Crisis Management Policy

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PARK SCHOOL

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Aim of policy:

The purpose of this Crisis Management Policy is to ensure that **Park School and Little Crickets** is prepared to respond swiftly, safely and effectively to any crisis situation that may affect pupils, staff, visitors, parents, carers or the wider school community.

The policy sets out the principles that guide the School's response, the leadership structure that will be used during a crisis, and the expectations placed on all members of staff when an urgent, serious or potentially disruptive incident occurs.

The policy is intended to support calm, consistent and proportionate decision-making. In a crisis, leaders may need to make decisions quickly and sometimes with incomplete information. This document therefore provides a shared framework for identifying a crisis, protecting life and welfare and maintaining safeguarding oversight as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so.

The policy also explains how **Park School and Little Crickets** will draw upon wider organisational support where this is required, particularly in relation to strategic advice, external communications and media management. The School recognises that crisis situations can attract public attention and that inaccurate or premature communication can increase risk. For this reason, all external messaging must be coordinated, factual, authorised and sensitive to those affected.

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents and carers, volunteers, visitors, contractors and any other individuals on the School premises or participating in School activities. It applies during the normal school day, during trips or visits, during co-curricular activities and during any period in which the School has responsibility for pupils.

The policy covers crises including, but not limited to:

- Serious injury or death.
- Fire, flood or other major incident affecting the School site.
- A missing child or pupil unaccounted for during School-supervised activity.
- Lockdown situations or serious security concerns.
- Threats to the School, including terrorism, bomb threats or malicious communications.
- Serious safeguarding incidents requiring urgent protective action.
- Environmental, public health or utility-related emergencies.
- Cyber incidents affecting safety, safeguarding, communication or operational continuity.
- Reputational incidents requiring coordinated communication or media management.

Related Guidance and School Policies

This policy outlines the schools approach to the management of a crisis in terms of business continuity and critical functions, but is not exhaustive in its scope and should be used in conjunction with the following policies, statutory guidance and advice:

Policies:

- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
- *Accessibility Plan*
- *Attendance Policy*
- *Catering & Food Allergens Policy*
- *Curriculum Policy*
- *Educational Visits & Offsite Activities Policy*
- *Examinations Policy*
- *Fire Safety Policy*
- *Health & Safety Policy*
- *Infection Control & Illness Policy*
- *Lockdown Policy*
- *Missing Pupils Policy*
- *Parental Engagement & Communication Policy*
- *Prevent (Extremism & Radicalisation) Policy*
- *Remote Learning Policy*
- *Risk Assessment Policy*
- *Social Media Policy*
- *Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy*
- *Supervision of Pupils Policy*
- *Visitors, Contractors & Site Security Policy*

Statutory & Regulatory Guidance:

Health and Safety at Work. Act 1974 (1974)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (1999)
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (2005)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 (2013)

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- Childcare Act 2006 (2006)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (2015)
- Data Protection Act 2018 (2018)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (2014)
- The Independent School Standards: Guidance for Independent Schools (April 2026)
- Emergency Planning and Response for Education, Childcare and Children's Social Care Settings (Department for Education, May 2023)
- School and College Security (Department for Education, July 2026)
- Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Duties for Schools (Department for Education, April 2022)
- First Aid in Schools, Early Years and Further Education (Department for Education, February 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023; updated March 2024)
- Data Protection in Schools (Department for Education, July 2026)
- Providing Remote Education: Guidance for Schools (Department for Education, August 2024)

Definitions

Crisis

For the purpose of this policy, a crisis is any event that presents an immediate or significant risk to life, health, safety, property, safeguarding, welfare, operational continuity or the reputation of the School. A crisis is likely to require urgent action beyond routine day-to-day management and may require coordination between senior leaders, emergency services, external agencies, parents, carers, governors and group-level representatives.

A crisis may include an incident that is physically dangerous, emotionally distressing, operationally disruptive or reputationally sensitive. It may occur suddenly, such as a fire, missing pupil or serious injury, or it may develop over time, such as a public health emergency, prolonged utility failure, cyber incident or emerging safeguarding concern.

Critical Incident

A critical incident is a sudden, unexpected or serious event that is likely to cause distress, disruption or risk and which requires a specially coordinated response. A critical incident may form part of a wider crisis, but it may also be a contained event that still requires clear leadership, accurate communication and appropriate support for those affected.

