



*Elmley Dray  
School*

## Contingency Plan

To be read in conjunction with the school's Business Continuity Plan

Elmley Dray School is to carry on activities which benefit the community and in particular (without limitation) to support people with autism and their families in Kent to improve their life outcomes (eg. education, health, care and employment).

This is motivated by the family support team which are experts by experience and/or are autistic/neurodiverse themselves.

### Rationale

This policy aims to ensure that Elmley Dray School, the Community Interest Company (CIC) provides its services in a consistent way by placing the learner (children and vulnerable adults) at the heart of all decision making and provision of support and guidance.

It is fundamental to Elmley Dray School that each learner is valued equally and accepted as a unique being with distinctive qualities and aptitudes.

Elmley Dray School will make its services as accessible as possible, with the use of technology in order to be flexible and adaptive to the needs of all clients. This policy refers to the work of the community interest company as well as Elmley Dray School.

Elmley Dray School is a vital part of our learners, parents and carers, staff and supporting agencies, professional, educational and personal lives. However there are times when our lives could be shattered by:

- absence of a member of staff due to serious/terminal health issue
- the death of a learner or a teacher

- violence and assault at Elmley Dray School
- the destruction or vandalism of part of the buildings;
- fire in one or even all our buildings;
- a road, sea or air traffic accident involving learners and staff or death or injuries through other causes during a journey to work or study;
- a disaster in the community involving families and friends of members of Elmley Dray School community;
- pandemic which results in hub closure due to staff shortages;
- a learner or teacher being taken hostage;
- civil disturbances and terrorism.

This policy supports the need to be wise before the event and to ensure that the safeguarding of all our young people and indeed our staff is managed appropriately in times of crisis.

## Information

When a crisis occurs the first task is to obtain accurate information. This will either be obtained by Elmley Dray School Director/Proprietor or Headteacher or will be relayed to them.

Disasters happening away from Elmley Dray School premises will be unclear perhaps for hours, but there is still a need to convey accurate information as soon as possible. Uncertainty breeds rumours, which adds to distress. The PAT team (including Director(s) and Headteacher) and the Local Authorities will be contacted immediately with the contingency plans explained to enable education and care to continue.

For every educational journey including residential, there is a named member of the staff who is to take the responsibility of being the leader. On all residential trips there will be a Duty Officer nominated (who is not on the trip), and their contact details will be given to all members of staff on the trip. Those who are identified as Duty Officers will understand that they must ensure that they are contactable throughout the period when the residential trip is ongoing.

Disasters happening within Elmley Dray School premises will however be dealt with by the Directors and/or the Headteacher immediately. Communication is key to ensuring that all stakeholders are informed and that parents' and clients' concerns and anxieties are managed fairly. learners must be provided with information as soon as it is available and that the Emotional Wellbeing provision will be made immediately available to support all learners.

## Management of the Contingency

As soon as a major incident is confirmed, the Director/s and Headteacher will meet to decide their strategies and form a small team to manage the crisis. This may include

redistribution and the relocations of resources such as hubs teaching and learning and meetings scheduled.

Issue	Action plan for business continuity
Absence of a member of staff due to serious/terminal health issue;	<p>Remaining staff will cover the role of the absent staff member for the short term whilst another member of staff is recruited to cover this role.</p> <p>In the absence of the Headteacher, an interim head will be sought immediately, using agencies to supply if needed.</p>
The destruction or vandalism of part of the buildings;	The school will seek to repair the damage caused as soon as possible. Timetable changes to include room changes will be put in place to allow lessons to continue whilst repair work takes place.
Fire in one or even all our buildings;	<p>Should fire occur in one building, the school will seek to repair the damage caused as soon as possible. Timetable changes to include room changes will be put in place to allow lessons to continue whilst repair work takes place.</p> <p>Should a fire occur in all of the buildings, the landlord would be contacted in order for us to find an alternative location to carry out teaching in the short term. The use of google classroom will be in place as well in order to allow learners to access the curriculum and therapies virtually.</p>
Pandemic, such as COVID, which results in hub closure due to staff shortages	The use of google classroom will be in place in order to allow learners to access the curriculum and therapies virtually.

