



**“I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness.”
John 10:10**

Business Continuity Plan

Policy reviewed by SLT:	<i>5/3/2018</i>
Next review:	<i>Spring 2021</i>
Signed (Headteacher):	<i>R. Kaye</i>
Statutory policy: <i>Yes/No</i> On school website: <i>Yes/No</i>	

SOMERSET MODEL BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN



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Version	1

SOMERSET VERSION CONTROL

VERSION NO.	DATE	BY WHOM	ACTION
2	February 2016	S Dorrall	New logo and contact details. Term MTPD replaced with Recovery Time Objective.
2.1	October 2016	S Dorrall	Addition of "Plan - Do - Check - Act" diagram. Risk Assessing your business section. Appendices C, D and E added.

For further guidance on Business Continuity Plans, please call:
Phil Povey (Civil Contingencies) 01823 356804 or
Steve Dorrall (Senior Business Support Officer) 01823 355953.

Completed plans can be sent to Steve Dorrall for retention purposes, although it is not mandatory. It is good practice for the school to retain a printed copy away from the school and conduct regular reviews of a completed plan.

“Business Continuity Plan v2.1”

(Somerset County Council, October 2016)

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BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

(This policy is based on the Somerset CC model policy dated October 2016.)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

Somerset County Council is required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to develop plans to manage business continuity in the event of a range of disruptions to services. By extension, Local Authority schools have the same obligation.

No-notice disruptions are, by definition, impossible to predict. This plan deals with the ones most likely to occur:

- loss of premises (through fire, flood, etc.)
- loss of utilities (electricity, gas, water, fuel)
- failure of IT and telephony
- staff shortage

The impact of any serious disruption may manifest itself in terms of delivery of education, safety/welfare, financial consequences; reputation damage; and environmental consequences.

1.2 Aim of plan

The aim of this plan is to provide guidance and support to enable schools to tackle the impact of severe disruptions due to a variety of unlikely, but credible, causes, with the following objectives.

1.3 Objectives of plan

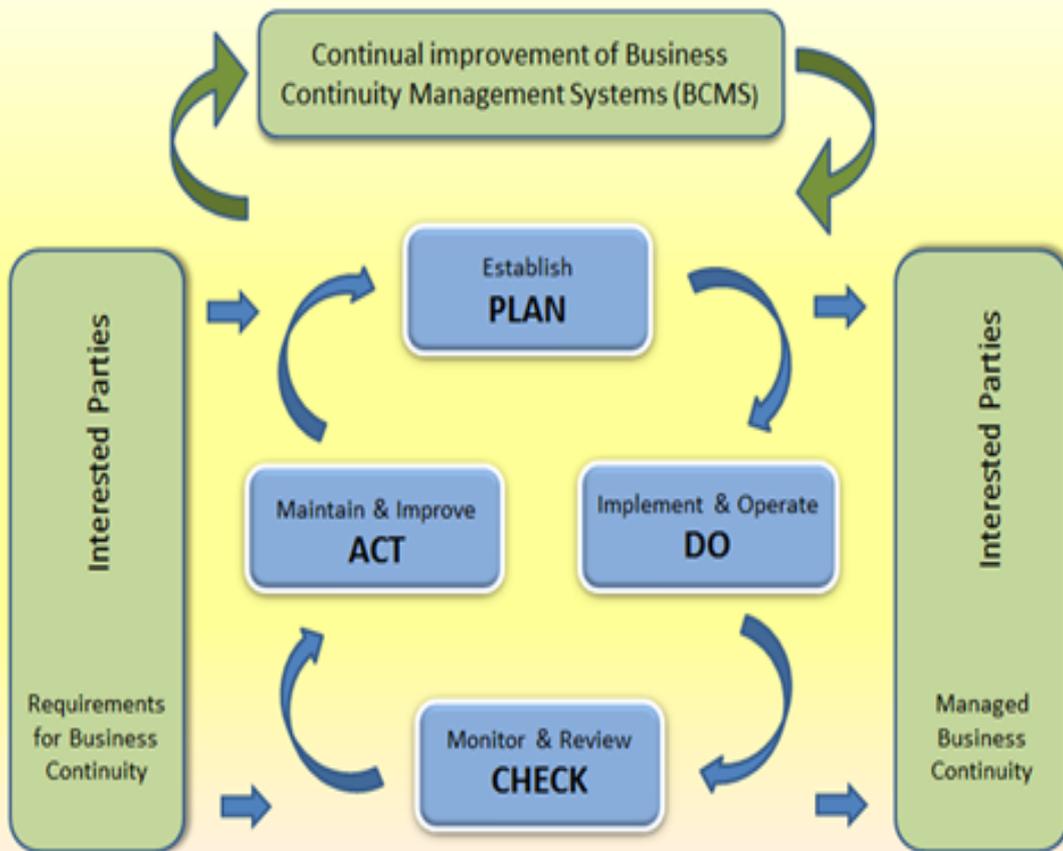
The plan is designed to achieve the following strategic objectives:

- (a) To safeguard the safety and welfare of pupils, staff and visitors.
- (b) To resume provision of education services at the earliest opportunity and, where possible, secure a continuation of learning.
- (c) To maintain the community and identity of the school.
- (d) To return the school to normality.

