



OUR LADY OF GRACE CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN
FOR
DISASTER RECOVERY IN THE EVENT OF A CRITICAL INCIDENT**


Presented to OLOG Audit & Risk Committee	13/03/24
Presented and Approved by OLOG Board of Trustees	20/03/24
Signature of Chair of Board of Trustees:	
Name of Chair of Board	Michael Coleman
Date	
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1.0 Introduction

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) has been written for those who will be involved in re-establishing the operational delivery of services following a major incident. It should be read in conjunction with:

- The schools' Critical Incident Plan
- The schools' fire evacuation plan (the operation of which does not necessarily activate the BCP).
- The line management lines of communication

2.0 Definitions

An emergency is any event which causes, or has the potential to cause injury, loss of life, damage to property or significant business disruption.

A disaster is the escalation of an emergency to the point where normal conditions are not expected to be recovered for at least 24 hours.

3.0 General Information

3.1 Review and Training

This document should be reviewed annually by the Leadership Teams and the Academy Trust Board.

3.2 Associated Documents/information

Associated Documents include:

- Schools' Business Continuity Plan
- Fire Evacuation Plans
- Fire risk assessment
- Line management lines of communication

3.3 Emergency Contact Information

An emergency information pack is kept at reception in the each school's office and includes:

- Copies of this document
- Contact details for the Chair of Trustees and of the Local Governing Body

Access to staff and student data (those on roll) with home phone numbers can be accessed on-line from SIMS and paper copies are held in the school offices in the event of a computer network or power failure.

4.0 Strategy

If a disaster is declared by Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust Headteachers or their deputies / assistant heads and/or Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust Academy's Catholic Senior Executive Lead (CSEL) or Chair of Trustees, this Business Continuity Plan and the will be activated. Staff communication will be via text / email and the website if this is operable, or by the line management plan of communication.

The following organisations/individuals may need to be advised of the implementation of the Business Continuity Plan as soon as possible:

- Director of Children’s Services office 020 8430 2000
- Buildings Team (Barkers) 0203 9127812
- MIS support 01689 814700
- LGFL Internet connectivity 0208 2555555 (OPTION 5)
- Press Office 020 3373 2755
- Solicitors (Winckworth Sherwood) 020 7593 5000
- Health and Safety Advisors (Geetha Unnithan) 020 8249 6973
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) 0345 300 9923
- Academic Risk Protection 03300 585566
- Local Police 020 8534 1212
- Local Fire Service 020 8555 1200
- Diocesan Education office 01277 265284
- Chair of Trustees Contact details held by school
- Chair of Local Governing Body Contact details held by school
- Catholic Senior Executive Lead Contact details held by school

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Headteacher or their Deputy

The Headteacher of each school is responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of the BCP, including:

- Immediately contacting the Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust Chief Accounting Officer / Finance Officer / Trust IT Officer if the disaster relates to the built environment or the ICT infrastructure to establish if the building can be re-occupied and/or service delivery reinstated
- Co-ordination of status reports/communication for the benefit of all audiences (including staff, students, parents, LA, Academies Team at DFE, press)
- Maintaining the BCP in an up-to-date format by delegating responsibility to the Finance Trustee (i.e. Chair of the Finance Committee / Chief Accounting Officer for updates.)

5.2 Incident Management Team (IMT)

Lead by the Headteacher of the relevant school, the Incident Management Team includes all Assistant and Deputy Headteachers / the School Business Manager (SBM) and the Site Manager. Additional members of the team will be recruited to match the specific needs of the incident.

The IMT is responsible for acting under the direction of the Headteacher (or their Deputy) to restore normal conditions as soon as possible.

5.3 Staff

Staff are required to co-operate with the IMT in support of the BCP. In the event that staff are sent home, they should remain available during normal working hours to assist with necessary tasks.

6.0 Procedure for Closing the Academy

Before a decision is taken to close a school as a result of an emergency or weather event, Schools should if at all possible discuss and agree the closure of the school with the CSEL. However, schools should not delay a response in the event of an emergency if they cannot contact the CSEL.

6.1 Closure in advance of a School day

The school can be closed in advance of a normal school day using the following system:

- Closure authorised by the Headteacher or their Deputy
- Implementing the school staff texting service or line management communication structure (actioned by – Senior / Decision Leadership Team)
- Recording the closure on the home page of the school website (actioned by – SBM / Office Manager)
- Sending out text messages via the school texting service system to all parents (actioned by –SBM / Office Manager)
- Notifying NPW / Barkers for further health & safety advice

6.2 Closure during a School Day

It is never a preferred option to close the school during a school day but it can be done using the following procedures:

- Closure authorised by the Headteacher or their Deputy on the basis that students with parental authorisation may make their way home by themselves. Students will continue to be supervised by staff until parents authorise them to leave or they are collected.
 - Parental authorisation can be provided by text message or email from a parental phone number or email address directly to the student’s phone and seen (and recorded) by a member of staff
 - Consider the use of Places of Safety (as described below).
- Notification of the school closure using the website (actioned by – SBM or designated member of staff). If SBM is unavailable please contact the Trust IT Officer for further advice.
- Recording the closure on the home page of the school website (actioned by – SBM). If the school website is unavailable, contact the Trust IT Officer for support.
- Sending out text messages to all parents via school texting service (actioned by – SBM / Admin Assistant).

