

# Emil Dale Academy – Student Protection Plan

---

Academic Year: 2025/26

## 1. Introduction

1. Emil Dale Academy is committed to protecting the interests of all its students and ensuring that their opportunity to complete their programme of study is safeguarded. This Student Protection Plan sets out the risks that could impact students' continuation and completion, and the measures in place to mitigate those risks.
2. This applies to all students studying:
  - i. BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts Practice (Musical Theatre) - validated by North Hertfordshire College (Year 12) or The Knights Templar School (Year 13)
  - ii. Cert HE in Musical Theatre Performance - validated by the University of Bedfordshire
  - iii. BA (Hons) in Musical Theatre - validated by the University of Bedfordshire
3. This Plan is informed by Office For Students (OfS) guidance and contractual obligations with our validating partners. It is published on our Policies page ([www.emildale.co.uk/emil-dale-policies](http://www.emildale.co.uk/emil-dale-policies)).
4. Emil Dale Academy is committed to:
  - a. Ensuring continuity of study wherever possible.
  - b. Acting in students' best interests and consulting them in decision-making.
  - c. Communicating clearly, transparently, and in a timely manner.
  - d. Upholding our obligations to validating partners and regulatory authorities.

## 2. Assessment of Risks

5. We have carefully assessed a range of potential risks that may affect students' ability to continue and complete their studies. The table below outlines the risks, their likelihood, potential impact, and our mitigation strategies. We review these risks annually and update our mitigations where required.

| Risk  | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigation   |
|---|------------|--------|--|
| Closure of a course   | Low        | Medium | Courses undergo annual review with awarding partners.<br>Alternative delivery arrangements are considered through Business Continuity plans, remote learning plans and/or location delivery alternatives.<br>Teach-out plans are prepared in advance.  |
| Closure of Emil Dale Academy  | Very Low   | High   | The Academy has a strong financial position and diversified income. Formal partnership agreements allow for continuity or transfer.<br><br>Alternative delivery arrangements are considered through Business Continuity plans, remote learning plans and/or location delivery alternatives.                              |
| Loss of a validating partner  | Very Low   | High   | Strategic partnerships are reviewed regularly. Alternative validation or student transfer would be pursued.<br>Teach-out plans and transfer plans are also considered in contractual agreements with validating partners.  |
| Loss of access to key premises  | Low        | Medium | Multiple performance and teaching spaces are available, as well as remote learning arrangements.<br>Business Continuity Plan in place.   |
| Loss of essential teaching staff  | Medium     | Medium | Staffing reviews, associate staff, and succession planning ensure delivery.<br>EDA has ongoing recruitment processes in place whereby teaching staff are evaluated ahead of space for employment so we have a pool of staff available.   |
| Major disruption (e.g. pandemic, national emergency, industrial action)                                       | Low        | High   | Remote and hybrid delivery infrastructure available. Can be deployed quickly (evidenced through strategies deployed in Covid-19 pandemic).<br>EDA will adjust assessment methods in consultation with validating partners.<br>EDA will provide targeted wellbeing, housing, and financial support for affected students. |
| Loss or reduction of student support services (e.g., counselling, disability support, safeguarding provision) | Low        | Medium | Student wellbeing is a core priority. In the event of service disruption, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide interim cover via partner institutions or external providers.</li> <li>• Ensure that statutory safeguarding and SEND obligations continue without interruption.</li> </ul>           |

### 3. Measures to Protect Students

6. In the event of disruption, Emil Dale Academy will always act in the best interests of students, ensuring that their opportunity to complete their studies is preserved. Where risks materialise, the following measures will apply:

- a. Teach out the affected programme where feasible.
  - i. Wherever feasible, students will be enabled to complete their current course of study with Emil Dale Academy under a structured teach-out plan, developed in consultation with the relevant validating partner. This will include clear timescales, communication of any changes to assessment or delivery, and access to appropriate academic and pastoral support.
- b. Offer transfer options to other internal or partner programmes, or alternative providers:
  - i. Where teach-out is not possible, students may be offered transfer opportunities to:
    - 1. Another relevant course within Emil Dale Academy.
    - 2. Equivalent programmes at validating partners or agreed external providers.
  - ii. In such cases, we will provide students with:
    - 1. Academic guidance on the most suitable route.
    - 2. Support with credit transfer and recognition of prior learning.
    - 3. Practical assistance with relocation, travel, or accommodation, if needed.
- c. Students who are unable to continue their studies due to closure, withdrawal, or other disruption may be eligible for refunds or compensation:
  - i. Private sector fees paid directly to Emil Dale Academy will be handled in accordance with our Fee Payments, Debt Collection & Refunds Policy.
  - ii. Fees paid to validating partners (e.g., North Hertfordshire College, Knights Templar School, University of Bedfordshire) will fall under their own policies. Emil Dale Academy will actively support students in accessing these processes.
  - iii. In exceptional circumstances, compensation may also cover additional expenses, such as increased travel or relocation costs.
- d. Regulatory and contractual compliance
  - i. For students enrolled on validated programmes, Emil Dale Academy will always comply with the procedures required by the validating institution, which may include:
    - 1. Written approval before any course closure or suspension.
    - 2. Following University- or College-led teach-out strategies.
    - 3. Partner-managed transfer processes.
    - 4. Regular reporting and escalation of risks that could affect student continuation.
- e. Commitment to timely communication
  - i. Students will be informed of material changes at the earliest possible stage, normally within 10 working days of a decision being confirmed.