1.4 The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model

The International Standard applies the "Plan-Do-Check-Act" (PDCA) model to planning, establishing, implementing, operating, monitoring, reviewing, maintaining and continually improving the effectiveness of the organisational BCMS.

Plan - Do - Check - Act



Plan (Establish)	Establish business continuity policy, objectives, targets, controls, processes and procedures relevant to improving business continuity in order to deliver results and align with the organisation's overall policy and procedures.
Do (Implement and Operate)	Implement and operate the business continuity policy, controls, processes and procedures.
Check (Monitor and Review)	Monitor and review performance against business continuity policy and objectives, report the results to management for review, and determine and authorise actions for remediation and improvement.
Act (Maintain and Improve)	Maintain and improve the BCMS by taking corrective action, based on the results of management review and reappraising the scope of the BCMS and business continuity policy and objectives.

1.5 **Related plans and procedures**

This plan should be read in conjunction with the school's other evacuation plans and emergency procedures that deal with the immediate response to an emergency situation, e.g. Dealing with Critical Incidents Policy.

1.6 **Plan review and testing**

This plan should be reviewed for currency and accuracy every two years or in the event of significant structural or organisational change. It is good practice to test the plan at regular intervals, i.e. annually. A Business Continuity Tabletop Exercise Template is included for this purpose in Appendix F.

1.7 **Business continuity/emergency grab bag**

An emergency grab bag should be created to hold key information that will support the school in the event of an emergency/business continuity disruption. Depending on the nature of the disruption, this pack should be kept in a location that can be accessed at all times.

Suggested grab bag contents include:

Section	Details
Business continuity	Business Continuity Plan (plus spare copies of forms in Appendices)
	Key contact details, including governors, parents/carers, Local Authority suppliers
Organisational information	Staff Handbook (policies and procedures)
	School branding material and stationery
	School logo
	Other key documents
Financial information	Bank, insurance details, payroll, etc.
	Invoices, purchase orders, etc.
	Financial procedures
	Assets Register and Insurance Policy

Staff Information	Staff contact details
	Staff emergency contact details
IT/Equipment Information	Software licence agreement and key codes
	Office telephone list (for phone divert)
	Backup rota and data restoration routine
Equipment and other items	First Aid Kit
	A-Z map
	Portable radio (plus spare batteries)
	Wind-up LED torch
	Backup tapes
	Laptop with wireless connection
	Pay-as-you-go mobile phone and battery powered mobile phone charger
	Stationery, including permanent markers, clipboards, pens, blue-tack, pins, pencils and notebook paper
	Disposable camera with film
	Hazard barrier tape
	Emergency cash, a cheque book or spare credit card
	Contact details for taxi/transport providers
	School floor plans
	Spare keys
Whistle/megaphones	