6.3 Immediate Places of Safety

In the event of a major incident on site requiring the school to be closed, students will assemble at the primary assembly points. If these are not usable, staff will escort students to the secondary assembly points.

Primary and secondary assembly points are identified within each schools’ fire evaluation plan.

6.4 Off-Site Place of Safety

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the site completely, students will be escorted into the grounds of schools / public parks indicated in the individual schools’ evacuation plans, from where they can be collected or from where they can be released to make their own way home, once parents have been contacted to confirm this is acceptable (Appendix 2)

7.0 Lockdown Procedure

It is now possible to envisage circumstances where the school may wish to lock itself in, to secure staff and students from an outside threat. This circumstance is described as a ‘lockdown’.

If a lockdown is declared:

- A member of SLT will be advised to implement the lockdown via word-of-mouth / bell.
- The IMT will communicate via messaging when they are unable to meet
- The school will be advised that it is in ‘lockdown’ by word-of-mouth / bell
- All staff will remain in classrooms and keep students calm and away from windows /closing blinds if necessary
- All students in external PE lessons will be advised to return to their classrooms.

The lockdown will proceed in the following priority:

- The external gates of the school will be closed and locked ensuring no one can enter or leave the premises
The following doors will then be locked:
- Main building external doors / front entrances

Note: the alternative entrance to some schools can be accessed via car parks, controlled through the school offices.

Monitoring the Site Entrances:

Once the site is secure, staff should return to the building and monitor school entrances via CCTV (if installed), and discretely from the side windows in the school offices. The gates should only be opened by senior staff when visual confirmation of the presence of the Emergency Services can be confirmed.

Silent Evacuation

Notification of a silent evacuation would be made by word-of-mouth and would follow the fire evacuation procedure.

8.0 Business Recovery in the Event of a Loss of Buildings or site Space

9.1 General

Replacement of the buildings and facilities that have been damaged or made unavailable will be the responsibility of the DfE / through the Education Funding Agency's Risk Protection Arrangements (RPA) scheme. In the event of building unavailability, the school will be entitled to financial unavailability deductions to off-set the Unitary Charge Payments that will still be due for payment.

Temporary working facilities are the responsibility of the School and Academy Trust for which it holds insurance (see below).

9.2 Insurance

The schools hold insurance in line with the RPA to cover the cost of temporary accommodation.

9.3 Replacement Site Facilities

The size and scope of facilities required for the school will vary according to circumstance. In the first instance contact should be made with the ESFA and the RPA administration 03300 585566

The location of the temporary accommodation will be determined based on the space required and circumstances at the time. Two possible locations that have been identified for consideration should temporary accommodation / buildings need to be sited are:

- Playground for St Antony's
- Playground for St Edward's
- Playground for St Francis'
- Fields / Pitches on the St Helen's Site
- Playground for St Joachim's Site
- Playground for St Winefride's Site

Erecting additional buildings on current sites will always be the preferred solution.

9.0 Pandemic Threat / Mass Staff Unavailability

Loss of staff is considered a generic threat to operations. The spread of a virus capable of impacting on operational service delivery is now considered genuine and serious.

In the event of mass staff illness, the IMT will shut the school to students using the same procedures described above.

Subsequent to any closure the IMT should meet to discuss staffing capacity and re-organisation arrangements. In line with pandemic risk assessments and DfE guidance, the school should move to its online learning provision.

10.0 Other Threats

The following other threats have been considered:

- Phone and IT Communications Loss
- Finance Process Breakdown – payments to staff & suppliers fail
- Utilities / Energy Supply failure
- Service Delivery Loss of General Nature – Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust are unable to provide buildings or ICT support
- Key Supplier failure other than Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust Academy – Catering, transport
- Evacuation due to Nearby Incident
- Bad Weather prolonged
- Strikes
- Terrorist Attack or Threat

Links with other policies

Data Protection	Health & Safety	Fire Risk Assessment / Evacuation
Staff Handbooks	Whistle Blowing Policy	Conflict of Interest Policy
Anti-theft and Fraud	Confidentiality	Data Protection
Generic Risk Assessments	Critical Incident Plan	Risk Management Policy
Financial Regulations	Risk Management Register	Risk Protection Arrangements
Grievance Discipline & Capability Procedures		Pandemic Risk Assessments
School Cyber Response Plan		

