

Bedales Senior Exam Contingency Plan

Implementation date:

Date/term of last review: Autumn 2024

Author	Exams & Operations Officer
Contributor(s)	Deputy Head (Academic)
Approval Body	Head of Bedales School
ISI Regulatory Paragraph Number	N/A
Next Review Period	Autumn 2025

Tick relevant box(es) ✓ how this Policy should appear:

Website	Upload	✓
	Signpost	
SharePoint		✓

Bedales Senior Exam Contingency Plan

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the examination/assessment process at Bedales 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 processes.

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, the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ document Preparing for disruption to examinations (Effective from 1 September 2024).

This plan also confirms Bedales' compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section GR 5.3) that the centre has in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually:

- a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery.

Contingency arrangements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 3.17-19), Bedales School must have an up to date written contingency plan. The contingency plan must cover all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery. Senior leaders must have robust contingency arrangements in place that will minimise the risk to examination/assessment administration and delivery and any adverse impact on candidates.

The plan must cover the following scenarios:

- The head of centre, relevant senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration, SENCo (or equivalent role), examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle
- The potential impact of other events such as flooding which could lead to all or parts of the centre becoming unavailable
- Potential issues with the centre's IT systems
- As part of the contingency plan the centre must identify an alternative site if examinations cannot be conducted at the registered address. Larger centres may require more than one potential alternative site or different sites for different Year Groups.
- Bedales School must have at least one senior member of staff (senior designated contact) who is available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results related during the summer holidays.

However, several contacts can be provided to reduce the risk of this falling on one individual throughout the summer holidays.

Bedales School must ensure that candidates' work is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up. Appropriate security arrangements must be implemented which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 5.3), the Head of Centre will ensure that Bedales School responds to the National Centre Number Register annual update by the end of October every year which includes providing senior designated contact details (this might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). These must be the contact details of someone who can be reached in an emergency if the centre is closed over the summer and who can mobilise resources to respond to the issue.

Head of centre absence at a critical stage of the cycle

Where the Head of Centre may absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, main duties and responsibilities will be escalated in accordance with the centre's written escalation process].

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

Exam officer extended absence at a critical stage of the exam 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.
- 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

- That the Exams Officer works closely with Heads of Department to ensure timely and correct information is sent to exam boards.
- Invigilators are recruited at the start of the academic year.
- Compulsory training is held for invigilators during the Autumn or Spring term.
- Exams Officer attends the Exams Office Training and conferences to ensure up to date procedures are followed.
- Results are prepared the day before the official release date to ensure are accessible to students and departments on results day.

SENCo (or equivalent role) extended absence at a critical stage of 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.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Have a specialist Assessor come into school to assess students for access arrangements.
- Head of Learning Support ensures needs are identified and supported.
- Exams Officer and Head of Learning Support work closely together to support students and ensure correct procedures are followed for application and implementation of access arrangements.
- Assistant Head of Learning Support to provide cover in the event of absence of Head of Learning Support.

Teaching staff extended absence at a critical stage of 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 (including controlled assessments and coursework) 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption above

- Early/estimated entry information is submitted to the exam boards ahead of the deadline.
- The entries are made by the Exams Officer and forwarded to the Head of Department for checking and confirmation. A diary system is in place to chase any late returns.
- Head of Departments are advised of the deadlines and regulations for non-examination assessments well in advance and students are kept informed.
- As soon as information regarding centre assessed mark and internal assessment marks are received from exam boards it is forwarded to Heads of Departments.

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

The centre will:

- Recruit invigilators in the Autumn term ready for mock and external exams.
-
- Have centre staff that have completed the Exams Office Invigilator Training that can be called upon if needed

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

The centre will:

- Where main exam venue(s) is/are unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time where possible, make use of other available rooms within the centre, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
- Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body.
- Where main exam venue(s) is/are unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time, where possible, move to alternative venue, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.

Alternative site details:

Bedales Prep School, Alton Road, Steep, Petersfield

- Communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or venue.
- Communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue. Communication details:
- Candidates and parents/carers will be informed via email from the school's MIS system which goes directly to their email addresses. Communication details are held on the school MIS system.

- Ensure the secure transportation of question papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.

(After the exam) consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.

Cyber-attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

(This will include the required arrangements for cyber security)

- (GR 3.21) 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/ phishing attempts
 - Enabling additional security settings wherever possible
 - Updating any passwords that may have been exposed
 - Setting up secure account recovery options
 - Reviewing and managing connected applications
 - Monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
 - Ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document

Guidance for centres on cyber security
Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with

awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements.

- Reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body
Ensuring

Failure IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- IT system corruption affecting candidates' work
- MIS system failure at final entry deadline.
- MIS system failure during exams preparation.
- Power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen test.
- MIS system failure at results release time.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

(This will include the security arrangements put in place which protect candidates' work)
(GR 3.19) Ensure that candidates' work is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up. Implement appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Refer to and invoke its exams emergency evacuation policy/procedure in line with JCQ's centre emergency evacuation procedure or its exam lockdown policy.
- Where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
- After the exam consider whether any candidates ability take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.