The school holds computerised and a hard copy of the entire roll, including parents' names and telephone numbers. The receptionist holds the details of learners involved in off-site activities from Elmley Dray School. In the event of a tragedy Elmley Dray School telephones will have to be staffed. Those answering the phones should keep notes so that it is known who has made contact and what information has been given. There can then be certainty about who remains to be contacted.

According to the precise circumstances, some of the following advice may be applicable.

- (a) Staff contacting parents, carers and clients should have a written or rehearsed message.
- (b) Offer help with transport or access to technology whichever is appropriate.
- (c) Check that parents, carers, learners in distress are not left alone, and appropriate Safeguarding arrangements will be put in place under the guidance of the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding.
- (d) Offer appropriate contact information for parents, carers, clients, learners as required.

## **The media**

Elmley Dray School Headteacher and Director will be nominated as the Press Officers, through whom all enquiries should be directed. Every effort should be made to discourage reporters from entering the premises or having access to staff, parents, carers and learners. The Director will make specific arrangements for a press briefing if required.

## **Informing Elmley Dray School staff and volunteers**

The whole staff will be informed as soon as possible, preferably at a specially convened online meeting. The information about the meeting will be emailed to [allstaff@elmleydraychool.co.uk](mailto:allstaff@elmleydraychool.co.uk) with details of the proposed meeting.

## **Informing the parents, carers, learners and professionals attending Elmley Dray School or meetings**

Closure of Elmley Dray School will be avoided if possible. The school understands the value of the service that they are providing for families and learners.

Learners should be told simply what has happened and their questions should be answered as straightforwardly as possible. Where questions cannot be answered this should be acknowledged. Speculation should be discouraged.

## Funerals

People from differing backgrounds and religions have different burial rites. Some, including Parsees, Sikhs and Jews, may hold funerals within 24 hours of death. There is not always time therefore to prepare staff and learners for attendance. In this case a member of staff should swiftly make enquiries about the burial customs (for example, if flowers are in order and whether representatives from Elmley Dray School would be welcome).

## Managing the aftermath

All stakeholders will need the opportunity to express their emotional reactions to any crisis. Supervision and support will be provided to all staff who feel they are inexperienced in coping with any crisis.

Safeguarding continues to be paramount, and it is necessary to identify if learners are struggling to cope. Close contact with parents and carers will ensure that communication between home and Elmley Dray School is maintained in order to ensure that the wellbeing of the learners is ensured.

Reintegration if required after a major incident will be carefully planned. Every person will be seen as an individual and the support provided will be bespoke to that individual.

These contingency measures may be generally applicable in cases of prolonged absence from Elmley Dray School.

- (a) Elmley Dray School Directors or the Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team might visit the learner at home or in hospital. At least two people will attend together.
- (b) Contact should be maintained by Elmley Dray School throughout the absence.
- (c) Elmley Dray School will provide study material or access through google classroom if appropriate.
- (d) Special arrangements should be made with examination boards where necessary.

- (e) Emotional wellbeing support to be provided for each individual as needed to support reintegration and engagement.

Should the crisis be one which is related to a fire or damage at Elmley Dray School, then the contingency needs to address the need to maintain the educational and therapeutic provision as far as possible. With access to remote learning and some parts of the school possibly, the Directors will ensure that teaching and learning, therapeutic services which will be prioritised over administrative purposes.

Administration and finance tasks would be completed via home/remote access working if necessary.

#### Version control - Approval and review

Version No.	Approved By	Approval Date	Main Change	Review Period
1	Hayley Furnell	September 2024	Initial policy approved	Annually
1.1	Hayley Furnell	August 2025	Annual review	Annually



Hayley Furnell, Director,  
on behalf of Elmley Dray School

Dated: August 2025

Next review: August 2026