Business Continuity Incident

A business continuity incident is an event that prevents, or has the potential to prevent, the School from delivering its core functions in the normal way. This may include loss of access to buildings, significant staff absence, failure of utilities or ICT systems, inability to provide catering or transport, or any event that compromises the School's ability to provide safe education and welfare arrangements.

Crisis Management Aims

The School's crisis management aims are designed to ensure that the immediate response, ongoing management and recovery phase remain focused on safety, safeguarding, continuity, communication and learning. The following aims should guide all decisions taken during a crisis:

- Protect life, health, safety and wellbeing.
- Maintain safeguarding oversight for all pupils, including vulnerable pupils.
- Provide clear leadership, accountability and decision-making.
- Mitigate further risk, harm or disruption.
- Maintain timely, accurate and coordinated communication with staff, pupils, parents, carers and relevant external agencies.
- Ensure continuity of education and care as far as reasonably practicable.
- Manage communications, including media engagement, responsibly, sensitively and lawfully.
- Preserve essential business functions and financial viability.
- Support recovery, reflection and return to normal operations.

These aims should be applied proportionately. In the earliest stage of a crisis, life safety and safeguarding will take precedence over educational, operational or reputational considerations. Once immediate risks have been controlled, the Crisis Management Team will consider continuity of education, welfare support, communication, business operations and recovery planning.

Crisis Management Team

The Crisis Management Team provides the leadership and coordination structure for the School's response. The team may be convened in full or in part depending on the nature, scale and urgency of the incident. Where an incident is serious, complex or likely to continue beyond the initial response period, the Crisis Management Team will also operate as the Business Continuity Management Team.

Core membership of the Crisis Management Team comprises:

- Headteacher, as Crisis Team Lead 1.
- [Business Manager], as Crisis Team Lead 2.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Director of Studies.
- Site Manager
- School Office or Communications Officer.
- Group-level representative, providing strategic advice, external communications support and media management.

Additional members may be asked to join the Crisis Management Team where their expertise or operational role is relevant to the incident. Additional membership may include:

- SENCo.
- Site staff.

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- First Aid Lead.
- School Nurse or medical lead.
- IT Manager.
- Catering Manager.
- Transport lead.
- Finance Director or Business Manager.
- Admissions lead

The Headteacher or Business Manager will determine the membership required for each incident. The Crisis Management Team should be small enough to make timely decisions but broad enough to ensure that safeguarding, premises, communication, welfare, education and operational issues are properly considered.

Roles & Responsibilities

Headteacher and Business Manager

The Headteacher and **Business Manager** are the School's Crisis Leads. They hold overall responsibility for command, coordination and decision-making during a crisis. At least one Crisis Lead should be available to provide direction, authorise key actions and ensure that the response remains aligned with the School's legal, safeguarding, regulatory and operational responsibilities.

The Crisis Leads will decide whether to activate the Crisis Management Team, determine the initial response strategy and ensure that emergency services, local authority teams or other external agencies are contacted where required. They will authorise communications to parents, carers, staff, pupils, governors and stakeholders, and will ensure that records are kept of significant decisions, actions, timescales and rationale.

The Crisis Leads will also work with group-level leadership on external communication, press and media responses. No external statement should be released without appropriate authorisation. Where immediate communication is required for safety reasons, the message must be factual, concise and limited to the information necessary to protect pupils, staff and others.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding remains central to all crisis management decisions. This includes identifying pupils who may be particularly vulnerable, assessing welfare needs, ensuring appropriate supervision and support, and maintaining contact with children's social care, police or other safeguarding partners where required.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that safeguarding records are maintained, that information sharing is lawful and proportionate, and that staff understand any safeguarding actions they must take during the incident. Where the incident involves a child protection concern, missing child, allegation, peer-on-peer abuse, online safety matter or welfare risk, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will advise the Crisis Leads on the appropriate safeguarding response.

Director of Studies

Director of Studies will provide operational leadership for pupils. During a crisis, they will support registration, roll calls, pupil supervision, parent communication where delegated, continuity of learning and pastoral follow-up. They will help ensure that pupils receive clear, age-appropriate information and that routines are restored as quickly as possible.

