

Business continuity framework

Business continuity policy: document provenance

Approver	Trust Board
Date of approval	June 2026
Policy owner	School and college trust leader, estates
Policy authors	School and college trust leaders Estates centre of excellence
Version	1.0
Date of next review	June 2028
Summary of changes in this review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A full review of this policy has completed along with related procedures to ensure all are fit for purpose.
Related policies and documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refer to section two for information about related policies and documents

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, the policy will be reviewed as per the review cycle. Should no substantive change be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

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1.0 Policy statement

- 1.1 Dixons Academies Trust (our trust) is committed to ensuring the safety, security, and continuity of education across all of our academies. As such, our trust understands that a clear and effective business continuity framework needs to be in place to outline our response in a variety of situations.

2.0 Scope and purpose

- 2.1 Business continuity is defined as the ability for our trust to continue providing safe education, safeguarding, and essential operations during disruption by coordinating central trust support with local academy decision-making to minimise impact on pupils, staff, and learning. It is about preparing for the unexpected so our trust can continue operating, protect students and staff, and minimise financial, operational and reputational damage.

- 2.2 The scope of this framework is:

- to set out the background and context regarding to business continuity and major incidents
- create awareness of the types of incidents which may occur
- establish roles and responsibilities of a gold and silver team
- determine how and when the major incident plan will be invoked
- summarise how lessons learned will be dealt with

- 2.3 A major incident is defined as an unplanned event which immediately puts part of our trust assets and activities at risk, for example a fire or power outage. It is defined as an event or events usually sudden, which involve experiencing significant disruption, to a level which potentially overwhelms normal activities and procedures and which is likely to have related consequences.

- 2.4 A major incident may occur at any time and cause significant loss with prolonged interruption to the business of our trust. Some examples of the types of incidents are noted below but this list is not intended to be exhaustive.

- **Loss of premises:** fire, bomb threat, adverse weather, intruder on the premises, structural damage
- **Loss of staff:** adverse weather, strike action, sickness and illness, inability to reach site
- **Loss of ICT systems:** cyber attack, internet outage, adverse weather, infrastructure failure, accidental damage, third-party service failures, electrical outage
- **Loss of other critical services:** gas leak, electrical outages, infrastructure damage, adverse weather, fire, fuel shortages, third-party supplier failures
- **Other events:** adverse publicity, loss of life or serious injury to staff, students or members of the academy community / public

- 2.5 This framework and associated procedures have been developed in accordance with relevant legislation, including but not limited to:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Protect Duty / Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 - Martyn's Law
- Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004 - UK Preparedness
- Academies Trust Handbook

- 2.6 This framework has been developed in accordance, and will be implemented alongside, the following other policies and procedures. This list is not intended as exhaustive.

- Adverse weather what to do
- Loss of connectivity what to do
- Infection control what to do
- Lockdown and evacuation policies
- Accident, incident and near miss reporting what to do



3.0 Roles and responsibilities

	Area	Members	Responsibilities
Gold team	Trust wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and college trust leaders: Lucy Bowman, Robyn Ellis, Tom Rennie, Clare Skelding, Jenny Thompson, Luke Sparkes Area subject specialist depending on incident type: estates, IT etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision making for activation of major incident plan. In overall strategic command of the event / situation / operation. Holds ultimate responsibility for the handling and outcome of the incident and sets the strategy for dealing with it. Command responsibility for the overall implementation of this procedure and ensuring that staff members are aware of their responsibilities. Open and continue to maintain, a log of all factual information received, actions taken, and the time of those events.
Silver team: Local decision making clusters	Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional advice links / school and college trust leaders Regional principals Regional estates and IT colleagues Relevant area subject specialist depending on incident type 	<p>Responsible for managing the tactical plan following approval by gold team.</p> <p>Command responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assume tactical command of the incident. Be located appropriately to exert their tactical command over the incident depending on the circumstances. <p>Specific responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise within each cluster team to co-ordinate regional or site specific response. Ensure our trust has the capacity to respond to unforeseen circumstances. Determine regional response and recovery strategy. Act as part of the leadership team to coordinate a response to an incident. Take lead responsibility for any regional and local decisions made during an incident. Maintain the welfare of all staff and students. Open and continue to maintain, a log of all factual information received, actions taken, and the time of those events.

