



Business Continuity Policy

Onthank Primary School and Additional Support for Learning Centre (ASLC)

Policy Statement

At Onthank Primary School and ASLC, we are committed to maintaining the safety, wellbeing and continuity of learning for all children during any disruption to normal school operations. We recognise that emergencies and unforeseen events can occur and have procedures in place to ensure a safe, coordinated and effective response.

This policy is aligned with East Ayrshire Council's [education-service-business-continuity-plan](#) and reflects local procedures for emergency response, communication, evacuation, lockdown, temporary relocation and recovery.

Our CARES Values

Community

We work together to support children, families and staff during periods of disruption.

Ambition

We strive to minimise disruption to learning and maintain high expectations for all learners.

Respect

We communicate clearly, honestly and sensitively with all members of our school community.

Equity

We ensure that all children continue to receive appropriate support, particularly those who may be vulnerable or have additional support needs.

Safety

The safety and wellbeing of children, staff and visitors will always be our first priority.

Aims

We aim to:

- Protect the safety and welfare of children, staff, visitors and the wider school community.
- Ensure effective communication during emergencies.
- Minimise disruption to learning and teaching.
- Maintain critical school functions wherever possible.
- Support recovery and the safe resumption of normal school operations.

Types of Incidents

Business continuity arrangements may be activated in response to:

- Fire or explosion.
- Severe weather.
- Flooding.
- Loss of electricity, water, heating or other utilities.
- Significant ICT, telephone or network failure.
- Major building damage.
- Significant staff absence.
- Public health emergencies.
- Security incidents requiring evacuation or lockdown.
- Any incident causing significant disruption to learning, teaching or school operations.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head Teacher (Incident Lead)

The Head Teacher, or nominated depute, will act as Incident Lead and will:

- Assess the nature and severity of the incident.
- Determine whether business continuity procedures require to be activated.
- Contact emergency services where necessary.
- Contact the East Ayrshire Risk Management Centre where appropriate.
- Establish an Incident Team.
- Coordinate emergency responses and recovery arrangements.
- Maintain a record of decisions and actions taken.
- Ensure effective communication with parents, carers and staff.
- Authorise the stand-down of emergency procedures when safe to do so.

Staff

All staff will:

- Follow emergency instructions and school procedures.
- Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Ensure children are supervised and accounted for.
- Assist with evacuation, relocation or lockdown procedures.
- Report issues or concerns to the Incident Lead.
- Support children and families throughout any disruption.

Emergency Response Procedures

When an incident occurs, the school will:

- Assess risks and immediate safety concerns.
- Contact emergency services where required.
- Decide whether evacuation, lockdown or shelter arrangements are required.
- Activate business continuity arrangements if learning and teaching are likely to be significantly disrupted.
- Establish an Incident Team to coordinate the response.
- Maintain records of actions and communications throughout the incident.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- Children with additional support needs.
- Children with medical needs.
- Children subject to Child Protection procedures.
- Younger children who may require additional support during an emergency.

Evacuation Procedures

The school may be partially or fully evacuated where a risk exists to the safety of children, staff or visitors.

During an evacuation:

- Standard fire and emergency evacuation procedures will be followed.
- Registers will be taken and all individuals accounted for.
- Emergency services will be contacted where required.
- Children will remain supervised at all times.
- Parents and carers will be informed as soon as practicable.

Lockdown Procedures

In situations where remaining within the building is the safest option, a lockdown may be implemented.

During a lockdown:

- Children and staff will remain in classrooms or designated safe areas.
- Doors and windows will be secured where possible.

- Blinds will be closed if appropriate.
- Movement around the building will cease.
- Staff will reassure and supervise children.
- Communication will take place through agreed school systems until the all-clear is given. [\(1\) | PDF](#)

Alternative Accommodation and Relocation

Where there is a partial or full evacuation and children cannot immediately be collected by parents or carers, reciprocal arrangements will be implemented.

Onthank Primary School and ASLC

The designated reciprocal establishment for Onthank Primary School and ASLC is:

Mount Carmel Primary School.

Onthank Early Childhood Centre

The designated reciprocal establishment for Onthank ECC is:

Hillbank Early Childhood Centre.

Where these arrangements are not possible, alternative accommodation will be identified through East Ayrshire Council's Risk Management Centre in consultation with Education Services. Longer-term arrangements will be coordinated through the Emergency Management Team.

When implementing temporary relocation arrangements, the school will consider:

- Safety and welfare requirements.
- Medical and additional support needs.
- Welfare and toileting facilities.
- Catering provision.
- Transport arrangements.
- Continuity of learning.
- Communication with families.
- Duration of disruption.

Communication with Families

Effective communication is essential during an emergency.

The school will communicate with parents and carers using appropriate channels including:

- School App notifications.
- SEEMiS messaging.
- Email communication.
- Telephone contact where required.
- Local authority communication systems.

Information shared will be timely, factual and proportionate to the situation. Parents and carers will be informed about closures, evacuation arrangements, relocation arrangements and changes to the school day as quickly as possible.

Continuity of Learning

Where access to the school building is restricted or unavailable, learning may continue through alternative arrangements.

This may include:

- Temporary relocation to another establishment.
- Adapted timetables.
- Blended learning arrangements.
- Remote learning using approved digital platforms.
- Provision of learning materials for home use.

Particular consideration will be given to ensuring equitable access for children with additional support needs and vulnerable learners.

Recovery and Resumption

Following an incident, the school will:

- Review the impact of the disruption.
- Restore normal operations as quickly and safely as possible.
- Support the wellbeing of children, families and staff.
- Participate in debrief and review processes.
- Identify lessons learned and improvements required.
- Update procedures where necessary.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and following any significant incident or change in local authority guidance.

Approved by: Head Teacher, Onthank Primary School & ASLC

Review Date: August 2027

Policy Lead: Head Teacher

Linked Policies: Health and Safety, Fire Safety, Child Protection, Attendance, Remote Learning, Information Security, Additional Support Needs and Critical Incident Procedures.