Director of Studies should also identify pupils who may need additional support because of age, SEND, medical need, family circumstances, emotional response or prior vulnerability. They will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCo and pastoral staff to ensure that welfare arrangements are coordinated.

Site Manager

The Site Manager is responsible for advising on site safety, access, evacuation, lockdown, utilities, emergency equipment, contractor support and premises recovery. During a site-related incident, this role is central to ensuring that affected areas are made safe, that emergency services have appropriate access and that leaders receive accurate information about the condition and usability of buildings and facilities.

The Site or Facilities Manager will support decisions about temporary relocation, alternative accommodation, emergency repairs, utilities, security, cleaning, catering access, transport and reinstatement works. Where necessary, they will liaise with contractors, insurers, local authority emergency planning teams and other premises-related partners.

Group-Level Support: Media and Strategic Communications

Forfar will provide strategic advice, crisis communications planning and support where an incident requires external communication, reputational management or media handling. This support is intended to ensure that messages are accurate, consistent, lawful and sensitive, and that senior leaders are not left to manage complex external scrutiny without appropriate advice.

Group-level communications support may include drafting or approving statements, preparing parent or stakeholder messages, advising on public messaging, acting as a point of contact for media where appropriate, and supporting the School in protecting its reputation and integrity. This support must be coordinated with the Headteacher and Business Manager so that operational decisions and communication decisions remain aligned.

All external media communications must be authorised by the Headteacher and the group-level Communications Lead, Vicki McEarlean. Staff must not speak to journalists, comment publicly, post on social media about the incident or provide information to external parties unless they have been specifically authorised to do so.

School Office and Communications Officer

The School Office or Communications Officer will support the practical dissemination of authorised messages to staff, parents, carers and other stakeholders. This may include sending emails, SMS

messages, website updates, parent portal messages or telephone communications, as directed by the Crisis Leads.

The School Office will maintain up-to-date emergency contact lists and will help direct external enquiries to the Headteacher, Business Manager or group communications team. Office staff should not speculate, provide informal updates or release information that has not been approved.

Crisis Procedures

Identification and Initial Response

Any member of staff who identifies a potential crisis must inform the Headteacher, Business Manager or most senior available leader immediately. Staff should not delay escalation because they are uncertain whether the threshold for a crisis has been met. Early reporting enables leaders to assess the situation and take proportionate action before risk increases.

The senior leader receiving the report will make an initial assessment of the nature and seriousness of the incident. This assessment should consider immediate danger, safeguarding risk, pupil and staff welfare, site safety, operational disruption, likely duration, communication needs and whether emergency services or external agencies are required. The Headteacher or Business Manager will decide whether to activate the Crisis Management Team.

Immediate Actions

The first priority in any crisis is to protect life, safety and welfare. The precise actions required will depend on the nature of the incident, but staff must follow established emergency procedures, including fire, evacuation, lockdown, first aid, missing child and safeguarding procedures where relevant.

Depending on the nature of the crisis, immediate actions may include:

- Calling emergency services where there is immediate risk to life, serious injury, fire, crime, security threat or other urgent danger.
- Following fire, evacuation, lockdown or invacuation procedures.
- Ensuring pupils, staff and visitors are moved to, or remain in, a place of safety.
- Completing registration, roll calls or headcounts as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Providing first aid and medical support.
- Establishing a safe command point for the Crisis Management Team.
- Securing affected areas and preventing unnecessary access.
- Beginning a written record of key facts, decisions, actions, times and communications.

Staff should remain calm, follow instructions and avoid speculation. In the early phase of a crisis, information may be incomplete or change quickly. All staff must therefore use agreed communication routes and avoid sharing unverified information with pupils, parents, carers or external parties.

Command Point and Record Keeping

Where the Crisis Management Team is activated, a command point will be established in a safe and accessible location. If the School site is inaccessible or unsuitable, the command point may operate remotely through Microsoft Teams or another approved communication platform.

The Crisis Management Team must maintain a clear incident log. This log should record the time of the incident, who reported it, actions taken, decisions made, communications issued, agencies contacted, pupils or staff affected, risks identified and follow-up actions required. Accurate record keeping is essential for safeguarding, accountability, insurance, regulatory reporting, learning review and any subsequent investigation.

