# Examinations Contingency Policy

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| Policy Owner: | HoC, Vikki Alden |
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Our schools cater for young people aged 11-16 who are outside of mainstream education and have Educational Health Care Plans. We embody our school values in all we do to ensure our pupils are supported fully to achieve their goals.

## Senior Designated Contacts:

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| **Vikki Alden - Head of Centre**<br>bclark@brunelschool.org | **Emily Johnston- Deputy Headteacher**<br>ejohnston@brunelschool.org |
| **Ben Clark - Senior Lead for Examinations**<br>bclark@brunelschool.org | **Katie Parrott – Exams Officer/Manager**<br>kparrott@brunelschool.org |

**In the event that the Exams Officer/Manager is unavailable, the Senior Lead for Exams Compliance will be responsible for meeting the responsibilities of the Exams Officer/Manager.**

**In the event that the Head of Centre is unavailable, the Deputy Headteacher will be responsible for meeting the responsibilities of the Head of Centre.**

## Purpose of the policy/plan:

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Brunel School. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.
Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual (and Northern Ireland Council for the curriculum, Examinations and Assessment) ***Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland*** which provides guidance in the publication *What schools and colleges and other Centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted* and the **JCQ Joint Contingency Plan** *in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.*

This plan also confirms Brunel School compliance with JCQ's *General Regulations for Approved Centre (section 5.3)* that the Centre *has in place:*

- a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency. The potential impact of cyber-attack should also be considered.

## Causes of potential disruption to the exam process and robust arrangements to mitigate risks of disruption

**Behaviour:**

We are a Trauma-Informed special school that caters for pupils with Educational Health Care Plans. Most of our children have Social, Emotional and Mental Health and their primary area of need. As a result of this, some adverse behaviour of pupils may cause disruption to the exams process.

Delivery: Staff are trained in TISUK approaches and the school has a Behaviour Team in place to minimise disruption to learning. The school also offers bespoke provisions to pupils where required.

Exams day: Invigilators are in-house staff who have good relationships with the candidates and are trained to prevent disruption and de-escalation strategies. Separate rooms are used where appropriate and one-to-one invigilation. Rooming is considered to prevent disruption.

Results day: The Senior Leadership Team are available on results day to assist with behavioural challenges and any disruption, including disruption from parents.

Other disruption may include the following:

1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

- *Planning*
  - annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
  - annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
  - sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained
- *Entries*
  - awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
  - candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
  - awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred
- *Pre-exams*
  - invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams
  - exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
  - candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
  - confidential exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions
  - internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators
- *Exam time*

- exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
- required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies

- *Results and post-results*
  - access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
  - the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Headteacher to take over responsibilities and Exams Administrator has a moderate knowledge and training on the administration at each point of the examinations cycle.

2. SENDCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

- *Planning*
  - candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
  - centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010
  - evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated
- *Pre-exams*
  - approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
  - modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
  - staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained
- *Exam time*
  - access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- SLT to nominate a deputy to cover the role with the assistance of the Exams Officer.

3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

*Criteria for implementation of the plan*

Key tasks not undertaken including:

Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received

Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late/late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies

Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled

Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking
Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- SLT to nominate heads of subject to cover the role/tasks.

### 4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams*
- *Invigilator shortage on peak exam days*
- *Invigilator absence on the day of an exam*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Internal invigilators and administration team to be utilised alongside the team of trained staff.
- Invigilators are rigorously trained both via the Exams Office Hub and in-house.

### 5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning*
- *Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days*
- *Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- SLT/Exams Officer to source alternative venues or KS3 areas of the school in line with JCQ regulations.
- The school has a named alternative venue and can use this in exceptional circumstances (see section 11)

### 6. Cyber-attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery, administration of examinations, access to non-exam assessment and storage of completed work.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- The Head of Centre must ensure there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:
    - Providing training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords and keeping all account details secret.
    - Providing training for staff on awareness of all types of social engineering and phishing attempts.
    - Enabling additional security setting wherever possible.
    - Updating any passwords that have been exposed.

- Setting up secure account recovery options.
- Reviewing and managing connected applications and removing account access when no longer required.
- Ensuring that authorised staff members access online systems, such as AB's portals, securely in line with AB regulations and the JCQ Guidance for Centres of Cyber Security.
- Reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an AB's online portal immediately to the relevant AB.

