



The Burgess Hill Academy Emergency and Lockdown Plan

2026-27

Version:	v1		
Ratified by:	TBHA LGB	Date:	September 2026
Next Review date:	July 2027		



1. Purpose

The Burgess Hill Academy is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for students, staff and visitors.

This public plan explains the academy's approach to responding to an emergency that affects the academy site, the safety of the academy community or the academy's ability to operate normally.

Detailed operational information, including alarm signals, communication channels, staff deployment, site-security arrangements, emergency contact details and specific assembly arrangements, is maintained separately and is not published for security reasons.

The academy's detailed fire and evacuation arrangements are contained in the Emergency Evacuation Procedures, updated on 13 March 2026. These remain the academy's authoritative operational procedures for evacuation.

- evacuate part or all of the site;
- move students and staff to a safer area within the site;
- secure buildings through a lockdown;
- shelter students and staff inside;
- close the academy fully or partially;
- relocate temporarily;
- change arrival, collection or transport arrangements;
- provide education through alternative arrangements;
- coordinate support following a serious incident.

2. Principles

In responding to an emergency, the academy will:

- protect life and prevent further harm;
- contact the emergency services where required;
- account for students, staff and visitors;
- follow the instructions of the emergency services;
- provide clear leadership and defined responsibilities;
- communicate accurate information as soon as it is safe and appropriate;
- protect confidential and sensitive information;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, staff and visitors;
- consider safeguarding, SEND and medical needs;
- maintain education and essential services where reasonably possible;
- support students, staff and families following the incident;
- review the response and act on lessons learned.

The exact response will depend on the incident. Leaders may adapt procedures in response to information from the emergency services or changing circumstances.

3. Legal and guidance framework

This plan has regard to:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;



- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Department for Education guidance on emergency planning and response;
- Department for Education guidance on protective security and preparedness for education settings;
- National Protective Security Authority guidance;
- Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025;
- local emergency-planning and safeguarding arrangements.

4. Scope

This plan applies to:

- students;
- academy staff;
- Trust staff working on the site;
- governors;
- volunteers;
- supply and agency staff;
- contractors;
- visitors;
- lettings and community users;
- external organisations operating from the academy site.

Separate arrangements may apply to an educational visit, work-experience placement, sporting event or activity away from the academy. The relevant visit or activity leader remains responsible for following the agreed emergency procedures and maintaining contact with the academy.

5. Types of emergency

The academy's procedures may be activated in response to circumstances including:

- fire or smoke;
- gas leak;
- structural damage;
- loss of electricity, water, heating or communications;
- flooding or severe weather;
- a hazardous substance;
- a suspicious item or package;
- a bomb threat;
- an intruder or other security threat;
- violence or the threat of violence;
- an incident in the local community;
- a public-health emergency;
- a serious accident or medical emergency;
- a transport incident;



- a cyber incident affecting essential systems;
- loss of access to part or all of the site;
- an emergency affecting an educational visit;
- another event requiring a coordinated response.

The academy will not assume that the same response is appropriate for every emergency. Depending on the circumstances, evacuation may increase rather than reduce risk.

6. Emergency leadership and decision-making

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the academy's response to a serious incident. Where the Headteacher is unavailable, responsibility will pass to the most senior designated leader available.

A Senior Emergency Management Team may be established to coordinate:

- overall leadership;
- liaison with emergency services;
- student, staff and visitor accountability;
- site and premises management;
- safeguarding and welfare;
- communication with parents and staff;
- Trust and local-authority liaison;
- media management;
- business continuity;
- record keeping;
- recovery.

The detailed allocation of staff roles and deputies is maintained within the academy's confidential operational plan.

7. First response

The academy's immediate priorities will normally be to:

- establish what has happened;
- assess whether there is an immediate risk to life;
- contact 999 where required;
- activate the appropriate emergency procedure;
- take immediate action to protect students, staff and visitors;
- provide first aid where it is safe to do so;
- account for everyone expected to be on site;
- identify anyone missing, injured or particularly vulnerable;
- establish a leadership and communication structure;
- preserve evidence where relevant;
- contact Sussex Learning Trust and other agencies as appropriate;
- maintain a written record of decisions and actions.

Staff must follow instructions promptly and must not delay action while seeking further detail where an emergency signal or direct instruction has been given.



8. Evacuation

8.1 Purpose

Evacuation will be used where remaining inside a building or part of the site presents a greater risk than leaving it.

- fire;
- smoke;
- gas or chemical release within a building;
- structural instability;
- another immediate internal hazard.