2. PLAN ACTIVATION

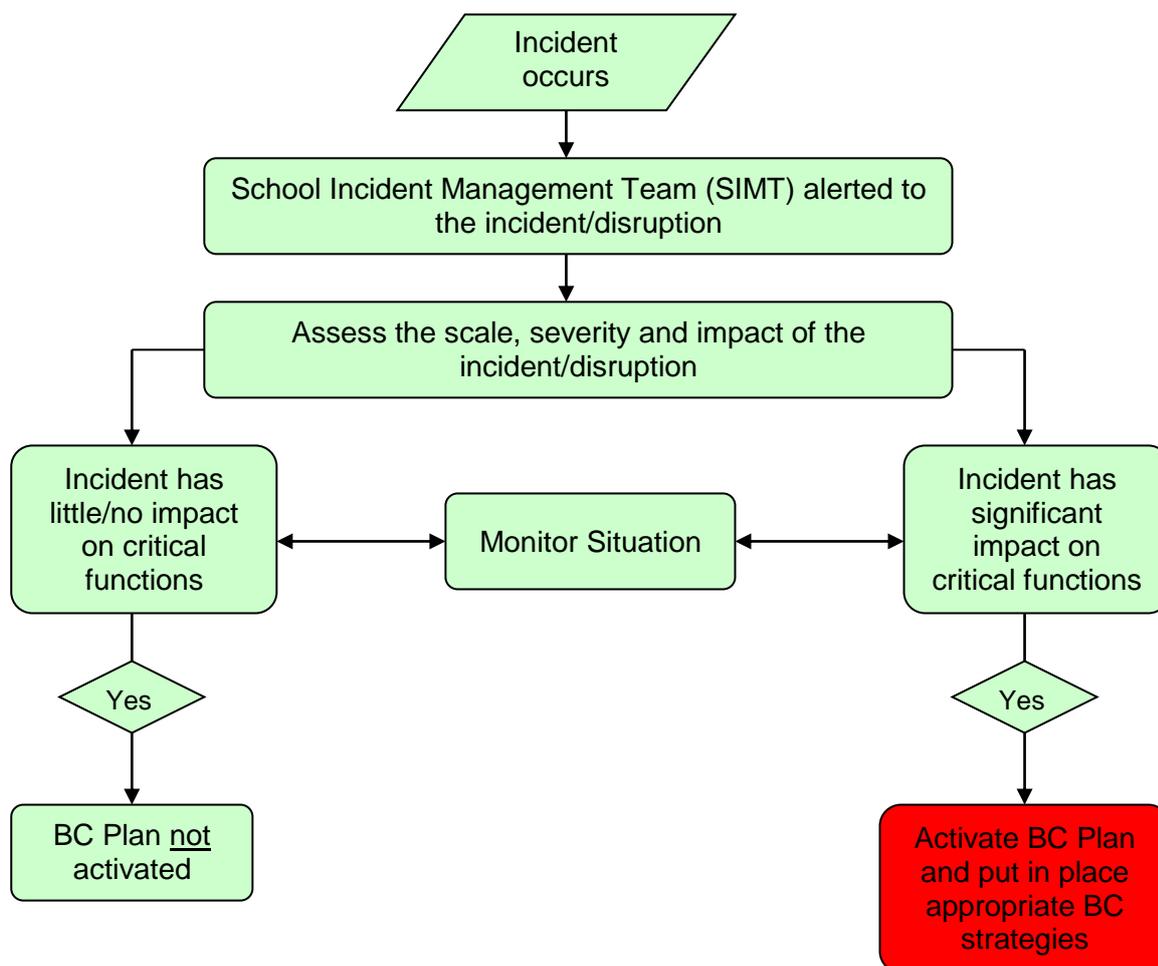
2.1 Circumstances

This plan will be activated in response to an incident causing significant disruption to the school, particularly the delivery of key/critical activities.

2.2 Responsibility for plan activation

The responsibility for implementing this plan lies with the Headteacher or, if not available, a member of the School (Incident) Management Team.

