

Business Continuity Strategy

Category:	Trust-wide Policy
Authorised By:	Board of Trustees
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Version:	1
Status:	Ratified
Issue Date:	January 2020
Next Review Date:	January 2023

Version Control

<u>Ver.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1	January 2020	Strategy written to set the framework and to complement the schools' Business Continuity Plans and the BC arrangements across the Trust.

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1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to define how the Eden Academy Trust (the Trust) will ensure that all conditions for the continuation and resumption of teaching and learning activities in the case of disaster or other disruptive incident are met. It underpins the Business Continuity Plans for each of the Trust's schools.

The Board of Trustees (the Board) own this strategy and delegate activities through Cabinet, Heads and other senior leaders as well as other designated staff in the Trust's schools and central team as outlined in the principles (section 2), organisation and control (section 3), appendix and the individual school plans.

2. Principles

The strategy, supported by the individual school plans, is designed to achieve the following strategic objectives:

- To safeguard the safety and welfare of pupils, 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 Trust;
- To return the Trust or the individual school to normal operations.

The Trust's overarching business continuity strategy is developed to harness the delegated decision-making authority of the 3-tier structure of organisation and control as indicated in section 3.

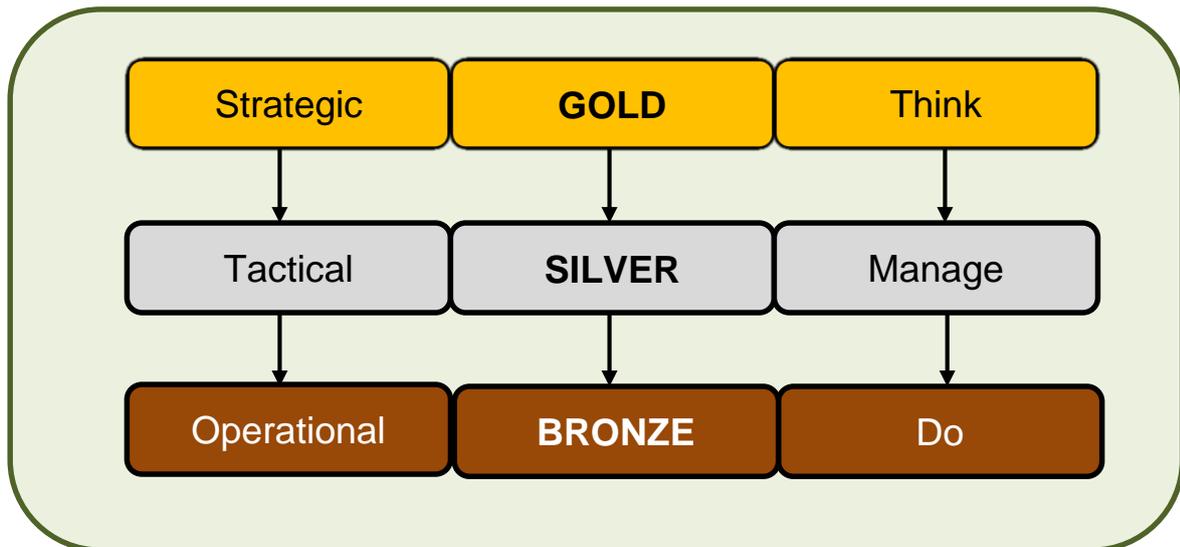
Overall accountability resides with the Board with the management of the incident delegated through a Strategic Leadership Team to the Head of the school impacted. Where the incident affects more than one of the Trust's schools, tactical management of the incident (and the associated role of Business Continuity Manager) may be transferred to the CEO or another cabinet member as appropriate.

3. Organisation and Control

The 3-tier structure of organisation and control works on the principle of Gold, Silver and Bronze.

These levels tend to refer to the Strategic, Tactical and Operational responses which can, in turn, be considered as 'Think', 'Manage' and 'Do'.

This is shown in the diagram below.