Internal Communication

Internal communication must be clear, factual and coordinated. Staff should receive enough information to carry out their responsibilities safely, but information should be shared on a need-to-know basis where safeguarding, privacy, investigation or legal considerations apply.

Senior leaders will determine the most appropriate internal communication method, which may include direct briefing, email, telephone, radio, staff messaging systems, Microsoft Teams or in-person instruction. Staff must not rely on informal messages, rumours or social media for information about a crisis.

Communication with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will be informed as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so. The Crisis Management Team must balance the need for prompt reassurance with the need to avoid inaccurate, incomplete or premature communication. Messages should explain what has happened in factual terms, what immediate action the School has taken, what parents and carers need to do, and when they can expect further updates.

Approved communication channels may include:

- Email.
- SMS.
- Parent portal.
- School website.
- Telephone.
- Virtual briefing where appropriate.

Where a crisis affects only a specific group of pupils, communication may be targeted to those families first. Where an incident affects the whole School or has wider community implications, a broader communication may be required. Any communication involving safeguarding, serious injury, death, criminal investigation or reputational sensitivity must be authorised by the Headteacher and, where appropriate, group-level communications support.

Media Management and Social Media

All media contact will be handled by the group-level Communications Team in consultation with the Headteacher. Staff must direct all media enquiries to the Headteacher, Business Manager or

designated group communications lead. No unauthorised statement may be made verbally, in writing, online or through personal social media accounts.

Social media messaging must only be posted following approval by the Headteacher and group-level communications. This includes School accounts and any public-facing communication that refers to the incident. Staff should be reminded that personal posts, even if well-intentioned, may compromise safeguarding, confidentiality, accuracy, legal compliance or the dignity of those affected.

Liaison with External Agencies

The School will engage with external agencies whenever the nature of the incident requires specialist advice, emergency response, safeguarding intervention, regulatory notification or public protection support. Contact with external agencies should be coordinated by the Crisis Leads or delegated to the appropriate specialist lead.

Relevant external agencies may include:

- Police.
- Fire and Rescue Service.
- Ambulance Service.
- Local Authority Emergency Planning Teams.
- Children's Social Care.
- Public health authorities.
- Local Authority County Council Education and Prevent teams.
- Insurers, contractors or premises specialists.
- Regulators or inspectorates where notification is required.

The Crisis Management Team must ensure that any information shared with external agencies is accurate, necessary and proportionate. Where safeguarding is involved, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will advise on information sharing and agency liaison.

Post Incident Recovery

Once the immediate crisis has stabilised, the School will move into a recovery phase. Recovery is not simply the reopening of buildings or resumption of timetables. It includes emotional support, operational restoration, communication, educational recovery, safeguarding follow-up, governance assurance and learning from the incident.

The School will provide appropriate emotional and pastoral support to pupils and staff affected by the incident. This may include tutor support, counselling, staff briefings, signposting to external support, adjustments to routines, additional supervision or targeted support for individuals who have been particularly affected.

The Crisis Management Team will hold one or more debrief meetings to review the effectiveness of the response. The debrief should consider what happened, what went well, what could have been improved, whether procedures were followed, whether communication was effective, whether any policy changes are required and whether further training or exercises are needed.

Parents and carers will continue to receive updates until normal operations have been restored or until the specific matter has concluded. Where an incident has had reputational or community impact, the School will work with group-level leadership to restore confidence and ensure that longer-term communications are handled sensitively and consistently.

Training & Review

Crisis management training will be provided annually for members of the Crisis Management Team. Training should ensure that leaders understand their roles, escalation routes, communication protocols, safeguarding responsibilities, record-keeping expectations and business continuity arrangements.

All staff will receive regular briefings on relevant crisis procedures, including evacuation, lockdown, missing child, first aid, safeguarding escalation and communication expectations. Training should be practical and should help staff understand what they are expected to do in the first few minutes of an incident as well as how to support pupils calmly and safely.

This policy will be reviewed annually and following any major incident, near miss or significant disruption. Updates will be approved through the School's governance arrangements and communicated to staff. Where changes affect emergency procedures, staff must receive timely briefing or training.

