



## Business Continuity Plan

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## 1.0 Statement of Intent

The Together Learning Trust (TLT) is committed to protecting the welfare of our entire Trust community and, as such, understands that clear and effective procedures need to be in place to outline the Trust's response in a variety of situations. The reputation of the Trust and individual academies within it are of paramount importance, and as such any decisions to close one or more academies, or other actions taken to protect students and staff will always be made with the welfare and safety of everyone in mind.

## 2.0 Scope and Definitions

The Trust understands the importance of being proactive and preparing for potential critical incidents. As it is not possible or desirable to write a response for every possible disruption, the effect can generally be summarised as:

- An inability to carry out daily and / or critical activities.
- Loss of life or serious injury to staff, pupils or members of the academy community / public
- Serious damage to, or loss of, part of a building / the full building or access to a building
- Adverse publicity and / or reputational impacts
- Loss or breach of ICT systems and / or data
- Loss or shortage of staff
- Loss of critical supplier or services

***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 Academy Business Continuity and Critical Incident Policy and Procedures

All TLT academies should have their own specific Business Continuity and Critical Incident Policy and Procedures. Each academy must ensure that their business continuity planning is informed by an assessment of the critical activities in order to identify key risks specific to its operation and the safety of its staff, pupils and visitors.

## 4.0 Strategy

The strategy used to deal with any critical incident will be guided by a risk-based approach as detailed below.

### 4.1 Minor

These are events or circumstances that the local academy can deal with using its procedures which does not affect the academy or Trust adversely or prevent it from carrying out its day-to-day activities. Headteacher / SLT will be notified and the incident monitored locally with possible activation of the local Business Continuity Plan.

### 4.2 Significant

These are events or circumstances that cause or threaten disruption to the academy on such a scale that it prevents the academy from carrying out its day-to-day activities. These incidents would typically require Trust support. The local Business Continuity Plan is likely to be activated partially or in full and notification must be made to a member of the Trust Leadership Team.

### 4.3 Major

These are events or circumstances that disrupt the whole academy and possibly the local community. An initial assessment by the Headteacher will establish if the incident is deemed major and activate the local Business Continuity Plan. The CEO must be notified and an Incident Management Team established under their direction.

#### **4.4 Crisis**

A crisis would typically be an event that impacts multiple academies within the Trust or has the potential to threaten the future operation of the Trust. An Incident Management Team (IMT) will be established at the declaration of a crisis to assist in managing the response. The membership of the IMT may vary different skills will be required depending on the nature of the incident, but will always be established and chaired by the CEO.

### **5.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **5.1 Trust Expectations**

- All staff and pupils will be familiar with the academy procedures for critical incidents so they can respond quickly.
- Identified staff will be familiar with responsibilities for initial response, business continuity and recovery procedures.
- Leaders in the Trust will be prepared to lend support to any TLT academy during and after a critical incident.
- All staff monitor and support the emotional wellbeing of the immediate and broader community during and after a critical incident, being attentive to ongoing difficulties, particularly amongst those directly affected, reporting any concerns to the senior and/or executive leadership teams.

#### **5.2 Chief Executive Officer**

The CEO has overall responsibility for the implementation and coordination of the TLT Business Continuity Plan, including;

- Establishing and leadership of the Incident Management Team as required.
- Co-ordination of external response.
- Co-ordination of communication for all audiences.
- Ensuring systems are in place for maintaining and reviewing the Business Continuity Plan and reviewing individual academy emergency plans which will form part of this plan and associated procedures.

#### **5.3 Headteacher**

- Overall responsibility for the implementation and coordination of the academy business continuity plan and critical incident procedures.
- Initial assessment and communication to the CEO and Trust Leadership Team as required by the risk management strategies.
- Co-ordination of status reports/communication for the benefit of all audiences.
- Maintaining the academy policy and procedures in an up-to-date format. Whilst accountability is retained by the Headteacher, responsibility for maintaining the policy and procedures can be delegated to a nominated senior leader.

#### **5.4 Incident Management Team (IMT)**

Led by the CEO, the IMT will include the Headteacher and SLT members from the affected academies, the Trust Chief Financial Officer, the Trust Director of Operations and appropriate School / Central Function Leads as required. 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 CEO to restore critical activities as soon as possible and minimise any potential impact to the Trust and its academies.