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

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

Candidates may not be able to take examinations – centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates may not be able to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal because of a crisis

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- (Centres' contingency plans should focus on options that enable candidates to take their examinations)
- Consider moving the starting time of the examination for all candidates (see section 6.2 of the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations) Be aware of the rules for very late arrivals (see section 21 of the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations) Wherever possible, it is always in the best interest for candidates to sit the examination. However, special consideration is an option where a candidate is unable to sit the examination (see Chapter 4 of the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process) The relevant awarding body should be contacted if additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to examinations is required
- Centre may not be able 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 may not be able to open as normal for scheduled examinations.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Centres' contingency plans must focus on enabling candidates to take their examinations if the centre is at risk of not being able to open as normal.
- This could include implementing alternative arrangements for the conducting of examinations and notifying the JCQ Centre Inspection Service of an alternative site arrangement by submitting the JCQ Alternative Site form online, using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP).

- The decision on whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre who is
- responsible for taking advice or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies. Special consideration is an option if all other avenues have been exhausted and candidates meet the published criteria. The relevant awarding body should be contacted if additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to examinations is required

Alternative site details:

Bedales Prep School, Alton Road, Steep, Petersfield

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

- 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.

Delay in collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, centres should contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions. For any examinations where centres make their own collection arrangements they should investigate alternative options that comply with the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations. Centres to ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until as close to that collection as possible.

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

- 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.

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

Including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day 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

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.

Alternative site details:

Bedales Prep School, Alton Road, Steep, Petersfield

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

DfE

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges

- Cyber Security Standards for schools and colleges
- Cyber crime and cyber security: a guide for education providers
- DfE Cyber Security Guidance – March 2023

Ofqual

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

Contingency planning

Awarding organisations are required to establish, maintain and comply with an up-to-date detailed written contingency plan, to mitigate any incident they have identified may occur. This includes having communication plans for external parties (Ofqual General Condition of Recognition A6). Schools and colleges should also be prepared for possible disruption to exams and assessments and make sure staff are aware of these plans.

General contingency guidance

- Emergency planning and response from the Department for Education in England.
- Handling strike action in schools from the Department for Education in England.
- School organisation: local-authority-maintained schools from the Department for Education in England.
- Exceptional closure days from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland.
- Checklist - exceptional closure of schools from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland.
- School terms and school closures from NI Direct.

- Opening schools in extremely bad weather - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- Police guidance from National Counter Terrorism Security Office and partners on preparing for threats.

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.

You may also wish to see the JCQ's notice to centres on exam contingency plans and JCQ's notice on preparing for disruption to examinations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for qualifications within its scope.

Steps you should take

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.

In the event of disruption

- Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
- Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
- 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.
- Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
- In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's Centre emergency evacuation procedure.
- Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
- Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

After the exam

- 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.
- Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
- Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
- 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.

Steps the awarding organisation should take

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.

In the event of disruption

- Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
- Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
- 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).
- Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
- Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

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.

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.

Wider communications

The regulators, Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA Regulation 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.

Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations or assessments

The governments' view across England, Wales and Northern Ireland is education in 2022 to 2023 has returned to normal. Schools are open and examinations will go ahead in summer 2023.

As education is devolved, in the event of any widespread sustained national disruption to examinations or assessments, national 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 examinations and assessments, including exam timetables.

The Department for Education has updated its guidance on handling strike action in schools in England in light of the industrial action in 2023. The guidance recommends schools should prioritise the running of examinations and assessments on any strike days and should review their contingency plans to make this happen. Schools, colleges and other exam centres should speak to the relevant awarding organisations if they are expecting any disruption that might affect the sitting of exams and assessments.

(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 (last updated 18 January 2023) <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 All centres must have 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 where the Head of Centre, examinations officer or SENCo is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency.

All relevant centre staff must be familiar with the examination contingency 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 'contingency sessions' for examinations, summer 2024. 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 'contingency sessions' 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.

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

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning

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 and extreme hot weather: www.gov.wales/opening-schools-well-childcare-and-play-settings-extreme-bad-weather-and-extreme-hot-weather

Northern Ireland

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

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

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 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. Further ransomware attacks on UK education by cyber criminals - NCSC.GOV.UK.
2. Mitigating malware and ransomware attacks.
3. Offline backups in an online world.
4. Backing up your data.
5. Practical resources to help schools improve their cyber security.
6. Building Resilience: Ransomware, the risk to schools and ways to prevent it.
7. School staff offered training to help shore up cyber defences - NCSC.GOV.UK.

All School policies are available to staff and can be found here:

<https://bedalesschools.sharepoint.com/sites/bdd-wholeschoolpolicies>