Appendix A – Business Continuity Plan

1. Purpose

This Business Continuity Plan supports the **Park School and Little Crickets** Crisis Management Policy by setting out how the School will maintain essential educational, safeguarding, welfare, operational and financial functions during a significant disruption. Its purpose is to ensure that the School can continue to protect pupils, communicate effectively, preserve critical services and restore normal provision as quickly as reasonably practicable.

The plan recognises that a crisis may disrupt different parts of School life in different ways. Some incidents may affect only one building or system, while others may affect the whole site, staffing capacity or the School's ability to communicate. The plan therefore provides a flexible framework for prioritising essential functions, allocating resources and identifying alternative arrangements.

The primary objectives of this Business Continuity Plan are to:

- Protect pupils, staff, visitors and the wider School community.
- Maintain continuity of education as far as reasonably practicable.
- Maintain safeguarding and welfare arrangements.
- Protect the long-term financial viability of the School.
- Restore full operations as quickly as reasonably practicable.
- Maintain stakeholder confidence through clear and timely communication.

This plan should be activated by the Headteacher and/or Operations/Compliance Manger following consultation with the Crisis Management Team. Where immediate action is required, the the Headteacher and/or Operations/Compliance Manger may activate the plan before the full team has been convened.

2. Scope

This plan applies to incidents that significantly disrupt normal School operations or have the potential to do so. It may be activated for short-term disruption, such as a temporary utility failure, or for longer-term disruption, such as loss of teaching accommodation.

Incidents within the scope of this plan include, but are not limited to:

- Fire resulting in loss of teaching accommodation.
- Flooding or severe weather damage.
- Structural failure of buildings.
- Utility failure, including electricity, water, gas or telecommunications.
- Public health emergencies.
- Cyber incidents affecting operational systems.
- Significant staff shortages.
- Major site access restrictions.
- Terrorist incidents or major security events.
- Any event preventing normal educational delivery for more than one school day.

3. Business Continuity Priorities

The School's continuity priorities provide a hierarchy for decision-making. The priorities are not intended to prevent leaders from exercising professional judgement, but they ensure that the most important functions are protected first when time, staffing, premises or resources are limited.

- Priority 1: Life Safety and Safeguarding
    - The first priority is the protection of pupils, staff and visitors. Safeguarding oversight, medical support, welfare provision and emergency communication must be maintained from the outset of any disruption. No continuity arrangement should be implemented if it compromises safety or safeguarding.
- Priority 2: Continuity of Education
    - Once immediate safety and safeguarding needs have been addressed, the School will seek to maintain teaching and learning. Particular attention will be given to public examination courses, pupils with SEND, academic tracking, reporting and pupils who may be disadvantaged by disruption.
- Priority 3: Business Operations
    - The School will maintain critical business functions so that essential services can continue. These include payroll, financial management, ICT systems, parent communications, admissions, recruitment, data access, supplier management and governance reporting.
- Priority 4: Recovery and Restoration

- The final priority is the planned return to full operational capability. This may include restoration of facilities, long-term educational recovery, financial recovery, reputational management and a full lessons-learned review. Crisis Management and Business Continuity Structure

4. Crisis Management and Business Continuity Structure

The Crisis Management Team identified within the main policy will operate as the Business Continuity Management Team when continuity arrangements are required. This avoids duplication and ensures that strategic, safeguarding, educational, operational and communication decisions are coordinated through one command structure.

The team will determine:

- Which functions remain operational.
- Which functions require temporary relocation.
- Which functions can be delivered remotely.
- How available resources should be allocated.
- Which recovery priorities should be addressed first.
- What external support is required.
- What communication is required for staff, pupils, parents, carers, governors and external agencies.

During the initial response phase, the team will meet daily unless the nature of the incident requires more frequent meetings. As the incident stabilises, meeting frequency may reduce, but the team should remain active until normal operations have been restored or an agreed recovery structure is in place.