8.2 Operational procedure

The academy will follow its separate Emergency Evacuation Procedures, which set out action on discovering a fire, the evacuation alarm, student and staff actions, visitor arrangements, fire-warden responsibilities, tutor-group assembly arrangements, accountability procedures, arrangements for Acorn, support for those requiring assistance and the roles of attendance, reception, site and senior staff.

Students and staff must leave by the nearest safe route, not collect belongings, proceed directly to their designated assembly area and remain there until the all-clear is given.

8.3 Public information

For security and operational reasons, this public plan does not publish detailed assembly layouts, routes, staff deployment, radio arrangements, emergency equipment locations or detailed checking processes.

8.4 Re-entry

Nobody may re-enter a building until authorised by the emergency services or the academy's designated evacuation lead during an exercise or false alarm. The fact that an alarm has stopped does not mean that it is safe to re-enter.

9. Lockdown

9.1 Purpose

A lockdown may be initiated where securing students, staff and visitors inside buildings offers greater protection than evacuation.

- a dangerous person on or near the site;
- a violent incident;
- a weapon-related threat;
- a serious incident in the local area;
- police instruction;
- another external threat.



9.2 Activation

The academy has a distinct lockdown signal and internal communication procedure. The precise signal and associated operational messages are not published. Staff and students will be taught how to recognise and respond to them.

9.3 Immediate action

When a lockdown is initiated, staff will normally:

- bring students and nearby visitors into the nearest suitable secure room where it is safe to do so;
- secure doors and accessible windows;
- move people away from doors and windows;
- reduce visibility from outside;
- silence mobile phones and other devices;
- maintain calm and quiet;
- account for those present where this can be done safely;
- report urgent information through the agreed internal system;
- follow instructions from senior leaders and the emergency services;
- remain in place until a verified all-clear or evacuation instruction is received.

Staff must use professional judgement where following the normal procedure would place people in greater danger. This may include moving away, escaping or directing students to a safer location.

9.4 Students outside buildings

Students and staff outside when a lockdown begins will follow the instructions and training they have received. The safest action will depend on their location, proximity to the threat, access to a secure building, available escape routes and instructions from staff or emergency services.

9.5 During lockdown

- keep students as calm and quiet as possible;
- avoid unnecessary communication;
- not respond to unverified instructions;
- not open doors until the all-clear has been authenticated;
- provide first aid only where it is safe;
- consider students with medical, communication, sensory or emotional needs;
- prevent students from using social media or contacting home unless instructed.

Parents should not telephone students directly during a lockdown. Sound, vibration, incoming calls or inaccurate information could increase risk.

10. Invacuation and shelter

Invacuation means moving people into a building or safer internal area. Shelter may be required where an external hazard makes it safer to remain indoors.

- smoke or a chemical plume;
- severe weather;



- a nearby police incident;
- an environmental hazard;
- an unsafe situation outside the academy.

The academy may bring students and staff indoors, close doors and windows, switch off ventilation where appropriate, move people away from the side closest to the hazard, restrict movement, account for those on site and await emergency-service advice. Shelter is different from lockdown; normal supervised activity may continue where safe.

11. Bomb threats and suspicious items

All bomb threats and suspicious items will be treated seriously.

A member of staff receiving a threat must remain calm, record as much information as possible, preserve the communication, avoid deleting or forwarding electronic messages, alert a senior leader, contact the police through 999 and follow police advice.

A suspicious item must not be touched, moved, opened, covered, placed in water or examined closely.

The academy will consider whether the safest response is evacuation, internal relocation, lockdown, restriction of access to a particular area or remaining in place. The normal fire assembly area may not be appropriate.

12. Accounting for students, staff and visitors

The academy will maintain arrangements to identify everyone expected to be on site. Information may be drawn from:

- attendance registers;
- lesson registers;
- visitor-management systems;
- staff sign-in information;
- trip and activity records;
- student sign-in and sign-out information;
- information from pastoral, safeguarding and medical teams.

During an evacuation, tutors and designated staff will check students against current records and report missing students through the established process. Staff and visitors will report to the designated checking point.

Unresolved concerns will be reported promptly and records retained.

13. SEND, medical needs and accessibility

The academy will make reasonable and proportionate arrangements for students, staff and visitors who may require additional support during an emergency.

- a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan;
- individual medical arrangements;
- mobility assistance;
- communication support;
- visual or simplified instructions;
- additional adult support;



- sensory adjustments;
- access to essential medication or equipment;
- consideration of the safest available room or route;
- additional preparation before exercises.

The SENDCo, medical team, site team and relevant senior leaders will review arrangements when needs, timetables, rooming or staffing change, or where an exercise identifies a concern.

