




Name of Policy	Examination Contingency Plan
School Lead	Steve Barnes
Governor Lead	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Date of last Review	October 2023
Date of Approval	October 2023
Date of next Review	January 2025
Links to other policies	Examinations Policy
Head Teacher sign off signature and date	  October 2023

## Content

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Responsibilities	3
4. Monitoring Arrangements	3
5. Contingency Plan	5
6. Further Guidance	13
Appendix 1 Examinations Staff Organisation Chart	14
Appendix 2 Agreed Alternative Venues	16

## 1. Aims

This plan aims to:

- Examine potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of exams.
- Mitigate the impact of disruptions by providing actions or procedures to follow

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This plan complies with the [Joint Council for Qualifications \(JCQ\) General Regulations for Approved Centres](#), which requires all exam centres to have a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy.

This plan is also based on:

- Ofqual's [guidance on contingency planning](#)
- JCQ's [joint contingency plan](#)

## 3. Responsibilities

### 3.1 Head of Centre

The Head of Centre is the Head Teacher, who will ensure that a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy is in place and covers all aspects of examination administration.

### 3.2 Exams Officer

The Exams Officer is Liz Hallissey, who will ensure that all relevant staff including exam assistants and invigilators are aware of the examination contingency plan

### 3.3 Staff and Invigilators

Staff and invigilators involved in the Centre's exam process are responsible for reading, understanding and implementing the contingency plan under the guidance of the Exams Officer and Head of Centre.

## 4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Exams Officer every year in the Autumn term. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

The Exams Officer will also monitor relevant guidance and updates from JCQ and the Department for Education (DfE) regularly, and initiate a mid-review update of the plan where needed and in consultation with the Head of Centre.

## 5. Contingency plan

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS
<p>Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – Centre is closed for an extended period</p>	<p>When the centre is closed and candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or supported study time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning, e.g. if the centre is forced to close due to structural damage</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek advice from relevant awarding organisations and JCQ</li> <li>• Have a contingency plan to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both</li> <li>• Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series</li> <li>• Communicate any changes in plans with parents and pupils</li> </ul>
SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS

<p>Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – Centre remains open</p>	<p>In the event that candidates are unable to attend examination centres to take examinations as normal, e.g. sickness bug, bereavement, injury.</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue</li> <li>• Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with relevant awarding organisations</li> <li>• Communicate any changes in plans with parents and pupils</li> <li>• Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series</li> <li>• Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements</li> </ul>
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SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS
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<p>Centre is unable to open as normal during the examination period</p>	<p>In the event that the Centre is unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations, e.g. a fire at the Centre.</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible</li> <li>• Refer to emergency plans and/or health and safety policy, where appropriate</li> <li>• Head of Centre will decide whether the Centre is safe to open, based on advice or instructions from relevant local or national agencies</li> <li>• Use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (agreed alternative venues are listed in appendix 1)</li> <li>• Communicate any changes to plans with parents and pupils</li> <li>• Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements</li> <li>• Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible</li> </ul>
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SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS
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<p>The Exams Officer is unexpectedly absent during the exam series</p>	<p>In the event that the Exams Officer or nominated exams assistant is absent due to unexpected illness, injury or selfisolation.</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a nominated and suitable trained and experienced deputy is present in base to take over the duties of the duty Exams Officer /Assistant.</li> <li>• Refer to the Examinations Staff Organisation chart to nominate a deputy to attend the Centre and perform the Exams Officer /Assistant role until the end of the absence period</li> <li>• Implement an absence management policy requiring staff absence to be reported at the earliest possible time to ensure cover to be arranged</li> </ul>
<p>Invigilator is unexpectedly absent</p>	<p>In the event that an Invigilator is absent due to unexpected illness, injury or selfisolation.</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all suitable support staff across the whole school team undertake Invigilator training including Learning Mentors, teaching assistants and administration staff</li> <li>• Encourage other staff to undertake Invigilator training</li> <li>• Have a reserve Invigilator plan in place to act as emergency cover.</li> </ul>