5. Educational Continuity Strategy

- **Phase 1: Immediate Response, 0 to 72 Hours**
  - Where buildings, systems or normal routines become unavailable, the School will act quickly to protect safety and establish temporary arrangements. Affected areas will be suspended from use until they have been assessed and declared safe. Safeguarding, welfare and communication will be prioritised before wider educational recovery decisions are made.
  - Immediate educational continuity actions may include:
    - Suspending use of affected areas.
    - Assessing structural or operational safety.
    - Prioritising safeguarding and welfare.
    - Establishing emergency communication channels.
    - Implementing temporary timetable arrangements.
    - Identifying pupils who require additional support.
    - Confirming staff availability and cover arrangements.
  - Learning may be delivered through approved digital or remote methods where face-to-face teaching is not possible. These may include Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, online learning platforms, pre-prepared digital resources, live lessons and recorded

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lessons. The School will seek to minimise disruption and maintain curriculum delivery from the earliest practical opportunity.

- **Phase 2: Hybrid Education Model**
    - Where significant facilities are lost but some on-site or local provision remains available, the School may implement a hybrid education model. This model may combine on-site teaching, alternative local facilities, remote learning and adjusted timetables. The precise model will depend on safety, staffing, transport, pupil age, examination requirements, SEND needs and the availability of suitable accommodation.
    - The School will seek access to appropriate local venues, including:
        - Community facilities.
        - St Andrews Church.
        - Sports facilities.
        - Partner educational venues.
        - Other suitable commercial premises.
    - Alternative facilities may be used for defined purposes, including:
        - Teaching.
        - Examinations.
        - Staff workspaces.
        - Parent meetings.
        - Pastoral provision.
        - Assemblies or briefings where appropriate.
    - Before any alternative venue is used, the School will consider safeguarding, supervision, accessibility, first aid, fire safety, transport, toilet and welfare facilities, data security and suitability for the age and needs of pupils. Where necessary, risk assessments will be completed or updated before pupils use the venue.
- **Phase 3: Temporary Accommodation**
- Where longer-term disruption is anticipated, the School will consider temporary accommodation. Temporary classrooms may be installed on the School site where feasible, and modular teaching accommodation will be prioritised for examination groups, core curriculum areas and pupils whose learning would be most significantly affected by prolonged disruption.
- Temporary office facilities may also be established for key operational functions, including safeguarding, administration, communication, finance and senior leadership. The School will work with insurers, contractors and local authorities to accelerate reinstatement works and to ensure that temporary arrangements are safe, suitable and proportionate.
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6. Remote Learning Preparedness

Drawing upon lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, the School will maintain readiness to transition rapidly to remote education where circumstances prevent normal on-site operations.

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Remote learning is not intended to replace in-person education where the School site remains safe and operational, but it provides an essential fallback when pupils cannot safely access School.

Remote learning preparedness measures include:

- Staff training in online teaching.
- Remote learning protocols.
- Cloud-based learning resources.
- Digital safeguarding arrangements.
- Online attendance monitoring.
- Remote pastoral support.
- Virtual assemblies and tutor sessions

The School will maintain the capability to transition to remote learning within 24 hours where circumstances require. During any period of remote learning, attendance, safeguarding, pupil engagement, SEND support and pastoral care must continue to be monitored.

7. Lost Learning Recovery Strategy

Where educational time is lost due to disruption, the School will assess the impact on curriculum coverage, pupil progress, public examination preparation and vulnerable learners. The response will be proportionate to the duration and seriousness of the disruption.

The School may consider:

- Extension of the school term.
- Additional teaching days.
- Curriculum recovery programmes.
- Holiday revision sessions.
- Extended academic support.
- Additional intervention sessions.
- Prioritised support for examination cohorts

The objective is to ensure that no pupil suffers material detriment to educational outcomes as a result of the disruption. Particular priority will be given to examination cohorts and pupils whose needs require additional planning or support.

8. Staffing Continuity

The School will identify critical staffing functions and ensure that each has appropriate contingency arrangements. Staffing continuity planning should consider leadership cover, safeguarding cover, teaching cover, first aid, site safety, ICT, finance, admissions and administration.

Critical staffing functions include:

- Senior Leadership Team.
- Safeguarding Team.

- Teaching staff.

- Estates and facilities.
- IT support.
- Finance team.
- Admissions team

In the event of staff shortages, the School will activate contingency arrangements. These may include cross-training, temporary staff, approved supply staff, use of retired staff where appropriate, and reprioritisation of duties to protect critical functions. Any staffing adjustment must preserve safeguarding, supervision and suitability requirements.