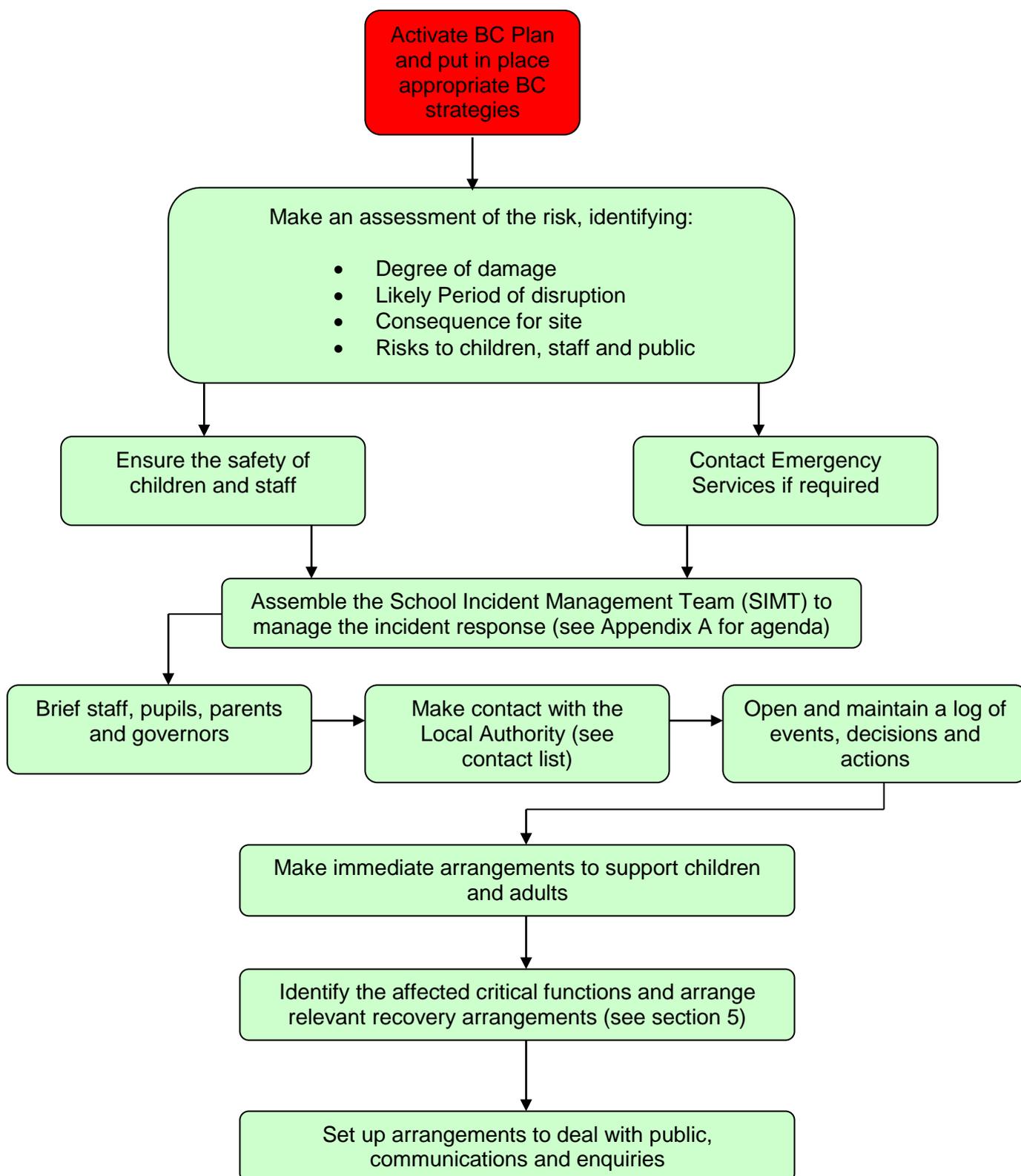
2.3 Activation process



3. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Incident response

Upon activation of the School Business Continuity Plan, it is suggested that the following actions are taken.



3.2 Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher, in conjunction with the School Incident Management Team (SIMT) will delegate business continuity roles and responsibilities. A guide to the roles and responsibilities required during a business continuity incident is described below.

Role	Responsibilities	Accountability/ authority
Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responsible owner of Business Continuity Management in the school ▪ Ensuring the school has capacity within its structure to respond to incidents ▪ Determining the school's overall response and recovery strategy 	The Headteacher has overall responsibility for day-to-management of the school, including lead decision-maker in times of crisis.
Business Continuity Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School Business Manager is the Business Continuity Coordinator (BCC). The BCC has responsibility for Business Continuity Plan development ▪ Developing continuity arrangements and strategies, e.g. alternative relocation site and use of temporary staff ▪ Involving the school community in the planning process as appropriate ▪ Plan testing and exercise ▪ Conducting “debriefs” following an incident, test or exercise to identify lessons and ways in which the plan can be improved ▪ Training staff within the school on business continuity ▪ Embedding a culture of resilience within the school, involving stakeholders as required 	Business Continuity Coordinator reports directly to the Headteacher and will usually be a member of the SIMT.
School Incident Management Team <i>Could consist of:</i> <i>Headteacher</i> <i>Business Continuity Coordinator</i> <i>Health and Safety Governor</i> <i>Chair of Governors</i> <i>Premises Manager</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leading the school's initial and ongoing response to an incident ▪ Declaring that an “incident” is taking place ▪ Activating the Business Continuity Plan ▪ Notifying relevant stakeholders of the incident, plan activation and on-going response actions ▪ Providing direction and leadership for the whole school community ▪ Undertaking response and communication actions as agreed in the plan ▪ Prioritising the recovery of key activities disrupted by the incident ▪ Managing resource deployment ▪ Welfare of pupils ▪ Staff welfare and employment issues 	The SIMT has the delegated authority to authorise all decisions and actions required to respond and recover from the incident.

Other roles/responsibilities to consider during the activation of a Business Continuity Plan include:

Role	Responsibilities	Report to/actions
Incident Log (record keeper)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To record all key decisions and actions taken in relation to the incident 	The Headteacher or SIMT.
Media Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collating information about the incident for dissemination in Press Statements ▪ Liaison with Local Authority Press Office 	The Local Authority Press Office/Headteacher but should not make direct contact with Media.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinating communication with key stakeholders including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ governors ○ parents/carers ○ Local Authority (SCC) ○ School Crossing Patrol ○ school transport providers ○ external agencies, e.g. Emergency Services, Health and Safety Unit 	All communications activities should be agreed by the SIMT. Information sharing should be approved by the Headteacher (or SIMT if the Headteacher is unavailable).
Premises Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To ensure site security and safety in an incident ▪ To link with the School Incident Team on any building/site issues ▪ To liaise and work with any appointed contractors 	Reporting directly to the Headteacher or SIMT.
ICT Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To ensure the resilience of the School's ICT infrastructure ▪ To link with SCC IT helpdesk or external providers (if applicable) ▪ Work with the Business Continuity Coordinator to develop proportionate risk responses 	ICT Coordinator reports directly to the Business Continuity Coordinator for plan development issues. In response to an incident, reporting to the SIMT.
Recovery Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leading and reporting on the school's recovery process ▪ Identifying lessons as a result of the incident ▪ Liaison with Business Continuity Coordinator to ensure lessons are incorporated into the plan development 	Is likely to already be a member of the SIMT, and will lead on recovery and resumption strategies. Reports directly to Headteacher.

4. **BUSINESS IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

For the purpose of this plan, the strategic critical function of the school is stated as:

**The provision of educational services to its registered pupils,
including a safe and secure environment in which to learn.**

In a business continuity context, the following functions are intended to achieve the strategic aim. Each activity has a “Recovery Time Objective” (RTO), a timescale by which an establishment would seek to reinstate a service or services that have been lost during a period of disruption. Some activities will be more critical than others, and establishments should risk assess their critical activities and a realistic recovery time objective of when the service or function can be restored.