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS
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<p>Disruption in the distribution of examination papers</p>	<p>In the event that there is disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out from the awarding organisation if they are able to organise an alternative courier and time to deliver hardcopies</li> <li>• If the above isn't possible, liaise with awarding bodies to receive electronic access to papers via a secured external network</li> <li>• Ensure there is adequate provision and plans in place to receive, make and store papers under secure conditions</li> <li>• As a last resort, awarding organisations may consider rescheduling the examination.</li> </ul>
<p>Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts</p>	<p>In the event that there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek advice from awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection</li> <li>• Only make alternative arrangements after approval from awarding organisations ensuring papers are securely stored until collection</li> <li>• Ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection</li> </ul>

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS
Cyber-attack	Where it is identified that a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations, or cause a failure of IT systems (see below).	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with IT and contact the relevant Awarding Body to seek further guidance.</li> <li>• Senior Leaders will monitor the situation and take any action required as directed by the Awarding Bodies.</li> </ul>
Failure of IT systems	<p>When the IT network/internet connection fails at key points in the exam cycle. Key points in the cycle relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entries - Submitting entries to awarding bodies</li> <li>• Pre-exams Exam scheduling (rooming/candidate seating etc.)</li> <li>• Issuing candidate timetables</li> <li>• Online examinations</li> <li>• Results and post-results</li> <li>• Downloading and producing results slips</li> </ul>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make entries from another site direct to the awarding bodies (using awarding bodies' secure extranet sites).</li> <li>• Compile exam room scheduling/timetables using alternative methods, including but not limited to alternative software/manual bookings and timetables.</li> <li>• Contact awarding bodies in respect of re-sitting online exams affected by system failure, or to seek an alternative solution.</li> <li>• Access results directly from the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites, from an alternative site if necessary</li> </ul>

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<p>Assessment evidence is not available to be marked</p>	<p>In the event of large-scale damage to, or destruction of, completed examination scripts or assessment evidence before it can be marked, e.g. a fire at the centre destroys completed examination scripts</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s), candidates and their parents, guardians or carers</li> <li>• If necessary, work with the awarding organisation to generate candidate marks based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement</li> <li>• Warn candidates that where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations, candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series</li> </ul>
<p>Centre is unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services</p>	<p>In the event that the centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services</p>	<p>The Pilgrim School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact awarding organisations about alternative options</li> <li>• Make arrangements to access results at an alternative site</li> <li>• Share facilities with other schools/colleges if possible</li> <li>• Coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site</li> <li>• Contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible</li> </ul>

## 6. Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

### **JCQ guidance:**

#### **Contingency planning**

The qualifications 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.

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.

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.

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.

The awarding bodies have designated 'contingency days' for examinations, summer 2024. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This is Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

For the Summer 2024 exams, the awarding bodies have also agreed to include two additional half-day contingency sessions. These are on Thursday 6 June 2024 and Thursday 13 June 2024.

### **Ofqual guidance**

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

### Further guidance

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england><https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/education-skills/cyber-security-schools-wales><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

General Regulations for Approved Centres [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations)

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms)

Guidance notes for transferred candidates [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms)

Instructions for Conducting Examinations [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations](http://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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special)<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams><https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/small-business-guide/backing-your-data><http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

### GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Exam disruption [www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care)<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance><http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

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>

## 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 cyberattacks, 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](#).