9. ICT and Data Continuity

ICT and data systems are essential to safeguarding, communication, teaching, administration and finance. The School will maintain appropriate arrangements to protect access to critical systems and to recover services following disruption, including cyber incidents.

The School will maintain:

- Cloud-based backups.
- Remote access capability.
- Cyber incident recovery procedures.
- Alternative communication systems.
- Secure data storage

Critical systems include:

- Management information system.
- Payroll system.
- Finance systems.
- Safeguarding records.
- Communication platforms

Recovery of safeguarding and pupil information systems will be prioritised because leaders must be able to access essential information about pupils, contacts, medical needs, attendance and welfare. Any cyber incident must be managed in accordance with relevant data protection, safeguarding and information security procedures.

11. Financial Continuity

Financial continuity is necessary to protect the viability of the School and to ensure that education, staffing and essential operations can continue during and after disruption. The Finance Director or [Business Manager] and Headteacher will work together to assess financial risk and maintain essential financial operations.

Priority will be given to:

- Payroll continuity.
- Fee collection processes.

- Insurance claims management.
- Cash flow forecasting.
- Supplier management.
- Admissions and pupil recruitment activities

The School will maintain business interruption insurance, activate insurer support immediately following major incidents, review expenditure priorities and preserve critical educational services. A financial recovery plan will be developed for any disruption expected to exceed four weeks.

11. Communications Strategy

Regular communication is central to effective crisis management and business continuity. Communication during a disruption should be accurate, timely, calm and consistent. It should provide reassurance without minimising risk and should explain what action the School is taking.

Regular communications may be provided to:

- Parents and carers.
- Pupils.
- Staff.
- Governors.
- Regulators.
- Insurers.
- Local authorities.
- Media, through authorised channels only

Communication methods may include:

- Email.
- SMS.
- Parent portal.
- School website.
- Social media.
- Virtual briefings

Updates will be issued regularly throughout the incident and recovery period. The frequency of updates will depend on the seriousness of the incident, the pace of change and the needs of stakeholders. Communication should be guided by accuracy, transparency, timeliness, reassurance and consistency.

12. Recovery and Return to Normal Operations

The School will return to normal operations through a planned and phased process. Reoccupation of facilities must not take place until relevant safety inspections have been completed and leaders are satisfied that premises, staffing, safeguarding, welfare and operational arrangements are suitable.

Recovery actions may include:

- Conducting phased reoccupation of facilities.
- Undertaking safety inspections.
- Reviewing educational recovery requirements.
- Supporting pupil and staff wellbeing.
- Reviewing financial impacts.
- Conducting a full lessons-learned review.

The Crisis Management Team will remain active until normal operations have been restored or until responsibility has been transferred to an agreed recovery group. Governors should receive appropriate assurance regarding safety, safeguarding, educational recovery, financial impact and lessons learned.

13. Testing and Review

This Business Continuity Plan will be reviewed annually and following any significant incident. It will be tested through desktop exercises and incorporated into Crisis Management Team training. A formal business continuity exercise should be conducted at least once every two years.

Testing should explore realistic scenarios, such as loss of teaching accommodation, cyber incident, significant staff absence, public health emergency or major utility failure. Findings from exercises should be recorded and used to improve the plan, update contact lists and refine staff training.

Appendix B – Critical Recovery Time Objectives

The following recovery time objectives provide target times for restoring critical functions. They are intended to guide prioritisation during disruption and should be applied flexibly according to the nature and severity of the incident.

Function	Target Recovery Time
Safeguarding operations	Immediate
Parent communications	Within 2 hours
Remote learning provision	Within 24 hours
Payroll systems	Within 48 hours
Core educational delivery	Within 48 hours
Temporary teaching accommodation plan	Within 14 days
Full educational capacity restoration	As soon as reasonably practicable

Appendix C – **Park School and Little Crickets** Critical Functions Matrix

The Critical Functions Matrix identifies the School functions that must be restored or maintained during disruption. It should be used by the Crisis Management Team to prioritise action, allocate responsibility and review whether minimum operational requirements are being met.