## **6.0 Procedure for Closing an Academy**

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

### **6.1 Closure in advance of a school day**

Subject to 6 above, schools should follow their emergency plan procedure.

### **6.2 Closure during a school day**

Subject to 6 above, schools should follow their emergency plan procedure.

### **6.3 Immediate places of safety**

In the event of a major incident on site requiring the school to be evacuated and/or closed, students will assemble at the primary assembly points or will be escorted to a pre agreed off site place of safety as per the emergency plan

## **7.0 Emergency Lockdown**

It is 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'. Each School has a lockdown procedure in its emergency plan which should be followed. As soon as it is reasonably practicable the School should contact the CEO to inform them of the nature of the threat.

## **8.0 Pandemic / Mass Staff Unavailability**

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

In the event of mass staff illness, the Trust will initially shut the academy to students using the same procedures as described in the emergency plan. The Trust will then support schools in ensuring home and/or alternative learning is available to pupils.

## **9.0 Business Recovery – Loss of Buildings or Site**

### **9.1 General**

Replacement of the buildings and facilities that have been damaged or made unavailable will be the responsibility of the School Trust and its insurers.

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

### **9.2 Insurance**

The schools hold insurance under Zurich Municipal and the PFI school contract (for the secondary PFI schools) to cover the reinstatement of Buildings and Temporary Accommodation.

### **9.3 Replacement 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 Chief Financial Officer to contact the Trust insurers or where relevant the Secondary School Business Managers to contact the PFI Provider.

## **10.0 Cyber Security and Data Protection**

TLT has policies and procedures in place to mitigate the risk of cyber security breaches and/or the loss / misuse of personal data. The Trust has appointed a Data Protection Officer (DPO) and annual audits are carried out to ensure systems are robust. The Trust and its schools employ well qualified staff to oversee its ICT networks and where appropriate engages industry professionals to further support this work. In the event of a data breach, schools will follow the processes outlined in the Data Protection Policy and ensure the DPO and ICO are informed as required. To guard against the potential loss of data and information, schools implement a backup system which would enable data and information to be recovered in the event of a loss / breach. Checks are made of external companies processing personal data related to the Trust prior to any data or information being shared.

## **11.0 Other Information**

### **11.1 Review and Training**

This document should be reviewed annually by the Trust Leadership Team and the Trust Board. Training needs will be reviewed and monitored in line with policy and risk assessment requirements.

### **11.2 Associated Documents**

- School Business Continuity Plans and Critical Incident / Emergency Procedures.
- School Fire Evacuation Plans.
- TLT Health and Safety Policy.
- TLT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- TLT Data Protection Policy
- School Risk Assessments (including fire risk assessment).

### **11.3 Emergency Contact Information**

An emergency protocol pack is kept at reception in the School offices and includes:

- A copy of this plan.
- Copies of school emergency plans and procedures.
- Details of how to remotely access the school MIS system which includes contact information for staff and students (on roll).