The *Strategic Thinking* is undertaken by the a Strategic Leadership Team which comprises the CEO, Chair of the Board of Trustees and other members of the Cabinet for the most serious incidents within the Trust, perhaps the complete loss of a site; or where there are significant casualties or the serious injury/death of a pupil, staff member or visitor. The Strategic Leadership Team will take advice or soundings from other Trustees and Members as appropriate. This is very much about thinking for the wider Trust.

The *Tactical Management* would rest with the Head¹ and school leadership teams. The Head would assume the role of Business Continuity Manager. They would work very closely with a number of colleagues who provide support for key areas, perhaps most importantly, at least immediately, the Site Manager acting

¹ For the purposes of this document, Head refers to Headteacher or Head of School as appropriate

as the immediate, local Incident Manager providing the on-the-ground management of the incident, and a Deputy or Assistant Head leading on the people aspects. They would also be supported in terms of communications by a central resource.

The Head, should they need it, has access to additional resources to support them. These provide the resource for the *Operational Doing*. These are likely to encompass such activities as:

- Administration;
- People Support;
- Premises;
- Teaching & Learning;
- Finance, Operations & ICT;
- Compliance.

Each area will have a designated lead. Their role is to provide the resource to deal with the many and varied tasks required to respond to and manage an incident and to restore both the infrastructure and everyday operations. Their role is to lead the activities, with designated colleagues where appropriate thus removing the operational delivery from the BCM(Head) so that they can focus on wider issues. For example, the teaching and learning lead would be responsible for restoring/continuing the delivery of teaching & learning as/when appropriate, organising what can be delivered, by whom, how and when and then making sure it happens.

3.1. Providing financial resources

The central finance team will ensure that appropriate financial resources are available to support the school in responding to the incident and restoring operations.

A separate ledger code will be established to track additional expenditure which may be recoverable from our insurers.

4. Incident Response Structure

The responsibility for invoking the incident response arrangements lies with the Head or, if not available, the next designated senior member of staff.

Upon invocation of the arrangements and associated Business Continuity Plan (BCP), the Head, or their nominated deputy, will form a Business Continuity Management Team (BCMT).

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

- pupils;
- staff;
- visitors to the Academy;
- building, contents and other assets;
- the Academy's ability to provide education; and
- the Academy's reputation.

The roles and responsibilities of all those involved are set out in Appendix 1 and the individual school plans.

It is important to remember that the focus at this stage is on *what has happened*, the *impact* and the *implications*. Consideration of *why* it occurred are for later.

5. Resource Strategy

This strategy applies to all the Trust's schools. As outlined above, the Board owns strategy and each school will have its own BCP, based on the same model.

5.1. Incident control centres

In the event of a serious incident and invocation of the BCP, an incident control centre will be established at the school in question where the BCMT will be located. Where this is not possible, the BCMT will relocate to alternative location. These will be identified and documented in the school plans.

5.2. Support activity resourcing

Each of the main support roles will have an identified lead, detailed in each school plan along with a designated alternate. The individual school plans should also identify those staff who have been identified to support those activities in the event of a plan invocation.

Where it is obvious during the initial phase that the incident, that everyone has been accounted for, there will be no further teaching and learning that day and the children have been sent home, consideration should be given to whether staff are required to support one of these teams before sending them home. Once released, it will be difficult to contact them again until at least the following day.

6. Communications Strategy

The Trust will have a Crisis Communications Plan to supplement this strategy and the individual school BCPs. This sets out the principles for communicating during an incident that affects Eden pupils, staff and/or sites.

In the event of an incident, internal and external communications will be led, managed and co-ordinated by the Marketing and Communications Manager, in consultation with the BCMT and Strategic Leadership Team.

6.1. Own the situation and own how it is presented

In the event of a serious incident requiring invocation of the BCP, the Trust has a duty to communicate with internal and external audiences in a timely, accurate, frequent, clear and coordinated way. A negative issue or event will become public knowledge as soon as it breaks, especially over social media, and Trust's long-term reputation will depend on how we are seen to manage the situation.

