



Exam contingency plan

2019/20

Policy Ref No. PEC 02 2019

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

The Ethos of St Peter and St Paul

"Our school is a community where Jesus Christ is our role model and his message the guiding principle behind all we do.

Every member of our community is responsible for creating an environment that is caring, fair and respectful of each individual.

We develop our potential, celebrate our talents and go forward together in faith."

Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. We are therefore committed to promoting:

The uniqueness of the individual

We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God's image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God.

The search for excellence

We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community, which flows from diversity of age, gender, racial and social origins, abilities, culture and religion. We are therefore committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

The education of the whole person

We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help pupils to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the school serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

The education of all

We have the duty of care for all to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically, emotionally or financially disadvantaged.

Moral principles

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. We believe this is fundamental to the common good. We aim to prepare our young people to serve as witnesses to these moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

Consequently, we still strive to ensure that:

Any person recruited to the service of the school, whether as a member of staff or as a volunteer, is made fully aware of our aims and objectives and required to support them;

Children who are admitted to the school and their families are fully aware of our aims and objectives and undertake to support them;

All of our structures and policies are evaluated and kept under constant review in order to see that no individual is subject in any way to unlawful discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, and to ensure that all are enabled to reach their full potential.

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

Contents

Purpose of the plan	5
Possible causes of disruption to the exam process	5
1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)	5
2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	6
3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	7
4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence	7
5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice.....	8
6. Failure of IT systems.....	8
7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)	8
8. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period	9
9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open.....	9
10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)	9
11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers.....	10
12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts	10
13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked.....	10
14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services.....	11

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at the St Peter & St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy. 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 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 St Peter & St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2019-20*) 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.*

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

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*

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*

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

- ▶ *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, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration*
- ▶ *candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking 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

- ▶ *Exams Officer to produce a guidance manual that is available to relevant staff that documents each stage in the exam cycle. This is available in paper format in the Exams Office and in Staff share.*
- ▶ *Relationship established with another school in order to have a point of contact for guidance*
- ▶ *Member of Administration staff to shadow exams officer during key points in the exams cycle and to assist during exam time.*

2. SENCo 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*
- ▶ *centre-delegated arrangements not put in place*
- ▶ *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*

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ *Miss G Bell to cover absence and in her absence Mrs R Sharp, SEN administrator to assist with tasks as required*

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

- ▶ *In the case of a teacher absence the subject leader would ensure that all tasks are covered and actioned.*
- ▶ *In the case of Subject Leader absence the SLT link would ensure all tasks actioned. If the absence was extended then a member of the subject department would cover the tasks required*

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

- ▶ *Exams Officer to keep in touch with invigilators and check on availability throughout the year in order to be aware of shortages ahead of Summer exam series*
- ▶ *Members of Administration staff available to invigilate when required in case of shortage on peak exam days*
- ▶ *Exams Officer to contact other invigilators in the case of absence on the day of an exam*

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

- ▶ *Exams Officer is part of a network of exams officers and may be able to use invigilators from another school*

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

- ▶ *Communicate at the earliest opportunity with SLT*
- ▶ *Look at other alternatives onsite or at other schools eg Sir Francis Hill Primary school*

6. 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

- ▶ *Communicate with Awarding Bodies to gain advice on procedures.*
- ▶ *Ensure entries are made in advance of the deadline to avoid issues*
- ▶ *IT technical support to prioritise issues to achieve a quick resolution*
- ▶ *Communicate with Awarding Bodies if results cannot be accessed and ensure IT support is on site on results days*

7. 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 incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Centre to communicate with Awarding Bodies
- ▶ Exam papers to be kept secure
- ▶ Candidates to be kept silent during evacuation
- ▶ Time of disruption noted and added on to ensure all candidates receive the full time
- ▶ Send report to Awarding Body

8. Disruption of teaching time – 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

- ▶ Staff to put relevant work available through E learning portals
- ▶ The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.

(Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students, as usual, for examinations. □ in the case of modular courses, centres may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series. □ centres should have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning.)

9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – 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

The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams 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

- ▶ Centre to take every step to ensure exams take place even if the school is closed.
- ▶ Make use of another venue to enable exams to take place if possible
- ▶ Seek advice from Awarding Bodies

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

11. 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

- ▶ *The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers*
- awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Centres would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and should have plans in place to facilitate such an action. Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances. □ as a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date)

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ *The Examination Papers to be kept in secure storage until problem resolved*
 - ▶ *Examinations Officer to Liaise with Awarding Bodies and Parcelforce*
- (□ where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, centres should seek advice from awarding organisations and should not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding organisation. □ for any examinations where centres make their own arrangements for transportation, centres should investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations. □ centres to ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection.)

13. 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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ *The Head of Centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding bodies, seek advice and subsequently to students and their parents or carers*
- (awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations □ where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series.)

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services

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

▶ *Centre to contact awarding organisations about alternative options*

Exams Officer to download results from Awarding Body websites on a computer off site

- Distribution of results:
- centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
- centres to make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- centres to share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.)

(Facilitation of post results services:

- centre to make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location
- centres to contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible)

15. The awarding bodies have designated Wednesday 24 June 2020 as a 'contingency day' 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/examsystem-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

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

In the highly unlikely event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2020, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and the DfE 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 contingency day on 24 June 2020. Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the re-scheduling 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 this contingency arrangement so that they may take it 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.