



21/10/24

Review Date: 21 October 2025

Orchard Academy

www.orchard-academy.com

Business Continuity Arrangements

Statement of Intent

Orchard Academy recognizes that the safety of learners, staff members, and visitors in our online environment is paramount, although certain factors may be beyond our control. In the event of an emergency, staff members will take all reasonable actions to ensure the safety of all participants in our virtual classes and activities.

The procedures outlined in this policy aim to minimize disruptions to the online learning environment while ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff members, and visitors by responding to critical incidents as quickly and efficiently as possible. This strategy sets forth Orchard Academy's policy for planning and responding to major incidents that may affect the continuity of our online services and the safety of our staff, pupils, and stakeholders.

Orchard Academy will embed business continuity management within its culture, ensuring that all stakeholders—including partners and key suppliers—are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in maintaining business continuity.

While no planning can entirely prevent accidents and emergencies, we recognize that some can be mitigated through sensible precautionary measures. All staff are expected to be familiar with the routines and procedures for addressing emergencies. Regardless of the cause of an incident, its impacts can generally be summarized as:

- An inability to carry out daily and/or critical online learning activities
- Loss of life or serious injury to staff, learners, or any visitors
- Loss of access to online platforms or resources
- Loss or failure of ICT systems

- Shortage of staff
- Loss of critical suppliers or partners
- Adverse publicity and reputational impact

In the event of a critical incident, the priorities of the Academy's leadership will be to:

- Preserve life
- Minimise personal injury
- Safeguard the interests of all learners and staff
- Minimise property loss and return to normal operations as quickly as possible

Definitions

Emergency: Any event that causes, or has the potential to cause, injury, loss of life, damage to property, or significant disruption to online learning.

Disaster: An emergency that escalates to the point where normal online learning conditions are not expected to be restored for at least 24 hours.

Critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:

- The death of a pupil or staff member
- Serious incidents involving pupils or staff online or offline
- Violent intrusions into the online learning environment (e.g., cyber threats)
- Extensive damage to online resources
- A fire, flood, or other physical disruption affecting staff or resources
- Epidemics affecting learner participation
- Data breaches or significant failures of ICT systems

Legal Framework

This policy complies with all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- DfE (2015) 'Emergency planning and response'
- DfE (2019) 'School and college security'

This policy operates in conjunction with Orchard Academy's risk assessments and related policies, which may include:

- Health and Safety Policy

- Lockdown and Evacuation Risk Assessments
- Adverse Weather Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Emergency Procedures Risk Assessment

Roles and Responsibilities

Director

The Director is responsible for the implementation and coordination of the Business Continuity Plan (BCP), including:

- Ensuring the Academy contacts the relevant emergency services if incidents relate to the online platform or physical infrastructure.
- Coordinating status reports and communication for all stakeholders (including staff, learners, parents, local authorities, and the press).
- Keeping accurate records of critical incidents.
- Ensuring staff understand the school's critical incident management plan.
- Coordinating disaster recovery efforts with relevant members of the Central Team.
- Leading communications with parents, staff, and learners.
- Developing an Incident Management Team (IMT).

Incident Management Team (IMT)

The Director will appoint a team of staff members to form the school's critical incident management team. This team will be responsible for:

- Keeping parents informed about the situation.
- Deciding when and how to resume online classes.
- Organizing support for staff and learners affected by the incident.
- Cooperating with relevant authorities during investigations of critical incidents.
- Managing media interest and ensuring the appropriate attendance of school members at memorials.
- Maintaining written records of critical incidents and actions taken.

Staff

All staff members are required to cooperate with the IMT in support of the BCP. In the event of an incident requiring staff to work remotely, they should remain available during normal working hours. Staff must refrain from discussing any incident on social media.

Initial Action

- Immediate actions will be taken to safeguard learners and staff by using the relevant emergency procedures to alert all team members.
- The first adult on the scene will raise the alarm.
- Members of the IMT will assess the situation and gather initial information, which will be logged.
- The emergency services will be contacted with specific details about the situation.

Emergency Procedures

Closure during a School Day

Although closing the Academy is never a preferred option, it may be necessary. Procedures include:

- Closure authorised by the Director, allowing pupils with parental permission to leave classes.
- Notifications of closure will be made through the school website, text messages, and other communication channels.

Business Recovery

Insurance

Orchard Academy is insured through a private insurance scheme.

Pandemic Threat / Mass Staff Unavailability

In the event of mass staff illness, the IMT will follow guidance from the DfE and Public Health England and may shut the school to pupils, implementing the closure procedures outlined above.

Internal Communications

- Emergency contact details for learners and staff will be maintained in our cloud-based Management Information System (MIS) for remote access.
- The Director will ensure regular updates and communication with staff and families during a critical incident.
- Staff members will utilise mobile phones for communication and to relay key messages during emergencies.

After a Critical Incident

- Following a critical incident, Orchard Academy will focus on contacting those directly involved, informing the Management Committee and local authorities, and appropriately debriefing the school community.
- Support will be provided to staff and learners affected, including consultations with educational psychologists if necessary.

Handling Complaints

Orchard Academy acknowledges that critical incidents are sensitive matters. Complaints regarding the Academy's arrangements should be directed according to the Trust's Complaints Policy.

Other Threats

Other potential threats considered include:

- Loss of ICT communications
- Financial process breakdowns affecting staff and supplier payments
- Utilities or energy supply failures
- General service delivery losses

Approved by: Management Committee of Orchard Academy

Next Review Date: September 2025