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Author:	Kim Webster-Marsh (CEO)

Signed -

Business Continuity and Emergency Closure Policy
Building SEND Castles Ltd

1. Policy Statement

Building SEND Castles Ltd is committed to maintaining the delivery of its essential services, including education and care for children aged 4–11 with Special Educational Needs (SEN). This policy outlines procedures to respond to events that may disrupt the normal operation of the provision, including emergency closures, and ensures safety, communication, and continuity. Safeguarding children, staff, and visitors remains the highest priority during any disruption.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Safeguard children, staff, and visitors in emergency situations
- Minimise disruption to service delivery
- Outline clear procedures in the event of closure or disruption
- Ensure timely and effective communication with parents, staff, and relevant authorities
- Establish a plan for recovery and return to normal operations
- Maintain operational continuity while ensuring all safeguarding requirements are met

3. Scope

This policy covers:

- Emergencies requiring immediate closure (e.g., fire, flood, illness outbreak)
- Unplanned disruptions (e.g., power failure, building damage)
- Planned closures (e.g., training days, scheduled maintenance)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

CEO (Kim Webster-Marsh):

- Overall responsibility for implementing emergency procedures
- Decides on closures in consultation with relevant authorities
- Communicates decisions to staff and families

All Staff:

- Follow emergency procedures
- Support children during evacuations or closures
- Communicate with the CEO regarding safety concerns

5. Risk Assessment and Preparedness

Risk assessments are conducted annually and after any incident. These include:

- Fire safety and evacuation
- Gas leaks, electrical failure
- Extreme weather (snow, storms, heat)
- Other hazards that may affect safe operations

The Health and Safety Coordinator maintains a Business Continuity Folder that includes:

- Contact lists
- Evacuation procedures
- Emergency contact details for families and services
- Backup communication methods

6. Emergency Closure Procedures

Triggers for closure may include:

- Unsafe premises (fire, flood, structural damage)
- Severe weather or loss of utilities
- Staff shortage that compromises child safety
- Other emergencies impacting child or staff safety

Closure Process:

- Immediate risk assessed by CEO or most senior staff member
- Local Authority and Suffolk County Council informed if necessary
- Parents/carers notified promptly via phone, text, or email
- Arrangements made for safe collection of children
- Incident logged and debrief held for staff

7. Communication

- Parents updated via email and/or text message
- Social media or website may be used for widespread alerts if necessary
- Emergency contact details for all children and staff are maintained and regularly updated

8. Continuity Planning

- Short-term closure: Home learning packs or resources may be offered where appropriate; staff may work remotely to plan future sessions or update records
- Long-term closure: Emergency review of services undertaken; alternative locations or service arrangements explored with Suffolk County Council
- Child safety and safeguarding remain a priority in all continuity arrangements

9. Recovery and Review

- Debrief held with staff following an incident
- Risk assessments and procedures reviewed and updated
- Feedback from families and staff collected to improve planning and response

10. Monitoring & Review

- Policy reviewed annually or after any significant incident
- Integrated with Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and On-Going Staff Training policies
- Ensures operational readiness, compliance, and the protection of children and staff