an annual basis.
* If possible this plan should be tested or exercised; the most common form of exercise is a “table-top exercise” which brings all the key players together to “walk through” a scenario using the plan.

CRITICAL SERVICES OR ACTIVITIES

These are the services and activities that should be maintained or recovered in a disruption.

Recovery Time Objective is the time in which the service must be recovered. Typically these are 1 day, 2-3 days, 1 week, 1 month.

Here is a worked example.

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| Critical Service/Activity | Recovery Time Objective | Service Details In particular – what should be maintained or recovered in the event of disruption. | Responsible Person |
| Examinations | 1 day | Enable pupils to sit examinations (including SATs, GCSE and A-Level). |  |
| Teaching | 1 week | Deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum (Foundation to Key Stage 4) incl. the duty to provide 190 days education. |  |
| Teaching Support | 2 weeks | Assist in the education of pupils and running of establishment services. |  |
| Maintain site safety and security | 1 day | Provision of suitable, safe and secure accommodation to enable the delivery of education and to meet duty of care requirements, health & safety legislation etc. |  |
| Catering | 1 week | Provision of free school meals to national standards. |  |
| Administration | 2 weeks | Administer key administrative functions, e.g. admissions, correspondence, financial management etc. |  |
| Coursework | 1 month | Safe keeping of coursework including electronic documentation and other physical items. |  |
| Records | 1 month | The keeping of suitable records in relation to staff/pupils and general administrative functions, e.g. pupil attendance. |  |
| Cleaning | 1 week | Carry out general cleaning such as toilets, waste collection and removal. |  |
| Property and equipment maintenance | 1 month | Ensure the long term functionality of all buildings, plant and equipment. |  |
| Extended Services | 1 month | Extended services may include Breakfast Clubs, After School Clubs, Children’s Centres, hiring of rooms/halls etc. |  |

Notes:

If the service has to comply with a statutory duty then state the name of the duty and the time requirement.

Criticality may depend on the time of year that the incident happens.

POSSIBLE DISRUPTIONS

The purpose of this list is to identify the events that could disrupt the school’s critical services and activities to such an extent that they threaten:

* Pupil education.
* Pupil health, safety and welfare.
* The school’s reputation.
* The school’s financial viability.

The outcome of this part of the process is that it highlights which disruptions should have action cards (higher risk rating) and those which do not (lower risk rating).

Risk Rating is a function of Likelihood and Impact.

Impact – how serious the disruption might be as a result of this threat.

1 – Insignificant

2 – Minor

3 – Moderate

4 – Major

5 – Catastrophic

Likelihood – the chances of this threat happening.

1 – Rare

2 – Unlikely

3 – Possible

4 – Likely

5 – Almost Certain

Worked Example:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Possible Disruption | Impact (A) | Likelihood (B) | Risk Rating (A x B) |
| Loss of staff (industrial action, flu pandemic, seasonal flu) | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| Loss of premises – partial or total (fire, flood) | 4 | 2 | 8 |
| Loss of utilities (power, water, sewerage, gas, phones) | 4 | 3 | 12 |
| Loss of ICT (server failure, power, virus, cyber attack) | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| Local hazards in the area e.g. airport, railway line, tram line, motorways, industrial sites etc. | 3 | 1 | 3 |

The scoring is largely subjective and should be carried out by a group of staff.

Likelihood largely depends on how often such disruptions have previously occurred.

Impact should be based on how the disruption affects the critical services previously listed.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The purpose of the Incident Management Plan is to make sure the right people come together in the right place at the right time to take control of the organisation’s response to the disruption.

**Overall Responsibility**

The person who will take overall responsibility of the school’s response to an incident and bring together the Incident Management Team.

Most commonly this is the headteacher or their deputy.

**Most Likely Key Players**

The people who should be contacted to form an Incident Management Team and will carry out the actions required to maintain or recover critical services/activities. This list should include some of those listed as Responsible Persons in the list of Critical Services/Activities.

Most commonly:

* Heads of Year or Heads of Department
* Senior Administrator
* Exams Coordinator
* Head of IT
* School Caretaker
* Lead on health and safety

Also include representatives from Suffolk County Council when required.

It can be useful to set out the key roles for individuals in advance in an appendix.

Note – if personal contact details (e.g. home phone numbers) are included here, be mindful of data protection issues.

**Location**

The most appropriate location (off-site) for the Incident Management Team to meet.

Most commonly:

* Another nearby school.
* A Suffolk County Council office.
* A town council or parish council building.

**Records**

An Incident Log must be opened as soon as this plan is invoked, see Appendix 1.

This is important not just for incident management purposes, but also if there should be any form of enquiry after the event.

GENERIC ACTIONS

These are the actions the Incident Management Team should take whatever the disruption.