## Appendix 1 – Recovery Action Plan Template

Operational Threat	Steps to Restore Normal Working	Action by Whom	Comments/Notes
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Telephone maintenance company and arrange alternative contact such as mobile phones.</li> <li>Consider temporarily moving to paper based operations where possible.</li> </ol>	<p>School Business Manager</p> <p>SBM / Headteacher</p>	
Cyber Security Threat / Data Breach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review implications and isolate affected area if possible.</li> <li>Limit access to affected systems, consider shutting down systems if threat significant.</li> <li>Liaise with DPO regarding next steps as required.</li> <li>Consider temporarily moving to paper based operations where possible and record all actions.</li> <li>Inform Insurers</li> </ol>	<p>IT Manager / SBM</p> <p>IT Manager / SBM / Headteacher</p> <p>SBM / Headteacher</p> <p>SBM / SLT / Headteacher</p> <p>CFO</p>	
Finance Process Breakdown – payments to staff & suppliers fail	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referral to Trust Finance Staff</li> <li>Inform Board of Trustees</li> <li>Seek Advice from Bankers, Payroll provider, Auditors, Accountants</li> <li>Contact LA/ ESFA for emergency funds</li> <li>Arrange emergency payment to supplier</li> </ol>	<p>School Business Manager</p> <p>Headteacher</p> <p>CFO/CEO</p> <p>SBM / CFO</p> <p>SBM / CFO</p>	
Utilities / Energy Supply failure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider short term school closure</li> <li>Contact Utility company for advice on time scales</li> <li>Arrange alternate Emergency supply if water</li> <li>Liaise with contractors over responsibility for repair</li> <li>If school responsibility contact insurers if this is due to an insured incident or arrange repair</li> </ol>	<p>Headteacher / CEO</p> <p>SBM / Facilities Manager</p> <p>SBM / CFO</p> <p>SBM / CFO / Trust Ops Director</p> <p>SBM . CFO</p>	
Building Loss – partial or complete (Fire, Flood etc.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact insurers for immediate advice and permission to carry out emergency works</li> <li>Assess timescales of likely repair</li> <li>Arrange temporary on or off site accommodation dependent upon the extent of damage and timescales for repair</li> </ol>	<p>SBM / CFO</p> <p>SBM / FM / Trust Ops Director</p> <p>Headteacher/ School Business Manager / Facilities Manager / CFO / Trust Ops Director / CEO</p>	

Building Denial leading to short term lack of access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use text message system to inform parents of emergency closure</li> <li>2. Assess likely timescale to return to normal.</li> <li>3. Assess the need for alternative accommodation or off site education</li> </ol>	<p>Headteacher / SBM</p> <p>SBM / Facilities Manager/ Head Headteacher/ School Business Manager / Facilities Manager / CFO / Trust Ops Director / CEO</p>	
Key Supplier Failure e.g. Catering, ICT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess timeframe with supplier</li> <li>2. Arrange alternative short term supply</li> <li>3. If longer term arrange alternative supply contract</li> </ol>	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>School Business Manager</p> <p>CFO</p>	
Evacuation due to Nearby Incident	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with emergency services to assess situation and timescales</li> <li>2. Use text/ web site to maintain communication with parents following initial evacuation and release of students to parents</li> <li>3. Liaise with emergency services for advice on safe return of pupils and communicate to parents</li> </ol>	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>School Business Manager</p> <p>Headteacher</p>	
Lockdown due to Nearby Incident	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with emergency services before contacting parents</li> <li>2. Act on the advice of emergency services and only cancel lockdown on their instructions</li> <li>3. Once incident is complete, SLT will meet to discuss whether there is a need for children to go home</li> <li>4. Parents will be contacted by text / telephone when it is safe and if they need to take children home.</li> <li>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</li> </ol>	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>Headteacher / CEO</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>School Business Manager</p> <p>Headteacher</p>	
Fire	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with the fire service on when it is safe to enter the building</li> <li>2. Initial assessment of extent of damage to inform &amp; plan</li> <li>3. Contact insurers to arrange for inspection, temporary accommodation and repair</li> <li>4. Contact ESFA /Insurers for emergency funds if necessary</li> <li>5. Liaise with fire services on cause of fire to prevent</li> </ol>	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>Headteacher / SLT / FM</p> <p>Facilities Manager / SBM / CFO</p> <p>CFO</p> <p>Facilities Manager / SBM</p>	



	reoccurrence 6. Establish a team to plan and deal with the return to normal	CEO	
Bad Weather prolonged	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use email / text messages to maintain communication with parents</li> <li>2. Maintain contact with staff using text / telephone</li> <li>3. Ensure home learning is available for pupils.</li> <li>4. Use web site /text messages to inform pupils or reoccupation</li> </ol>	<p>School Business Manager</p> <p>School Business Manager Headteacher School Business Manager</p>	
Strikes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Talk to staff to assess how many staff are likely to strike so that partial / full closure can be considered</li> <li>2. Inform parents of affected children by letter, text, email</li> </ol>	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>School Business Manager</p>	
Terrorist Attack or Threat	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with emergency services and act on their advice</li> <li>2. Maintain communication with parents through email /text / phone / letter</li> <li>3. Arrange support on return to school for staff and children</li> </ol>	<p>Headteacher / CEO</p> <p>School Business Manager</p> <p>Headteacher</p>	