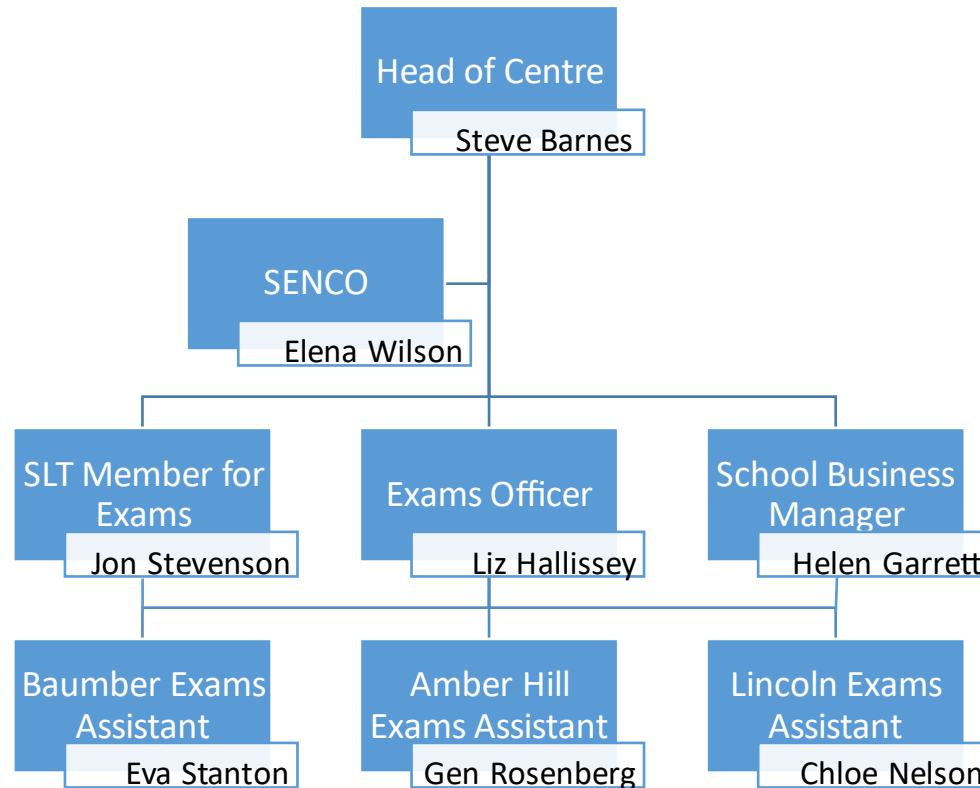
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The Department for Education has been asking centres to review **National Cyber Security Centre advice** following increasing number of cyberattacks involving ransomware infections. The NCSC information supports centres in cyber security preparedness 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](#)

Appendix 1: Examinations Staff Organisation Chart



During an examination series:

SLT Member for Exams will run exams at Baumber Centre with support of the Exams Assistant.

Exams Officer will run exams at Amber Hill Centre with support of the Exams Assistant.

School Business Manager will run exams at Lincoln Centre with support of the Exams Assistant.

In the event of staff absence, SLT Member for Exams, Exams Officer and SBM can all undertake Exam Assistant duties at all sites and Exam Assistants can all undertake duties at other sites.

## Appendix 2: Agreed alternative venues

The Pilgrim School has three JCQ approved Centres at the following addresses:

NCN 26337 / VQ 26313C - The Pilgrim School, Sutterton Drove, Amber Hill, Boston, PE20 3RQ

NCN 26313 / VQ 26313A - The Pilgrim School, Carrington Drive, Lincoln, LN6 0DE

NCN 26341 / VQ 26313B - The Pilgrim School, Lincoln Rd, Baumber, Horncastle, LN9 5ND

The Exams Officer, SLT, Teachers and support staff work across all 3 bases and can therefore move candidates if needed to another centre in the event of disruption at the exam centre. Each base also has access to wi-fi and can download exam papers if needed.

In the event of disruption necessitating a move to another venue outside of our Centres, we would use:

NCN 26337 / VQ 26313C - Amber Hill Centre – Princess Royal Sports Arena, Great Fen Rd, Wyberton, Boston PE21 7PB

NCN 26313 / VQ 26313A - Lincoln Centre – The Showroom Activity Centre, Tritton Rd, Lincoln LN6 7QY

NCN 26341 / VQ 26313B - Baumber Centre – Bannovallum School, Boston Rd, Horncastle LN9 6DA