It assumes that all immediate emergency actions such as evacuation have taken place according to existing school procedures.

It would be sensible for the IMT to also refer to the existing guidance from Suffolk County Council on Managing Critical Incidents.

Step 1 is usually to assess the scale, severity and duration of the incident and its likely impact on the school’s critical services and activities (listed on earlier in this plan).

Either by surveying the scene in person or contacting the emergency services (if still on site) for a briefing (esp. if the site has been declared a crime scene).

Criticality may depend on the time of year, especially any key milestones or statutory deadlines approaching.

Examples: examinations, exam result publication.

The assessment leads to Step 2, establishing the Incident Management Team (i.e. who you need to help you manage your recovery) and a contact point for everyone to keep in touch with the IMT. This may be a physical location or a phone number.

If they have not been preset in this plan, the leader of the IMT should allocate specific roles to IMT members as necessary, e.g. site liaison, staff communications, etc.

A log of key decisions and actions must be started at the outset and maintained throughout the incident. An template is provided in See Appendix 1.

Of particular importance are:

* Decisions on priorities, esp. where services/activities are scaled down or stopped.
* Where activities or staff/pupils have been relocated.
* Major financial costs.
* Also where certain options were not taken.

If there is time and it is permitted by the emergency services, consider the recovery of vital assets/equipment to enable delivery of critical School services and activities, in particular; exam papers, paper files and course work

The IMT should develop a communications plan that covers all stakeholders, in particular; staff, school governors, Suffolk County Council officers.

Notify them of your assessment, decisions made so far and arrangements for keeping in contact in future.

Officers from Suffolk County Council will be keen to be supportive, particularly for:

* Communication to parents/carers
* Establishment of an internal and/or public helpline number
* Public communication and media handling
* Insurance
* Site security (incl. turning off of utilities)
* School transport

These generic actions lead to the development of an action plan for recovering and maintaining the schools critical services and activities. This can be done using the prepared business continuity Action Cards that follow. If none of the prepared business continuity Action Cards is appropriate (e.g. the disruption was not foreseen), the IMT will need to create an action plan on the day.

The key parts of the action plan are:

* Setting priorities and scaling down / stopping non critical services/activities.
* Invoking the contingencies (relocation, redeployment, remote learning etc.).
* Communicating those decisions to all stakeholders.

Of particular use will be existing information held by schools, such as;

* Register of all school staff
* Inventories of equipment
* Inventories of IT software (incl. databases, spreadsheets etc.)
* List of paper-based information.
* Records of special needs requirements

It is advisable to list (in the business continuity plan as appendices) the minimum resources (staff, furniture, teaching equipment, ICT hardware, ICT software, phones etc.) required to maintain/recover critical services activities.

If this information is not prepared in advance, the IMT will have to spend more time creating it on the day.

Finally, the IMT should set the dates and times of future updates, meetings to review progress and communications to stakeholders. Over time this is commonly known as the “battle rhythm”.

Note – it may be useful to maintain an emergency box or grab bag, this is quickly grabbed in the event of an emergency and taken if the site is evacuated (or kept off site nearby). It should contain a selection of items useful in an incident, see Appendix 5. Someone should be identified to maintain it and grab in an incident.

ACTION CARDS

Included here are prototype Action Cards for specific disruptions, such Loss Of Staff, Loss Of Premises and Loss Of ICT.

They are not necessarily complete, they need to be adapted for each school.

Some could be extended to include other contingencies.

These three are not necessarily the full set, they should be added to as required.

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| **Action Card for a loss or shortage of staff or skills** | **Further Information**  (e.g. Key contacts, details of arrangements, checklists) |
| Scale down and/or suspend non critical activities and focusing on critical activities. | See page 3 |
| Use of temporary staff from an external source,  e.g. Supply Teacher Agencies. | <agency details> |
| Redeployment of staff from less critical services/activities to more critical ones. | May require multi-skilling to ensure staff are capable of undertaking different roles. |
| Using different ways of working to allow for reduced workforce, this may include:   * Larger class sizes (subject to adult and child ratios) * Use of Teaching Assistants, Student Teachers etc. * Deploy school’s Remote Learning Programme * Pre-prepared educational materials that allow for independent learning | It is advisable to maintain lists of minimum staff numbers for critical services/activities, e.g. teachers, teaching assistants, technicians, invigilators, SEN support staff, admin staff. |
| Using mutual support agreements with other Schools. | <other school details> |
| Note – during staff redeployment, thought should be given to the level of skills, knowledge and qualifications that will be required, including the need for CRB checks. If in redeploying staff a degree of risk is incurred, actions should be taken to mitigate that risk (e.g. briefing, buddying up, work instructions, supervision). | |
| Changes to working conditions, e.g. staff working longer hours, part-time staff working full time, etc. | Ensure staff management issues are considered, i.e. working time directive, job description flexibility and contractual requirements etc. |
| Note – if the cause of staff loss is Flu Pandemic, there will be further advice and guidance from SCC, e.g. on infection control, vaccination etc. | |