The chart below highlights critical functions for you to consider and amend as appropriate.

Critical function	Description	RTO
Examinations	Providing staff and facilities to enable pupils to sit examinations, e.g. SATs.	2 weeks
Teaching staff	The provision of a suitable number of qualified teaching staff to deliver the National Curriculum.	1 week
Support staff	The provision of suitably qualified and experienced support staff to assist in the education of pupils and running of establishment services.	2 weeks
Safe and secure premises	The provision of suitable, safe and secure accommodation to enable the delivery of education and to meet duty of care, Health and Safety requirements, etc.	1 week
Catering facilities and staff	Meals provided by external caterer: Edwards and Ward.	N/A
Utilities – gas	The supply of gas to enable the heating of premises, preparation of school meals, etc.	1 week
Utilities – water	The supply of water for drinking and general usage, including flushing of toilets and preparation of meals.	1 week
Utilities – electric	The supply of electricity to enable ICT systems to run, lighting of premises, etc.	1 week
Provision of IT	The provision of IT to deliver education and to enable the establishment to run smoothly.	2 weeks
Keeping of suitable records	The keeping of suitable records in relation to staff/pupils and general administrative functions within an establishment.	1 month
Keeping of suitable coursework	The creation and safekeeping of coursework, including electronic documentation and items such as textiles, D&T work pieces.	1 month
Provision of cleaning contractors	The provision of a suitable number of cleaners to carry out general cleaning, such as toilets, waste collection and removal.	1 week

4.1 Risk assessing the business

In the context of “Business Continuity Management” a risk assessment looks at the likelihood and impact of a variety of risks that could cause a business interruption.

The Risk Assessment matrix in this plan differs slightly from that used in the assessment of corporate risk. This matrix is incorporated into the ISO22301, which is an International Standard that Somerset County Council has aligned its Business Continuity Plans to. The ISO22301 is designed specifically to aid Business Continuity Management, and is used by numerous private organisations and most Local Authorities nationwide.

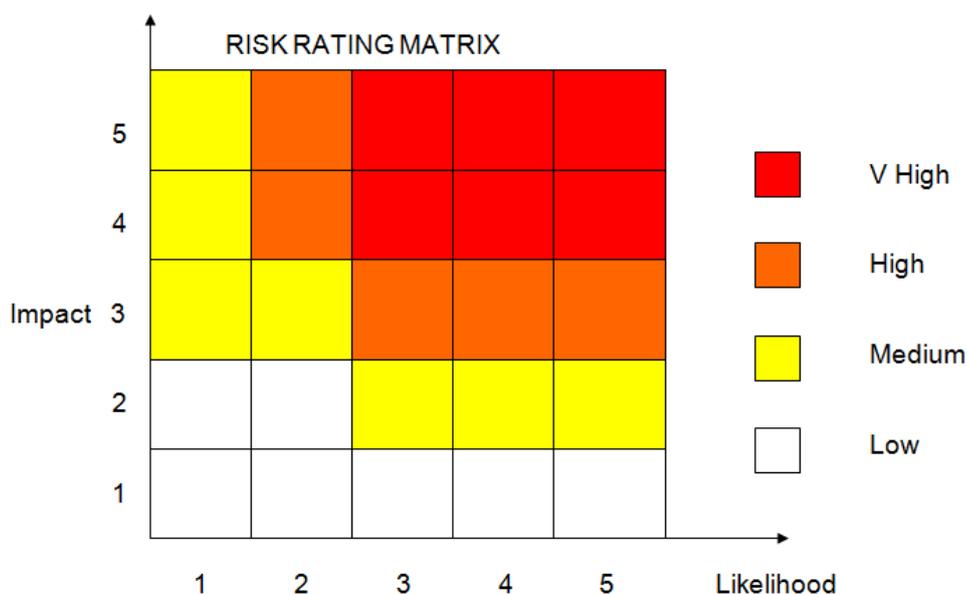
This assessment is a structured and auditable process for identifying significant events, assessing their likelihood and impacts, and then combining these to provide an overall assessment of risk as a basis for further decisions and actions.

Likelihood of occurrence	Indicator
1. Negligible	Slight or very small chance
2. Rare	Infrequent or exceptional
3. Unlikely	Not likely to occur or have occurred
4. Possible	Capable of happening or occurring
5. Probable	Having more evidence “for” than “against”, i.e. likely to occur

GUIDANCE:

Each of the hazards should be scored in terms of its “likelihood” and “impact”, which, combined, produce the “risk” rating:

Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1 – Negligible	1 – Insignificant	
2 – Rare	2 – Minor	
3 – Unlikely	3 – Moderate	Likelihood x Impact
4 – Possible	4 – Significant	
5 – Probable	5 – Catastrophic	



5. POTENTIAL DISRUPTION

5.1 Loss of premises

Loss of premises may result from fire, flood, loss of essential utilities or the building is within an area cordoned off by Emergency Services. This may occur during school hours, necessitating an evacuation, or during non-school hours preventing staff and pupil's access to the building.