We must make sure that we are communicating as quickly as possible so that ours is the dominant voice in how the story of the incident is told.

6.2. Basic rules of communication during an emergency

- Stick to the script - don't speculate, repeat rumours or say anything you don't know to be the case;

- Keep current – update as soon as we have confirmed information or agreed advice;
- Be human – don't use jargon, show we care about those affected and are grateful to those working to manage the situation;
- Do not confirm fatalities or injuries until police have released the information – even if it is circulating on the web/social media;
- Treat all communications as external – internal messages will leak.

6.3. Drafting and approving communications

The Communications team will be responsible for drafting internal and external communications in conjunction with the BCM who will have the most up to date understanding of the current position. The draft communications will then be approved by the Strategic Leadership Team prior to be issued.

7. Distribution of Plans

To make the plans easier to navigate, all school plans will follow the same format and as will all plan appendices (team plans).

Those involved in the management and recovery process should only be issued with the relevant plan sections as set out in Appendix B:

The appendices for the Communications team, Strategic Leadership Team, Finance & ICT team and Compliance will be generic for all schools so will not need all 6(7) versions but should include all relevant contact details.

8. Management and Maintenance of the Strategy and Business Continuity Plans

The strategy will be reviewed every three years, or if there is a significant change in the structure of the Trust in the interim.

The Head will ensure that their school's BCP is maintained and that the assignment of responsibilities and that contact information is up to date. In addition, they will formally review their plans on an annual basis or when there is

a significant change in the structure of the school or its senior leadership team.
Any changes will be notified to the Governance and Policy Officer.

9. Training and Testing

All staff with a designated lead role in the plans should receive appropriate training, both in the implementation of this strategy, the operation of the supporting BCPs and in basis incident management techniques. This should include an appropriate desktop exercise.

10. Reviewing incidents

Following all invocations of a BCP, a full review will be undertaken of the incident including why it happened, how the school/Trust responded, what lessons can be identified and what changes should be made to the arrangements and plans.

Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities

A. Business Continuity Manager

Role holder: Headteacher/Head of School or designated alternate

Supported by: Admin Team and other role holders

Responsibilities:

- Decide whether to invoke the Business Continuity Plan
- Convene and chair the BCMT
- Manage the response, continuity and recovery phases
- Liaise with Chair of Local Advisory Board
- Allocate resources - human, physical and financial
- Agree communications with the Communications Team for approval by the Cabinet
- Agree key information and instructions to be given to pupils and by staff.

B. Incident Manager

Role holder: Site Manager or designated alternate

Responsibilities:

- Meet and liaise with emergency services
- Undertake the actions set out in the Incident Manager action checklist
- Liaise and share information with the BCM
- Instigate and manage incident, continuity and recovery actions at the incident site as instructed by the emergency services and the BCMT
- Co-ordinate the damage assessment function involving the premises and ICT teams

C. People Support

Team Lead: Deputy or Assistant Head

Responsibilities:

- Ensure all pupils, staff and visitors are safe and accounted for.

- Marshalling of pupils, staff and visitors at the evacuation rendezvous point in conjunction with fire marshals.
- Arranging for transfer of everyone to place of safety.
- Arrange for warm, dry shelter (refuge) for everyone in the short term.
- Liaise with first aiders in relation to injuries, casualties and fatalities and collate information for BCMT.
- Liaise with fire marshals and other staff in relation to pupils/staff/visitors unaccounted for and collate information for BCMT.
- Deal with immediate welfare matters e.g. distress, domestic responsibilities.
- Co-ordinate the sending home of pupils and immediate care of those whose parents/carers cannot be readily contacted.
- Collate information regarding casualties and status of pupils, staff and visitors for reporting to the BCMT.