14. Visitors, contractors and lettings

Visitors and contractors must:

- sign in on arrival;
- wear the identification provided;
- follow staff instructions;
- remain with their host where supervision is required;
- leave or secure themselves with the group they are visiting;
- report to the designated checking point during an evacuation;
- not re-enter until authorised.

Organisations using the site outside the normal academy day must receive relevant emergency information, maintain accurate attendance records, provide suitable supervision, nominate a responsible leader and comply with academy and lettings procedures.

15. Communication with parents and carers

The academy will provide information as soon as it is safe, accurate and appropriate to do so. Communication may be issued through email, text message, the academy website, the usual parent communication system, telephone contact, Sussex Learning Trust channels or emergency-service communication.

- follow instructions issued by the academy;
- avoid coming to the site unless specifically asked;
- avoid contacting their child directly during a lockdown;
- avoid repeated calls that may obstruct emergency communication;
- ensure contact details remain current;
- rely on official communication rather than rumours or social media;
- not share photographs, locations or unverified information online.

Where collection is required, the academy will explain the collection point, time or sequence, identification required and any access restrictions. Students will only be released in accordance with safeguarding arrangements.

16. Communication with students and staff

Staff will receive regular training and reminders about evacuation, lockdown, shelter, emergency signals, accountability, visitors, SEND and medical arrangements, communication restrictions, suspicious items and safeguarding. Students will be taught how to respond promptly and calmly without being given unnecessary operational or security detail.



17. Emergency services, Trust and external agencies

The academy will cooperate fully with police, fire and rescue services, ambulance services, West Sussex County Council, Sussex Learning Trust, health services, social care, the Health and Safety Executive where relevant, insurers, utility providers and other appropriate agencies.

- the nature of the incident;
- people believed to be involved;
- anyone unaccounted for;
- known medical or accessibility needs;
- site hazards;
- access information;
- relevant site plans;
- actions already taken.

18. Media and social media

Only the Headteacher, Trust communications lead or another specifically authorised person may speak publicly or to the media on behalf of the academy.

- provide statements to journalists;
- speculate about causes or responsibility;
- share names or personal information;
- publish photographs or video of the incident;
- disclose emergency procedures or security arrangements;
- respond to online rumours on behalf of the academy.

19. Academy closure or partial closure

The Headteacher may decide to close or partially close the academy where it is not safe or practical to remain fully open.

- severe weather;
- loss of utilities;
- damage to buildings;
- insufficient safe staffing;
- a public-health incident;
- a security threat;
- emergency-service instruction;
- loss of essential IT or communication systems.

Before closing, leaders will consider partial opening, relocation, timetable changes, maintaining examinations, remote education and targeted support for vulnerable students. Where closure occurs during the academy day, students will not be sent home without appropriate arrangements.



20. Relocation and reunification

Where students cannot safely remain at the academy and cannot be released directly to parents, the academy may move them to an alternative place of safety. The operational plan identifies possible locations, routes, transport and contact arrangements; these details are not published.

- students will remain supervised;
- registers and safeguarding information will accompany the group;
- emergency services will be informed;
- parents will receive collection instructions;
- students will only be released to an authorised adult;
- a record of release will be maintained.

21. Examinations

Where an emergency affects an examination, the academy will protect people first, follow the emergency procedure, notify the examinations officer, maintain examination security where possible, record the incident and timings, seek awarding-body advice, follow current JCQ requirements and consider permitted alternative arrangements or special consideration.

22. Educational visits and off-site activities

The visit leader will take immediate responsibility for the group until further support arrives.

- establish the location and safety of all students and staff;
- contact emergency services where required;
- notify the academy emergency contact;
- provide first aid and immediate welfare support;
- ensure no student is left without appropriate supervision;
- maintain a written record;
- preserve relevant documents;
- avoid public or media comment;
- coordinate contact with parents through the academy;
- follow insurer, provider and emergency-service advice.

23. Business continuity

The academy will seek to maintain essential functions during and after an emergency. Priority activities include safeguarding, accountability, communication, examinations, teaching and learning, SEND and medical provision, catering and welfare, site security, access to essential records, payroll, finance, staffing, IT and communications. Alternative arrangements may include temporary relocation, remote education, manual registers, alternative communication systems, temporary catering, timetable changes and support from the Trust or neighbouring settings.

24. Welfare and post-incident support

The academy will consider the immediate and longer-term welfare of students, staff, families, witnesses and those directly involved. Support may include pastoral support, counselling or psychological support, educational



psychology advice, adjustments to lessons or examinations, a supported return, staff welfare and sensitive remembrance arrangements. The academy will avoid forcing individuals to discuss an incident publicly.