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| **Action Card for a loss of premises or loss of utilities** | **Further Information**  (e.g. Key contacts, details of arrangements, checklists) |
| If the loss of premises is partial, scale down and/or suspend non critical activities and focus on critical activities redeployed to premises still in operation. | See page 3 |
| Relocation options may include… |  |
| Using mutual support agreements with other Schools. | <other school details>  Liaise with school transport (SCC). |
| Using pre-agreed arrangements with other premises in the community i.e. Libraries, Leisure Centres, Colleges, University premises. | <agreed providers and their contact details> |
| Hire in temporary quick-assemble accommodation, e.g. portakabins. | <supplier details> |
| Deploy school’s prepared Remote Learning Programme. | Type / quantity of RLP materials.  Nationally or locally available.  Timetable for delivery of RLP.  Parent / pupil communications. |
| Continue / scale down planned off-site activities e.g. swimming, physical activities, school trips. | <agreed providers and their contact details> |
| Deploy emergency generator for power loss. | <fixed on site or from supplier> |

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| **Action Card for loss of ICT** | **Further Information**  (e.g. Key contacts, details of arrangements, checklists) |
| Assess the impact on all services/activities, e.g. teaching operations and school administration. | See page 3 |
| A list of the key IT applications should be prepared by the school. | <include as an appendix in this plan> |
| Recover electronic back–ups of key school data e.g. CD or Memory Stick, mirrored servers etc. | <location of back-ups> |
| Reverting to paper-based systems e.g. paper registers, whiteboards etc.  Recover photocopies of data stored on and off site. | <location of back-ups> |
| Teachers to modify lesson plans. |  |
| Power loss - Uninterruptible Power Supply should allow the controlled closure of all ICT by staff |  |
| Telephone loss – set up a temporary network of mobile phones.  Contact land-line provider to redirect phone numbers to a mobile or alternative location. | <provider details> |

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| **Action Card for <other disruptions>** | **Further Information**  (e.g. Key contacts, details of arrangements, checklists) |
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**Appendix 1. Incident Log**

The template below can be used, but it is not mandatory to use this one. The key requirement is to record events, decisions, communications and expenditure.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date & Time** | **Description of What Has Happened** | **Action to be Taken as a Result** | **Responsible Person** |
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**Appendix 2. External Contact List**

Below is a prototype list and can be modified and added to.

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| Organisation | Name  (if possible) | Contact Details |
| SCC (Local Office) |  |  |
| SCC (Head Office) |  |  |
| SCC (School Transport) |  |  |
| Catering |  |  |
| Cleaning |  |  |
| Building Maintenance |  |  |
| Power (supplier) |  |  |
| Power (UKpowernetworks) |  |  |
| Phone provider |  |  |
| Gas (National Grid) |  |  |
| Anglian Water |  |  |
| Staff Agency |  |  |
| Mutual Aid Schools |  |  |
| Data Back-Up location |  |  |
| Power Generator Provider |  |  |
| Other suppliers and providers as appropriate |  |  |
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**Appendix 3 Suggested Roles and Responsibilities (optional)**

**3.1 School Incident Management Team**

These are just suggestions and should be added to/deleted/amended as appropriate.

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| **Role** | **Responsibilities** | **Accountability / Authority** |
| Headteacher | * Senior responsible owner of Business Continuity Management in the school * Ensuring the school has capacity within its structure to respond to incidents * Determining the school’s overall response and recovery strategy | The Headteacher has overall responsibility for day-to-management of the School, including lead decision-maker in times of crisis. |
| Business Continuity Coordinator | * Business Continuity Plan development * Developing continuity arrangements and strategies e.g. alternative relocation site, use of temporary staff etc. * Involving the school community in the planning process as appropriate * Plan testing and exercise * Conducting ‘debriefs’ following an incident, test or exercise to identify lessons and ways in which the plan can be improved * Training staff within the school on Business Continuity * Embedding a culture of resilience within the school, involving stakeholders as required | Business Continuity Co-ordinator reports directly into the Headteacher and will usually be a member of the School Incident Management Team. |
| School Incident Management Team  *(including Business Continuity Coordinator and Headteacher)* | * Leading the school’s initial and ongoing response to an incident * Declaring that an ‘incident’ is taking place * Activating the Business Continuity Plan * Notifying relevant stakeholders of the incident, plan activation and ongoing response actions * Providing direction and leadership for the whole school community * Undertaking response and communication actions as agreed in the plan * Prioritising the recovery of key activities disrupted by the incident * Managing resource deployment * Welfare of pupils * Staff welfare and employment issues | The School Incident Management Team has the delegated authority to authorise all decisions and actions required to respond and recover from the incident. |

**3.2 Additional Response and Recovery Roles**

Depending on the circumstances of the incident, it may be necessary to activate one or all of the roles described below.