D. Communications

Role holder: Communications Manager or designated alternate – interim arrangements with BCM

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Responsibilities:

- Drafting of all internal and external communications for approval and release by the Cabinet
- Updating of the website and social media

E. Academy Strategic Leadership Team

Role holder: Cabinet + Chair of Trustees

Supported by: CEO's PA and the Governance & Policy Officer

Responsibilities:

- Media management
- Liaison with the Board of Trustees and Members
- Stakeholder engagement
- Liaison with DfE

- Liaison with ESFA
- Liaison with Charities Commission
- Assessment of long-term and academy-wide implications

F. Finance, Operations & ICT

Role holder: Director of Finance & Operations

Supported by: Central finance team and ICT manager

This team will operate remotely from the BCMT location

Responsibilities:

- Establishing emergency procedures for cost control
- Providing funding and financial assistance to the BCMT and support teams
- Liaise with insurers and the premises team to arrange access to the affected site(s) for insurers and loss adjusters
- Review and arrange revised insurance cover
- Ensuring that the Trust can account for all costs which it is entitled to recover under the insurance policies
- Arrange for opening of alternative premises.
- Co-ordinate fitting out alternative premises with furniture and equipment.
- Organise retrieval and restore of data from back up tapes/systems

G. Teaching & Learning

Role holder: Deputy or Assistant Head

Supported by: Additional teaching and support staff as required

Responsibilities:

- Identifying priorities for the continuation and restoration of teaching and learning across the school/designated curriculum area(s), and implement these such that teaching & learning is restored in the most effective and efficient manner

- Identifying the priorities and resources required to deliver teaching & learning across the school/curriculum area(s) to inform development and maintenance of the plan
- Liaison with and support for the BCMT
- Implementing actions set out in the plan to deliver the continuity and restoration of teaching and learning

H. Premises

Role holder: Assistant Site Manager

Responsibilities:

- Site Security
- Authorising and managing access to the building(s)/area(s);
- Supervision of salvage operations including initial salvage of critical documents/equipment if this can be done safely
- Security and safeguarding of school assets.
- Liaison with neighbours
- Building and Office Services:
- Managing the reinstatement of the affected building(s)/area(s);
- Managing the cleaning of affected building(s)/area(s).
- Sourcing office equipment and supplies in conjunction with
- Support for transfer to alternative premises.

I. Compliance

Role Holder: Governance & Policy Officer

Responsibilities:

- Support for the BCMT on the invocation and application of the BCP
- Support for (Cabinet) the Strategic Leadership Team
- Co-ordination of the updating of the BCP and support plans
- Ensure external agencies (e.g. DfE, ESFA) are notified as appropriate

J. Admin Support to BCMT (and support teams where required)

Additional dedicated support may be required for support teams/activities, e.g.

People Support

Role holder: Office Manager or Senior Administrator + at least 1 further administrator

Responsibilities:

- Management of information to/from the BCMT (and Support Teams)
- Maintenance of Status Boards
- Maintenance of Decision Logs
- Maintenance of Action Logs
- Call screening
- Meeting management
- Management of grab bags
- Organisation of catering as required.

Appendix 2: Distribution of plans and plan sections

Role holder	Main plan	Appendices												
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Business Continuity Manager & alternate(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BCMT	✓	✓	✓	✓										✓
Incident Manager & alternates	✓	✓	✓		✓									✓
People Support Lead & alternate(s)	✓	✓	✓			✓								✓
Communications Team	✓	✓	✓				✓							✓
Strategic Leadership Team Lead & alternate(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strategic Leadership Team	✓	✓	✓					✓						✓
Finance and ICT team lead & alternate(s)	✓	✓	✓						✓					✓
Teaching and Learning team lead & alternate(s)	✓	✓	✓							✓				✓
Premises team lead & alternate(s)	✓	✓	✓								✓			✓
Compliance team lead	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Admin team lead & alternate(s)	✓	✓	✓										✓	✓

Appendices F (Comms), G (Strategic Leadership), H (Finance & ICT) and K (Compliance) are generic to all schools. They should include relevant contact details for all schools so the leads and teams will not require 7 individual copies.

Appendix F will also have a supplementary Crisis Communications Plan which incorporates draft communications.