25. Recording and reporting

The academy will maintain a contemporaneous record of information received, decisions made, reasons for decisions, people contacted, instructions from emergency services, actions completed, people missing or injured, expenditure, communications issued and the time the incident began and ended. Records will be factual, chronological, securely stored and retained in accordance with legal, safeguarding, insurance and Trust requirements.

26. Training, testing and exercises

The academy will test its emergency arrangements through a planned programme of fire evacuations, lockdown exercises, communication tests, staff briefings, tabletop exercises, review of visitor arrangements and checks of emergency equipment and records. Exercises will be proportionate, age appropriate, sensitive to anxiety or trauma and followed by evaluation.

A drill is not complete simply because the alarm was activated. Leaders will review whether signals were understood, procedures followed, everyone accounted for, SEND and medical arrangements worked, communication was effective and actions are required.

27. Review following an incident or exercise

Area	Key question
Activation	Was the correct procedure initiated promptly?
Leadership	Were roles and decisions clear?
Communication	Were messages timely, accurate and understood?
Accountability	Were students, staff and visitors accounted for?
Safeguarding	Were vulnerable students protected effectively?
SEND and medical needs	Did individual arrangements work?
Site arrangements	Did doors, routes, alarms and equipment work?
Staff practice	Were procedures followed consistently?
Parent communication	Did families receive clear instructions?
Recovery	Was appropriate welfare and operational support provided?
Action	What must change, who owns it and by when?

Actions will have one named owner, a clear deadline, evidence of completion and a review point.



28. Responsibilities

28.1 Sussex Learning Trust

- provide support and oversight;
- support communication and media management;
- advise on legal, safeguarding, estates and operational matters;
- coordinate additional capacity where required;
- monitor significant risks and actions;
- support preparation for Martyn's Law.

28.2 Local Governing Body

- receive assurance that emergency plans are current;
- monitor whether exercises and reviews take place;
- receive information about significant risks and actions;
- provide appropriate challenge;
- avoid requesting or publishing sensitive operational detail unnecessarily.

28.3 Headteacher

- ensure effective emergency arrangements are in place;
- determine the academy response unless emergency services take command;
- maintain clear leadership and accountability;
- ensure appropriate communication;
- ensure lessons are learned;
- report significant concerns to the Trust and governors.

28.4 Senior leadership team

- understand the operational plan;
- lead allocated areas of the response;
- account for students and staff;
- maintain calm and clear communication;
- support safeguarding and welfare;
- complete agreed follow-up actions.

28.5 Site leadership

- support emergency-service access;
- provide site and hazard information;
- maintain alarms, exits and emergency equipment;
- support evacuation, lockdown and shelter arrangements;
- report defects or vulnerabilities;
- contribute to exercises and reviews.

28.6 All staff

- understand the main emergency signals and actions;



- follow instructions promptly;
- maintain supervision;
- account for students in their care;
- support students requiring additional help;
- report missing people or safety concerns;
- avoid speculation and unauthorised communication;
- participate in training and exercises.

28.7 Students

- follow staff instructions immediately;
- remain calm and quiet;
- leave belongings when told to evacuate;
- remain with their group;
- not use phones or social media during an incident;
- report concerns promptly;
- not leave an assembly or secure area without permission.

28.8 Parents and carers

- keep emergency contact details current;
- read academy communications;
- follow official instructions;
- not attend the site unless asked;
- avoid contacting students directly during a lockdown;
- not share rumours or sensitive information;
- bring identification where collection is required.

29. Publication and confidentiality

This website plan provides appropriate public information without publishing information that could compromise site security, undermine a lockdown, identify staff deployment, reveal security systems or signals, disclose confidential contact details, expose assembly or relocation arrangements or assist a person intending to cause harm.

The detailed Emergency Plan, Emergency Evacuation Procedures, staff-role annexes, lockdown signals, contact details, site plans, security arrangements, relocation routes, grab-bag details, bomb-threat checklists and business-continuity system details remain confidential internal documents.

30. Monitoring and review

This plan will be reviewed annually, after an emergency, after a significant exercise, following a material change to the site, following a change in leadership or Trust arrangements, where a security vulnerability is identified, when relevant guidance changes and as the requirements of Martyn's Law are implemented.

The operational Emergency Evacuation Procedures will continue to be reviewed separately and updated whenever responsibilities, assembly arrangements or site circumstances change. The public version will be checked before publication to ensure that it does not contain sensitive operational information.



Document Version Control

Date	Version	Comment	Ratified by	Reviewer
September 2026	v1		TBHA LGB	Headteacher