These are just suggestions and should be added to/deleted/amended as appropriate.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Responsibilities** | **Accountability / Authority** |
| Incident Loggist (record keeper) | * Ensuring that all key decisions and actions taken in relation to the incident are recorded accurately | Reporting directly to the Headteacher or School Incident Management Team. |
| Media Coordinator | * Collating information about the incident for dissemination in Press Statements * Liaison with Suffolk County Council’s Press Office to inform media strategy | The Media Co-ordinator should assist with providing information to the Press Office but should not undertake direct contact with Media. |
| Stakeholder Liaison | * Co-ordinating communication with key stakeholders as necessary. This includes (but does not cover all): * Governors * Parents/Carers/carers * Key Suffolk Council Services * School Crossing Patrol * School Transport Providers * External agencies e.g. Emergency Services, Health and Safety Executive (HSE) etc. | All communications activities should be agreed by the School Incident Management Team. Information sharing should be approved by the Headteacher (or School Incident Management Team if the Headteacher is unavailable). |
| Facilities Manager | * Undertaking duties as necessary to ensure site security and safety in an incident * Liaison with the School Incident Management to advise on any issues relating to the school physical infrastructure * Lead point of contact for any Contractors who may be involved in incident response | Reporting directly to the Headteacher or School Incident Management Team. |
| ICT Coordinator | * Ensuring the resilience of the School’s ICT infrastructure * Liaison with Suffolk County Council ICT support or external providers (if applicable) * Work with the Business Continuity Coordinator to develop proportionate risk responses | ICT Coordinator reports directly to the Business Continuity Coordinator for plan development issues.  In response to an incident, reporting to the School Incident Management Team. |

**Appendix 4 (optional).**

Include here (as required) further lists that may be useful, e.g. the minimum resources (staff, furniture, teaching equipment, ICT hardware, ICT software, phones etc.) required to maintain/recover critical services activities.

Here is an example. This can be used as a spreadsheet showing the needs for years, departments, subjects or individual classrooms.

Number of staff (esp. minimum number)

       Administration

       Teachers

       Other (please state)

Also include specific roles or skills that are essential to the recovery of critical services/activities.

Number of class rooms:

       Basic

       Specialist (please state)

Number of desks and chairs:

       Office desks

       Classroom desks

       Office chairs

       Classroom chairs

       Specialist desks and chairs (please state)

Telephone requirements (number of units):

       Normal office phones

       Mobile phones

       Pagers

Equipment:

       Office (e.g. fax machines, shredders)

       Classroom (e.g. whiteboards)

Public access requirements

Wheelchair access requirements

Special provisions e.g.:

       Confidential interview area.

       Floor loading for a safe.

       Secure area.

       Additional power.

       Goods/in out provision.

       Office accommodation (sq metres)

       Class Room accommodation (sq meters)

Storage space (sq metres)

Hardware and Networking requirements:

       Number of networked workstations.

       Number of local PCs

       Access to other systems.

Software requirements;

* General app’s (email, internet etc.)
* Specific app’s (teaching software, payroll etc.)
* Specific spreadsheets or documents.

Paper records/documents

Printing requirements.

Other essential equipment

**Appendix 5. Emergency Box or Grab Bag (Optional), suggested contents.**

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| Section | Details |
| Business Continuity | Business Continuity Plan (plus spare copies of forms in Appendices) |
| Key contact details, including: Governors, Parents/Carers, Local Authority, Suppliers etc |
| Organisational Information | Staff Handbook (policies and procedures) |
| School branding material and stationery |
| School logo |
| Other key documents |
| Financial Information | Bank, insurance details, Payroll etc |
| Invoices, purchase orders, etc |
| Financial procedures |
| Assets Register and Insurance Policy |
| Staff Information | Staff contact details |
| Staff emergency contact details |
| IT / Equipment Information | Software licence agreement and key codes |
| Office telephone list (for phone divert) |
| Back-up rota and data restoration routine |
| Equipment and other items | First Aid Kit |
| Local A – Z map |
| Portable radio (plus spare batteries) |
| Wind up LED torch |
| Back-up tapes |
| Laptop with wireless connection |
| Pay-as-you-go mobile phone and battery powered mobile phone charger |
| Stationery including permanent markers, clipboards, pens, blue-tack, pins, pencils and notebook paper |
| Disposable camera with film |
| Hazard barrier tape |
| Emergency cash, a cheque book or spare credit card |
| Contact details for taxi / transport providers |
| School Floor Plans |
| Spare keys |
| Whistle / megaphones |
| High visibility jacket |