- Brunel School and the Special Partnership Trust, subcontract IT services to Equinoxx. In the event of a serious threat, Equinoxx can be on site to support and can support remotely. Focus will be ensuring risk of access is mitigated. In some situations, such as threat to completed examinations or non-exam assessment, the Exam Officer must inform the relevant Awarding Organisation.

  Equinoxx (IT) can be contacted on 01872597969.

  To mitigate the risk of cyber-attacks, all staff have received cyber security training. Focus is on identifying and preventing cyber-attack attempts, including but not limited to, phishing and malware.

  All staff must ensure passwords to examination systems and portals, or electronic storage of examinations, must be updated regularly, using a mixture of upper case, lower case, and special characters.

  Electronic files will always be stored securely such as encryption to prevent unauthorised access.

  In the event of any cyber attack in school, this will be reported to the School's Operations Manager and Exams Officer without delay. The Operations Manager will then liaise with IT services and Awarding Organisations as required.

  If we are unable to access electronic files relating to examinations and non-exam assessment material, the Exam Officer will immediately seek advice from the Awarding Organisation.

  Non-exam assessment and electronic files are backed up onto USB or external hard drive, as well as the confidential Exams folder on the Management Drive, which can be accessed remotely. NEA MUST BE BACKED UP ON TWO SEPARATE DEVICES.

## 7. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- MIS system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS system failure during exams preparation
- MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exams Officer and IT Manager to communicate with awarding bodies/MIS providers at the outset to resolve the issue.
- Exams Officer to use awarding body secure areas and other internal systems if required.
- Non exam assessment material is backed up on USB/portable hard drive, and the confidential Exams folder on the Management Drive, which can be accessed remotely.

- Equinoxx (contracted IT support) can be contacted on 01872597969 or support@dns-ict.co.uk
- Arbor (MIS) can be contacted on 02038354047

## 8. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incidents resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- EO will contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
- EO will take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the school or college is able to open.
- HoC/EO to identify whether the exam can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned.
- Communicate with parents, carers and students regarding any changes to the exam timetable.
- Advise students, where appropriate, to sit exams in the next available series.

## 9. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre closed for an extended period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- SLT to source alternative venue and methods of learning for an appropriate course of action.
- Centre to communicate with parents/carer and students about the disruption for teaching & learning.
- School website to be used for updates along with extra Administration support for calls to parents/carers and take the necessary action to prepare students as usual for examinations.
- Exams Officer to advise if exams can be sat in a different series.
- Exams Officer to apply for special consideration as appropriate.

## 10. Candidates unable to take examinations – centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exams Officer to liaise with candidate and see if exam can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the awarding body and in line with JCQ guidance.
- Exams Officer to apply for special consideration as appropriate.

11. Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- SLT to try to keep the centre open for examinations only if possible.
- SLT to find an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding bodies/JCQ.

Named Alternative Venue:
In the event that Brunel School is unable to open for a scheduled exam or results day, our named alternative venue is Mayfield School, Torquay at either of the locations listed below. Contact: Stuart Heron sheron@mayfieldtorbay.org 01803 328375

**Mayfield School**

Moor Lane, Watcombe
Torquay, Devon, TQ2 8NH

01803 328375

admin@mayfieldtorbay.org

**Mayfield College**

Preston Down Road,
Paignton, Devon, TQ3 1RN

01803 554940

college@mayfieldtorbay.org

We will endeavour to facilitate the exam at Brunel School and will only aim to relocate the exam when all other options have been exhausted. The Vocational Block may be used as an exam space if the main building is unable to open.
Appropriate transport will be provided by Brunel School where necessary.

- Centres may offer candidates the opportunity to sit exams in the next available series.
- Exams Officer to apply for special considerations as appropriate.

12. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exams Officer to contact the awarding body to organise alternative delivery of exam papers.
- Exams Officer to access papers from exam board secure area & store securely.
- Inform SLT as additional courier deliveries likely to the centre.
- Exams Officer to check papers are on site 24hrs preceding the exam.

13. Disruption to the transporting completed examination scripts/assessment evidence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exams Officer to contact the awarding body and normal collection agency (Parcelforce).
- Exams Officer to keep scripts securely stored until awarding bodies re-arrange collection.

14. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked
- Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exams Officer to contact awarding bodies for advice, SLT to contact students as appropriate.
- Awarding body may generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence in consultation with the regulators, this will be confirmed.
- Exams Officer to apply for special consideration as appropriate.

15. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exams Office to contact awarding bodies for advice for alternative options.
- Centre to arrange to access its results at an alternative site.
- Centre to make arrangements to access the post results service from an alternative site.
- Centre to share facilities with other centres if possible.
- Centre to communicate any changes with parents/carer and students as appropriate.

SEE SECTION 11 FOR NAMED ALTERNATIVE VENUE.

16. The secure room and/or secure storage facility cannot be accessed.

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- In an emergency situation where the secure room and/or secure storage facility cannot be accessed, the centre will need to invoke a contingency arrangement.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- JCQ Centre Inspection Service must be contacted immediately.
- Awarding Bodies must be contacted to release online emergency scrips if required.
- The school's Caretaker will investigate the cause of the access issue and emergency contractors will be sought as required, supervised at all times by a key-holder.
- Whilst the secure storage is inaccessible, scripts and exam material can be temporarily stored in the locked safe in the locked administration cupboard.
- In the event that scripts and exam material cannot be accessed on the morning of an exam, the Exams Officer will contact the Awarding Organisation to arrange a electronic access to scripts.

17. Widespread disruption and resilience arrangements.

**Resilience arrangements** are in place for gathering and securely retaining evidence of candidate performance in line with the published guidance. The SENDCo is responsible for obtaining and securely storing this evidence. Mock examinations take place each year and progress and assessment is recorded on 'Evidence for Learning'.

In the case that examinations are unable to take place to severe widespread disruption, the Exams Officer will take advice from Awarding Bodies and they may require the school's evidence for progress and assessment in consideration of a final grade/mark for each pupil entered for examinations.

## Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

### Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

1. Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and make sure staff are aware of these plans. When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following guidance…

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises.
You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

3. Steps you should take

3.1 Exam planning

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

3.2 In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure'.
6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.

7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

### 3.3 After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

## 5. Steps the awarding organisation should take

### 4.1 Exam planning

Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan. Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

### 4.2 In the event of disruption

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
3. Ensure that where an assessment must be completed under specified conditions, students complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
5. Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

### 4.3 After the exam

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students. For example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.

## 5. If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption

If some of the students have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects.

See also:

- JCQ's guidance on special considerations

## 6. Wider communications

The regulators, Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The Department for Education in England, the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and the Welsh Government will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Central Applications Office (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.
Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

7. Widespread national disruption

In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.

[Ofqual guidance extract above taken directly from the ***Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted***, (updated 02 March 2020) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted)

JCQ

15.1 The qualification regulators, awarding bodies and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

Further information may be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland

15.2 In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.

15.3 Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.

15.4 In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

15.5: The awarding bodies will designate a 'contingency days' for examinations. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland

The designation of a 'contingency days' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than

one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the last contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of the contingency arrangements so that they may take them into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from Instructions for Conducting Examinations http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations, section 15, Contingency planning)

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents

General Regulations for Approved Centres www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Guidance notes for transferred candidates www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Instructions for Conducting Examinations www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations

A guide to the special consideration process www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance

JCQ notice - Preparing for disruption to examinations www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents

## GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Exam and assessment disruption; www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings

Opening and closing maintained schools www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools
Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service

## Wales

School closures: examinations gov.wales/school-closures-examinations

Opening schools in extremely bad weather; guidance for schools gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools

## Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days

Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools

## ProtectUK

www.protectuk.police.uk

## National Counter Terrorism Security Office

**Checklist for managing bomb threats** www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats

## National Cyber Security Centre

The NCSC's free Web Check and Mail Check services can help protect schools from cyber-attacks. Two NCSC cyber security services, which are already helping thousands of organisations to protect their websites and email servers from cyber-attacks, are now available to **all UK schools**. Both tools are available free of charge, are quick to set up, and thereafter run automatically. More information is available from the NCSC website.
The Department for Education has been asking centres to review **National Cyber Security Centre advice** following the increasing number of cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections. The NCSC information supports centres in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work.

Ransomware attacks continue and the Department is reminding centres to review the NCSC advice and to take precautions. This includes ensuring that you have backups in place for your key services and data.

For ease of reference, the Department has highlighted key links relating to the NCSC cyber security guidance below:

1. More ransomware attacks on UK education - NCSC.GOV.UK
2. Ransomware advice and guidance for your IT teams to implement
3. Offline backups in an online world
4. Backing up your data
5. Practical resources to help improve your cyber security
6. Building Resilience: Ransomware and the risks to schools and ways to prevent it
7. School staff offered training to help shore up cyber defences - NCSC.GOV.UK