



Tees Valley Education Trust

Contingency Policy for Discovery Special Academy Examinations: Use of Alternative Premises and Handling Key Personnel Sickness

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Purpose

This policy outlines the contingency procedures for examinations at Discovery Special Academy, focusing on relocating to alternative premises in the event of emergencies or other disruptions, including the absence of key personnel due to sickness. The goal is to ensure safety, accessibility, and exam integrity while providing the necessary support for all pupils.

Scope

This policy applies to all examinations conducted at Discovery Special Academy, including internal assessments, standardised tests, and final exams.

This policy is to also be read in conjunction with the academy's risk assessments as appropriate and emergency planning procedures.

Key Considerations

- **Accessibility:** The alternative premises must be accessible to pupils with varying needs, including mobility and sensory requirements.
- **Support Services:** Ensure the presence of support staff and resources for pupils requiring additional assistance.
- **Safety:** Compliance with health and safety regulations, with special attention to the needs of special needs pupils.

Designated Alternative Premises

Discovery Special Academy will designate one or more alternative premises for use in case of emergencies or disruptions. These premises must meet the following criteria:

- **Accessibility:** The premises must be accessible to all pupils, with ramps, lifts, and accessible toilets.
- **Capacity:** Sufficient space to accommodate pupils, support staff, and invigilators, with proper seating arrangements.
- **Transport:** The premises should be within a reasonable distance and accessible by adapted transportation if needed.
- **Safety and Security:** Compliance with fire safety and other regulations, with secure storage for examination materials.

Procedures for Handling Key Personnel Sickness

In the event of the sickness or absence of the head of academy or exams officer, the following steps should be taken:

- **Deputy Role:** The deputy head of academy will deputise for the head of academy or exams officer in their absence, taking on their responsibilities for managing exams and ensuring continuity.
- **Role Clarity:** Ensure that the deputy head of academy is aware of their roles and responsibilities in overseeing exam setup, invigilation, and maintaining exam integrity.
- **Communication:** Inform staff, pupils, and parents/carers about the change in leadership and ensure continuity in the examination process.
- **Collaboration:** The deputy head of academy should work closely with the remaining exam team to ensure a smooth transition and address any issues related to the absence of key personnel.

Procedures for Relocation to Alternative Premises

1. Activation of Contingency Plan

If an emergency or disruption requires relocation, the following steps must be taken:

- **Decision to Relocate:** The head teacher evaluates the situation and decides whether to relocate to the alternative premises.
- **Communication:** Notify pupils, parents/carers, support staff, and invigilators about the relocation, providing clear instructions on transportation and logistics. The exams officer will notify the examining body as soon as possible, following the decision to relocate.
- **Transportation:** Organise transport for pupils, ensuring that any necessary accommodations are provided (e.g., adapted vehicles, additional support staff).

2. Examination Materials Security

To maintain examination integrity during relocation, follow these steps:

- **Secure Handling:** Examination materials should be secured and monitored at all times during relocation.

- **Designated Responsibility:** Assign specific invigilators or backup staff to oversee the security of exam materials.

3. Examination Setup at Alternative Premises

Once at the alternative premises, set up the examination environment with the following considerations:

- **Seating Arrangements:** Arrange seating to allow for accessibility and any required accommodations for special needs pupils.
- **Support Staff:** Ensure appropriate support staff are present to assist pupils during the examination.
- **Technical Resources:** If exams require technology, ensure the equipment is accessible and functional.
- **Invigilation:** Assign enough invigilators to maintain exam integrity and support pupils as needed.

4. Examination Continuation

With the setup complete, continue with the examination:

- **Adjusting Exam Times:** If there was a delay due to relocation, adjust the exam timing to compensate.
- **Exam Integrity:** Invigilators must follow standard examination protocols to prevent cheating and ensure fair conduct.
- **Student Support:** Provide necessary accommodations and assistance to pupils with special needs throughout the examination.

5. Post-Examination Procedures

After the examination, ensure proper procedures are followed to secure exam materials and provide feedback:

- **Secure Collection of Exam Materials:** Collect all exam materials securely and ensure they are stored or transported safely back to the primary premises.
- **Debriefing:** Conduct a debriefing session with staff to review the relocation process and discuss any issues.
- **Feedback and Improvement:** Gather feedback from pupils, parents/carers, and staff to improve future contingency planning.

Communication and Review

The Discovery Special Academy administration is responsible for:

- **Regular Communication:** Keeping all stakeholders informed about the contingency plan and providing clear guidance on alternative premises procedures.
- **Annual Review:** Reviewing this policy at least once a year or after any significant event to ensure its effectiveness and make necessary updates.

Conclusion

This contingency policy for Discovery Special Academy examinations focuses on maintaining exam integrity and continuity during disruptions, including the sickness or absence of key personnel, and provides procedures for using alternative premises. By following these procedures, Discovery Special Academy aims to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all pupils during examination disruptions.