It is a critical function of the school to provide suitable, safe and secure accommodation to enable the delivery of education and to meet duty of care, Health and Safety requirements, etc. The space below should include all relevant information that would assist with recovery from a loss-of-premises incident.

Virtual learning: In cases of an enforced closure, many schools provide links through their website to learning opportunities. These, together with other educational Internet and paper-based services, provide methods for providing continuation of education provision.

It is good practice for schools/educational establishments to maintain contact with the Local Authority or Governing Body to help identify suitable working processes and possible alternative locations. From experiences of past business continuity events, alternative locations have been sought/implemented when a facility has been closed for a period of more than one week.

Risk	Potential porkarounds	
Complete loss of site Risk Rating: 1 x 4 = 4	Potential alternative sites:	1: The Key Centre 2: 3:
Partial loss of site Risk Rating: 2 x 2 = 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of alternative on-site buildings • Use of temporary accommodation • Use of off-site facility if available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful information/contacts (see Supply Teacher Contact Information, section 6.2, below) 	
Temporary loss of premises (utility failure) Risk Rating: 2 x 3 = 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual learning 	

5.2 Loss of staff

The most likely scenarios involving a significant loss of staff are industrial action, fuel shortage, outbreak of disease (e.g. pandemic influenza) and severe weather. In all of these events, there is likely to be a period of notice in which arrangements may be made to mitigate the effects. (See Appendices G and H.)

It is a critical function of the school to provide a suitable number of qualified teaching staff to deliver the National Curriculum and suitably qualified and experienced support staff to assist in the education of pupils and running of establishment services.

It is also important to consider “Single Points of Failure”, e.g. Exams Officer or Premises Manager.

Risk	Potential workarounds
<p>Pandemic flu Risk Rating: 1 x 5 = 5</p>	<p>A flu pandemic will occur in two waves, 3–9 months apart, with each wave lasting about 12 weeks. In addition to staff being off ill, you will also have staff being off to care for sick relatives etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative teaching arrangements • Temporary cover • Hygiene precautions
<p>Fuel crisis Risk Rating: 1 x 3 = 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative teaching arrangements • Virtual learning • Local supply cover • Alternative transport arrangements • Useful information/contacts (see Supply Teacher Contact Information, section 6.2, below)
<p>Industrial action Risk Rating: 2 x 3 = 6</p>	<p>As far as possible, without attempting to influence staff members’ legal right to take industrial action, managers should try to estimate the proportion of staff who may be available to work in order to plan work in accordance with priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual learning • Alternative teaching arrangements
<p>Severe weather Risk Rating: 4 x 3 = 12</p>	<p>In the event of severe weather (e.g. snow/flooding), staff may be unable to travel to work. Employees are expected to make all efforts to reach their usual place of work, provided they can do so safely without putting themselves or others at risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-identified decision process (see Appendices G and H) • Alternative teaching arrangements • Alternative school transport arrangements

5.3 Failure of IT/data/telephony

Failure of IT within a school could be caused by a variety of reasons such as fire, flooding or power cut. It is important to ensure that the main server is resilient, with separate power supply, but if this not possible, backup arrangements should be in place.

Risk	Critical IT systems	workaround options
Failure of IT server/systems Risk Rating: 3 x 2 = 6	e.g. SIMS, FMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backup paper system • Backup server • Disaster Recovery Contracts • Off-site backup arrangements • "Cloud" arrangements
Loss of data Risk Rating: 2 x 4 = 8	If critical data is lost, what backup options do you have if immediate access is required?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's paper files • Paper contact details
Loss of telephony Risk Rating: 2 x 2 = 4	In the event that the main landline was lost, what alternative communication methods do you have in place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School mobile phone • SIMS texting service

5.4 Loss of utilities (electricity/gas/water)

In the event that the school lost any of the utilities, what would the impact of this be and how long would the school continue to operate safely?

All contractor contact information can be found in section 6 of this plan.

Risk	Impact	Potential workarounds
Electricity/gas Risk Rating: 3 x 3 = 9	Heating system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional portable heaters
	Catering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supplied from Selwood Kitchens
	IT servers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Backup generator (hire)
Water Risk Rating: 3 x 4 = 12	Drinking supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bottled water purchase
	Sewerage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bottled water purchase
	Catering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bottled water purchase

6. CONTACT INFORMATION

6.1 School Incident Management Team contact information

(Information to be held in school; not for publication on website)

6.2 Supply teacher and LSA contact information

(Information to be held in school; not for publication on website)

6.3 External suppliers/contractors contact information

Further information on the School Closure procedure is available on the Somerset Learning Platform, via the document “Emergency Procedures for School Closures”.