Appendix 1. Recovery Action Plans

Operational Threat	Steps to Restore Normal Working	Action by Whom	Comments/Notes
Phone and ICT Communications Loss	1. Contact Telephone maintenance Company and arrange alternative contact such as mobile phones	School Business Manager	
Finance Process Breakdown – payments to staff & suppliers fail	1. Referral to Trust Finance Staff, 2. Inform Board of directors 3. Seek Advice from Bankers, Payroll provider, Auditors, Accountants 4. Contact LA/ EFA for emergency funds 5. Arrange emergency payment to supplier	Headteacher CSEL CFO CSEL CFO	
Utilities / Energy Supply failure	1. Consider short term school closure 2. Contact Utility company for advice on time scales 3. Arrange alternate Emergency supply if water 4. Liaise with contractors over responsibility for repair 5. If school responsibility contact insurers if this is due to an insured incident or arrange repair	CSEL & HT School Business Manager / Facilities Manager / HT /CEO	
Building Loss – partial or complete (Fire, Flood etc.)	1. Contact insurers for immediate advice and permission to carry out emergency works 2. Assess timescales of likely repair 3. Arrange temporary on or off site accommodation dependent upon the extent of damage and timescales for repair	Headteacher/ School Business Managers/ Facilities Manager / Trust Business Manager / CSEL	
Building Denial leading to short term lack of access	1. Use text message system to inform parents of emergency closure 2. Assess likely timescale to return to normal. 3. Assess the need for alternative accommodation or off site education	Headteacher / School Business Manager/ Facilities Manager/ Headteacher/CSEL	
Key Supplier Failure e.g. Catering, ICT	1. Assess timeframe with supplier 2. Arrange alternative short term supply 3. If longer term arrange alternative supply contract	Headteacher School Business Manager CFO	

Evacuation due to Nearby Incident	1. Liaise with emergency services to assess situation and timescales	Headteacher / School Business Manager / IT Team	
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	2. Use text/ web site to maintain communication with parents following initial evacuation and release of students to parents 3. Liaise with emergency services for advice on safe return of pupils and communicate to parents		
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Lockdown due to Nearby Incident	1. Liaise with emergency services before contacting parents 2. Act on the advice of emergency services and only cancel lockdown on their instructions 3. Once incident is complete, SLT will meet to discuss whether there is a need for children to go home 4. Parents will be contacted by text / telephone when it is safe and if they need to take children home. 5. A letter explaining the incident and the school's response will be sent home as soon as practically possible after the incident has completed. Use the email system for quick distribution	Headteacher Headteacher Headteacher SLT/CSEL School Business Manager Headteacher	
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Fire	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liaise with the fire service on when it is safe to enter the building 2. Initial assessment of extent of damage to inform & plan 3. Contact insurers to arrange for inspection, temporary accommodation and repair 4. Contact EFA /Insurers for emergency funds if necessary 5. Liaise with fire services on cause of fire to prevent reoccurrence 6. Establish a team to plan and deal with the return to normal 	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>Headteacher / facilities manager Facilities Manager / CFO</p> <p>CSEL Headteacher</p> <p>CSEL/Headteacher</p>	
Bad Weather prolonged	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use email / text messages to maintain communication with parents 2. Maintain contact with staff using text / telephone 3. Investigate the possibility of providing resources for children to study at home using ICT if practicable. 4. Use web site /text messages to inform pupils or reoccupation 	<p>School Business Manager</p> <p>School Business Manager Headteacher</p> <p>School Business Manager/IT Team</p>	
Strikes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk to staff to assess how many staff are likely to strike so that partial / full closure can be considered 2. Contact Trust for trust wide procedure 3. Inform parents of affected children by letter, text, email 	<p>Headteacher Headteacher</p> <p>School Business Manager</p>	
Terrorist Attack or Threat	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liaise with emergency services and act on their advice 2. Maintain communication with parents through email /text / phone / letter 3. Arrange support on return to school for staff and children 	<p>Headteacher / CSEL</p> <p>School Business Manager</p> <p>Headteacher</p>	

In the event of a major incident on site requiring the school to be closed, pupils will assemble at the primary assembly points. If these are not usable, staff will escort pupils to the secondary assembly points.

Primary and secondary assembly points are identified within each schools' fire evaluation plan.

Appendix 2

Our Lady of Grace Academy Trust Schools - Immediate and Off-Site Places of Safety

School Name	Primary Assembly Points	Secondary Assembly Points
St Edward's Catholic Primary School	School Playground	Our Lady of Compassion
St Helen's Catholic Primary School	School Playground	Hermit Park Ornamental Garden
St Joachim's Catholic Primary School	School Playground	Royal Docks Community School
St Antony's Catholic Primary School	School Playground	St. Antony's Church Hall
St Winefride's Catholic Primary School	School Playground	Little Ilford School
St Francis' Catholic Primary School	KS2 playground assembly points	TBC