4.0 Triggering the major incident plan

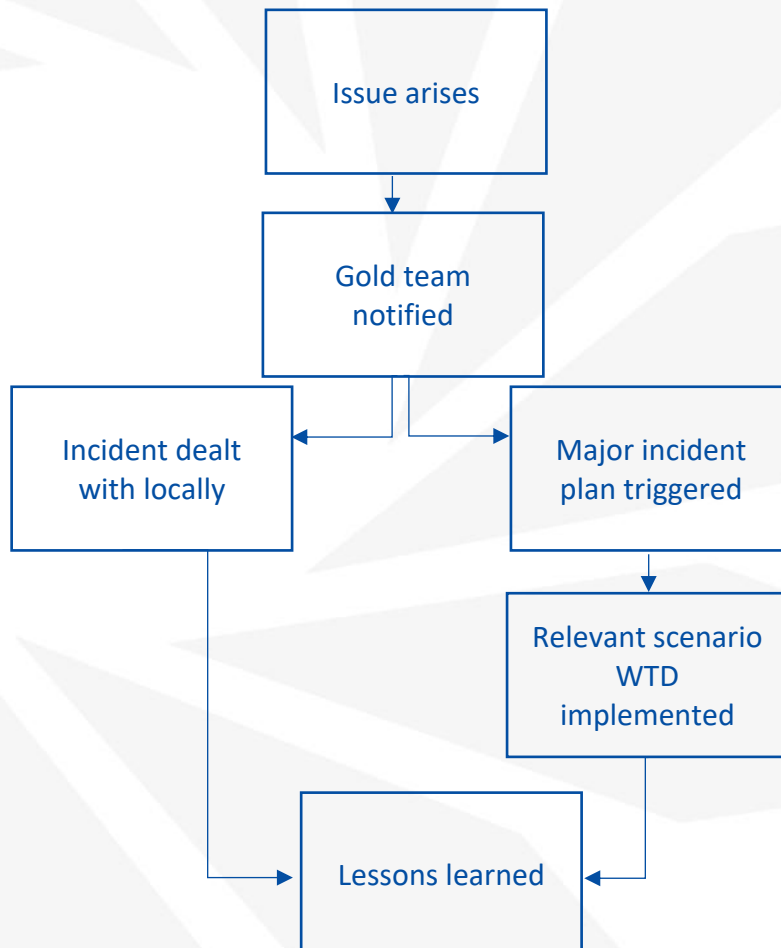
- 4.1 The scale and type of event will determine the level of response. A full assessment of the situation will be undertaken by the gold team who will then invoke the agreed level of the major incident plan if required. This may include advice from members of the local cluster teams and service specific-leads for example heads of centres of excellence.
- 4.2 It is not necessary for all members of the gold team to be present to assess the situation and invoke the major incident plan but there must be a minimum of one school and college trust leader and one relevant service area specialist.
- 4.3 Incidents may need to be triaged according to the risk ratings below to assess whether further resource should be brought into the planning, management and response.



Risk rating	Description of incident	Response
Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption affects a single class, year group or other function and can be managed through normal operational activities. • Disruption is not serious or widespread and is unlikely to affect trust operations to a significant degree. • No significant impact on staff or student safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local senior leadership team needs to be notified and the incident needs to be monitored. • Possible partial or full activation of the major incident plan.
Significant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption affects more than one year group, class or other function and remains self-contained. • The affected area has the capacity to manage the disruption – with or without support. • May require activation of specific resources e.g. ICT. • Significant impact on staff or students' safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leadership teams locally and / or regionally need to be notified to discuss whether to activate the major incident plan. • Escalation of the incident needs to be monitored.
Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption affects the whole trust and possibly the local community. • Major impact on student or staff safety. • Affected area does not have the capacity to manage the disruption. • Requires the activation of specific resources e.g. ICT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold team needs to be notified to discuss whether to activate the major incident plan. • Escalation of the incident needs to be monitored.

If the incident is an immediate threat such as a marauding terrorist attack, then the local academy major incident process should be activated and the gold team informed at the earliest opportunity.

5.0 Sequencing of procedures



6.0 Checklist of associated documentation

	Local or trust wide	Key stakeholders
Major incident what to do	Trust wide	Estates centre of excellence
Adverse weather what to do	Trust wide	Estates centre of excellence Health and safety champion Health and safety team Estates service delivery team
Loss of connectivity what to do	Trust wide	Estates centre of excellence IT centre of excellence
Lockdown and evacuation plan	Local	Principal Health and safety champion Health and safety team Estates service delivery team
Fire safety plan	Local	Principal Health and safety champion Health and safety team Estates service delivery team
Premises management documentation	Local	Principal Health and safety champion Health and safety team Estates service delivery team
Key contact information	Local	Principal

7.0 Monitoring and review

7.1 This framework will be reviewed and updated every two years unless otherwise required by relevant legislation.