Organisation	Purpose, e.g. supplier of stationery, Portakabin	Name of usual contact	Tel no (office hours)	Out-of-office hours	Other information
Somerset County Council School Closures			01823 355953		
Somerset County Council			0300 123 2224		
Property Services			01823 357357		
Insurance Services			01823 355920		
Area Building Surveyor		Pete Stevens			
Corporate H&S		Darren Ling	01823 355089		
LA Press Officer			01823 355020	07739 300144	
Gas Supplier		Corona			Account No:
Electricity Supplier		British Gas	0845 60000604		Account No:
Water Board		BWSL	0845 600 3 600		Account No:
Calor Gas	Little Gems	Flogas	0800 574574		Account No: 1216756

APPENDIX A: SCHOOL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM AGENDA

1. Background and Situation Report as known (Chair)

2. Updates and actions:

Premises

- Current state
- Critical items recovered/still in situ
- Estimate of return

Welfare (staff, visitors, clients)

- Confirm all persons accounted for
- Current arrangements for retaining staff
- Outstanding welfare issues

Communications

- Message given out to staff
- New contact number for public
- Public message via Communication and Marketing
- Brief for Somerset Direct
- Collect contact numbers for team members

Continuity and Recovery

- Critical services affected
- Options to work around disruption
- Resources shortfall
- Alternative premises identified (if applicable)

3. Date/time of next meeting

APPENDIX C: DISTRIBUTION LIST

Once the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is complete or has been updated, please circulate to the following:

- Headteacher
- School Business Continuity Coordinator
- Chair of Governors
- Emergency grab bag should hold a copy of the BCP

APPENDIX D: TESTING SCHEDULE

Type of Test (e.g. live exercise, desktop exercise, communications test)	Date of Test	Lessons Learned

APPENDIX E: ACTIVATION LIST

Description of Incident	Date of Incident	Lessons Learned

APPENDIX F: BUSINESS CONTINUITY TABLETOP EXERCISE TEMPLATE

Basic scenario

It is mid-morning on a normal term-time Thursday. A group from your school is out for the morning on a visit to Taunton Museum.

10.00hrs *After a long period of heavy rain, water has leaked through the school roof and caused a short circuit in electrical wiring, igniting cladding. Fire breaks out and alarms activate within the school. The evacuation procedure is implemented.*

10.05hrs *All children and staff arrive at the Fire Assembly/Rendezvous Point safe and well. More rain is threatening but none is falling at the moment. Flames are beginning to come through the school roof. The fire service have been called and are on their way.*

What are the immediate considerations?

Who has responsibility for the following?

- Liaison with fire service on arrival
- Immediate pupil and staff welfare
- Building security
- Critical items inside the school
- Finding alternative shelter
- Communication with:
 - Parents
 - County Council
 - Diocese
 - Media

Who is in charge?

How would the management of the incident be organised?

What considerations would there be for SCC Service Areas?

10.20hrs *The fire service have arrived and are working to extinguish the blaze. There is concern that the fire may spread to the Portakabin, which contains gas cylinders and the fire service are placing a 200m cordon around the building. This means that the children and staff have to leave the Fire Assembly/Rendezvous Point. It is starting to rain. Several parents have seen the smoke and come to the school to find out what is going on. Other parents have started to ring the school to make sure their children are safe.*

What are the considerations now?

12.30hrs *The fire has been extinguished, with smoke and fire damage to part of the main building. It is estimated that this facility will be out of commission for at least 10 weeks while repairs are made. Local press and TV have heard about the fire and have come to the scene. They are asking for an interview with the headteacher/manager and a parent.*

Questions

- (1) What are the three most important strategic objectives for the school in these circumstances?
- (2) How will these objectives be reached?
- (3) Where would children, staff and visitors relocate to?
- (4) How would they get there?
- (5) What facilities would be available at the alternative premises and what would need to be transported?
- (6) At what point would the decision be made as to sending people home?
- (7) If people are sent home for the day, how would they be informed of what to do the next day?

Next day *Part of the building has been lost to the fire. It is now estimated that repairs will take 15 weeks to complete, during which there will be noise and other disruptions around the building. The affected part of the building is not accessible. However, equipment and supplies can be recovered from the unaffected part of the building.*

Questions

- (1) What considerations would there be in deciding whether to disperse the staff and young people to other schools/centres or to remain as a unit in an alternative location?
- (2) How will the migration of young people, staff and equipment be managed?
- (3) How will classes be organised and what steps will be taken to maintain the educational establishment community atmosphere?
- (4) How will the repairs be carried out? What opportunities may arise to improve existing facilities?

15 weeks on *The repairs are complete and the school is ready for reoccupation.*

Question

How will the reoccupation be carried out?