Recovery Priority Definitions

Priority	Recovery Time	Definition
Priority 1: Immediate	0 to 4 hours	Functions required to protect life, safety, safeguarding and operational command.
Priority 2: Urgent	Within 24 hours	Functions required to maintain education, welfare and communication.
Priority 3: Essential	Within 72 hours	Functions required to maintain business and operational continuity.
Priority 4: Recovery	Within 14 days	Functions required to restore normal service levels and strategic operations.

Park School and Little Crickets Critical Functions Matrix

Critical Function	Lead Responsibility	Minimum Operational Requirement	Priority	Recovery Time	Alternative Arrangements
Crisis Management Team	Headteacher / Ops Manager	Headteacher or Ops Manager plus DSL and Facilities Manager	P1	Immediate	Remote command centre / Teams
Safeguarding	DSL	DSL plus trained deputy	P1	Immediate	Remote safeguarding systems
Emergency Communications	Headteacher / Ops Manager	SLT member and Communications Officer	P1	1 hour	Email, SMS, website
Pupil Registration	Director of Studies	Tutors	P1	Immediate	MIS / manual registers
Medical Provision	DSL	First aiders	P1	Immediate	Temporary medical facility
ICT Infrastructure	IT Manager	IT support operational	P1	4 hours	Cloud systems
Teaching and Learning	Director of Studies	Teaching staff	P2	24 hours	Online and hybrid learning
EYFS Provision	Head of EYFS	EYFS team	P2	24 hours	Temporary accommodation

Critical Function	Lead Responsibility	Minimum Operational Requirement	Priority	Recovery Time	Alternative Arrangements
Prep School Provision	Director of Studies	Core teaching staff	P2	24 hours	Hybrid learning
SEND Provision	SENCo	SENCo and key support staff	P2	24 hours	Adapted online provision
Catering Services	Catering Manager	Reduced catering team	P2	24 hours	External catering
Transport	Site Manager	Transport provision	P2	24 hours	Extended routes
Payroll	Business Manager	Finance team	P3	48 hours	Cloud payroll
Admissions	Head of Admissions	Admissions team	P3	48 hours	Virtual admissions
Human Resources	HR Manager	SLT	P3	72 hours	Remote HR systems
Governance	Headteacher	Headteacher	P3	72 hours	Virtual meetings
Sports Programme	Directors of Sport	Sports staff	P4	7 days	Local facilities
School Events	DSL	All staff	P4	14 days	Alternative venues

Educational Recovery Locations

Educational recovery locations should be selected according to safety, suitability, safeguarding, accessibility, transport arrangements, supervision and the needs of pupils. The School site will remain the preferred location where it is safe and operational. Where this is not possible, temporary modular classrooms, local community facilities, church and village halls, partner educational establishments, hybrid learning or full online learning may be used.

Financial Continuity Priorities

Financial continuity priorities are designed to protect the School's ability to operate during disruption and to support recovery afterwards. The Finance Director and Business Manager will monitor payroll continuity, fee income protection, insurance claim activation, business interruption recovery, admissions and pupil recruitment continuity, cash flow management, supplier continuity and regulatory compliance.

The Finance Director and Business Manager will provide weekly continuity reports to the Headteacher and Governors during any major disruption. These reports should identify financial risks, mitigation actions, expenditure priorities, insurance progress and any decisions requiring governance oversight.

COVID-19 Learning and Operational Resilience

The School maintains operational resilience arrangements informed by the experience of COVID-19 and other significant disruptions. These arrangements may be deployed immediately where circumstances prevent normal on-site operations.

The School maintains the capability to:

- Deliver a full online timetable within 24 hours.
- Conduct parents' evenings virtually.
- Deliver assemblies, tutorials and pastoral support remotely.
- Operate admissions and recruitment virtually.
- Maintain safeguarding oversight remotely.
- Hold governor and leadership meetings remotely.
- Continue fee billing and collection remotely.
- Track pupil progress and attendance remotely.
- Deliver staff training and professional development remotely.

Review

This Critical Functions Matrix shall be reviewed annually alongside the Crisis Management Policy and Business Continuity Plan and following any major incident, near miss or significant disruption. The review should confirm whether recovery priorities remain appropriate, whether contact arrangements are current, whether alternative locations remain available and whether training or testing has identified any weaknesses that need to be addressed.

PARK SCHOOL