APPENDIX G: SEVERE WEATHER CLOSURE CHECKLIST

Action	Done? By whom?
Identified person has made on-the-spot assessment of situation.	
Contact Transport Field Officer to check availability of transport if necessary.	
Contact coach companies/taxi providers to check availability of transport if necessary.	
Consultation between Headteacher and Chair of Governors to agree closure.	
<p>Add details of closure to Schools Closure List. This information will be picked up by local media and an LA contact who will inform all key agencies. The email can be sent by any member of staff providing they use their LEAD (LA provided) email account.</p> <p>Include name and location of school and further information as appropriate, e.g. whether partial closure and/or temporary change of hours. Remove any personal contact details/auto signatures from email as it will be published in full.</p> <p>This information must be renewed daily as it is automatically deleted at 00.00.</p>	
Check information has been uploaded onto Somerset Learning Platform (SLP).	
Inform staff	
Inform scheduled visiting staff – other visitors	
Inform parents	
Reassessment of situation during the day	
Update SLP. Messages will be automatically removed from the closures list at 00.00.	
Keep staff updated/informed of new developments	
Keep visiting staff and other visitors updated/informed of new developments	
Keep parents updated/informed of new developments	
<p>Confidential contact numbers for Somerset County Council Staff, Transporting Somerset, etc., can be obtained by following the link given below or logging on to Somerset iPost.</p> <p>It is recommended that a hard copy of these numbers is periodically printed for use in emergencies.</p>	

APPENDIX H: SEVERE WEATHER: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Can I ask staff to clear the school site of snow?

You can ask site staff, e.g. caretakers, site managers, groundsmen – although consider age and ability, e.g. NOT if they are elderly or have physical difficulties. Also consider the type of snow/ice before requesting this clearance. Hard, impacted ice and snow may raise manual handling concerns and this must be taken into consideration with your risk assessment.

You cannot ask any other members of staff to clear snow. However, if they wish to volunteer, you can take advantage of their offer.

2. What if parents want to clear snow?

If parents volunteer to clear the snow, ensure you have done a risk assessment and do not let them clear hard, compacted ice on your premises.

3. How far should the school clear the snow?

Schools should not clear the whole site, just enough for safe access and egress. If fire exits have soft snow against them, they can be cleared. If not, just clear the exits that have soft snow and inform everyone on the site (including pupils) that in the event of a fire, they may have to use alternative exits to those detailed on the fire evacuation notice. Further guidance on clearing snow and ice is available on the Gov.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway>

4. Can I clear the path/road outside my school?

Schools should not clear the road outside the school as this is an SCC Highways function and you would be responsible should any accident happen. However, if the balance of risks for clearing the pavement directly outside the gates of the school falls on the side of clearing the snow for access/egress to the entrance, then it is a responsible action to take.

5. What should I do when I have cleared the snow?

Having cleared the snow, schools must ensure that they continue to maintain the cleared area. This means checking that areas that had been cleared, have not refrozen.

6. Are there any concerns inside the school?

Every school should complete a “Slips and Falls on Icy Surfaces” risk assessment on the European Education Consultants (EEC) website as this will highlight the issues and risks within schools. For example, anyone coming into the school during wet, snowy and icy conditions will walk over the barrier mat but snow and ice may continue to drop from boots and shoes for some distance into the school. This usually falls on vinyl surfaces and can cause accidents. Recommendations in the risk assessment are signage, placing a non-slip material on the vinyl surface (not newspaper), e.g. flattened cardboard.

7. Can staff attend an alternative Somerset LA school if they cannot get to their place of work?

There is no requirement for staff to attend other schools, however, should they wish to volunteer, they may do so, providing all appropriate safeguarding checks are complete and the alternative school has agreed to accommodate them.

8. Why can't SCC Highways clear my school access roads?

SCC Highways (SCCH) has a duty to ensure all significant strategic routes are cleared across Somerset and resources are not available to treat all roads in the county. A "Winter Salting Routes Map" showing the significant strategic routes maintained by SCCH during the winter period is available on <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/emergencies/snow-and-ice>

In addition, Highways England is responsible for maintaining stretches of the M5, A303 and A36 highways that run through Somerset. Somerset has 23 gritters for the whole of the county. This puts enormous pressure on the SCCH – not only for clearing these routes but also for maintenance and unfortunately this resource cannot cover the county's entire road network.

9. Where can I get more salt or grit?

Schools should ensure that they have sufficient stocks of salt or grit in advance. If salt/grit supplies are unavailable, a suitable alternative is Safethaw. For further information, contact Charles Robertson: 0782 448 3841.

10. Is there any specific guidance concerning poor-condition temporary classrooms?

The key activities to consider for temporary buildings (which may be of poor condition) are as follows:

- Leave sufficient heat on to prevent the pipes from freezing if the property will be left empty for a period of time. Most of the heating systems will have a frost setting and can be left on holiday mode or set on automatic.
- Ensure outside taps are isolated and drained.
- Be especially careful with Elliott and other temporary buildings where services run under a unit, as these can be very susceptible if exposed to cold temperatures below an unheated building.

Schools with stand-alone buildings in condition category C or D will have been notified by the LA of the specific safety measures to be taken in the event of severe weather conditions. Schools that have received notification that they have a stand-alone building with a category C or D condition should contact their area building surveyor for further guidance if they have concerns during the winter period.

11. Do I need to consult with other schools?

Whilst the decision to close is the responsibility of an individual school, headteachers may wish to consult with nearby schools to adopt a coordinated response.