## 4. Communicating with Students

7. Clear, transparent, and timely communication is central to protecting students in the event of disruption. Emil Dale Academy is committed to ensuring that all students are kept fully informed and supported.

8. In the event of material change or disruption, we will:

- a. Provide Timely Updates
  - i. Students will normally be informed within 10 working days of a confirmed decision affecting their studies. Urgent updates (e.g., loss of premises or teaching suspension) will be communicated immediately.
- b. Use Multiple Channels
  - i. Information will be shared via:
    - 1. Email to all affected students.
    - 2. Notices on the Student Portal and Academy website.
    - 3. Face-to-face or online student meetings.
- c. Ensure Transparency and Clarity
  - i. All communications will explain:
    - 1. The nature of the change or disruption.
    - 2. The expected impact on students.
    - 3. The measures being put in place to protect continuation.
    - 4. Available routes for support and queries.
- d. Consult with Student Representatives
  - i. Where possible, the Academy will consult the Student Voice Committee or elected student representatives before finalising major changes. This ensures that student perspectives inform decision-making.
- e. Provide Named Points of Contact
  - i. A designated member of staff (normally the Business, Compliance and Strategy Manager) will act as the first point of contact for affected students, ensuring continuity and personal support throughout.
- f. Publish Information Publicly
  - i. Material changes will also be published on our website so that prospective students, applicants, and external stakeholders have access to the same information.

## 5. Student Support

9. Emil Dale Academy recognises that disruption to study can cause stress, uncertainty, and practical difficulties. We are committed to providing comprehensive support to help students navigate any changes to their programme or circumstances.

10. Students affected by course or institutional change will have access to:

- a. Academic Advice and Guidance
  - i. One-to-one academic consultations to explore study options.
  - ii. Support with credit transfer and recognition of prior learning.
  - iii. Advice on progression routes, including transfers to other providers or validating partners.
- b. Wellbeing and Mental Health Support
  - i. Access to in-house pastoral and safeguarding support.
  - ii. Referrals to specialist counselling or wellbeing services where required.
  - iii. Adjusted support plans for students with existing mental health or wellbeing needs.
- c. Practical Assistance
  - i. Help with securing alternative housing or travel arrangements if relocation is required.
  - ii. Provision of hardship funds or bursary support in exceptional cases of financial difficulty.
  - iii. Guidance for students with caring responsibilities or other personal circumstances.
- d. Financial Guidance
  - i. Access to advice on refunds and compensation (via Emil Dale Academy or validating partners).
  - ii. Information on alternative funding or bursary routes if disruption impacts household finances.
- e. Equity and Accessibility
  - i. Adjustments to ensure students with disabilities or additional learning needs are not disadvantaged.
  - ii. Specific support for students from widening participation backgrounds, care leavers, or those with dependants.
- f. Careers and Alumni Support
  - i. Additional careers advice and audition preparation for students whose training is disrupted.
  - ii. Ongoing access to alumni networks and professional development opportunities, even if students transfer or complete their studies elsewhere.

11. This holistic approach ensures that both academic progress and personal wellbeing are prioritised, and that no student is left unsupported during a period of disruption.

## **6. Governance and Review**

12. The Student Protection Plan is a living document, reviewed and updated annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose and aligned with regulatory requirements. Governance of the Plan rests with Emil Dale Academy's Senior Leadership, with oversight from validating partners and the Office for Students (OfS).

### **Annual Review**

13. The Plan is reviewed each academic year by the Senior Management Team and formally approved by the Owner/Principal.

14. Reviews take account of changes to risk profiles, regulatory guidance, and contractual obligations with validating partners.

### **Escalation Procedures**

15. If a risk materialises, the Plan will be activated under the leadership of the Business, Compliance and Strategy Manager and the Principal.

16. A Crisis Management Group will be convened to oversee decision-making, consisting of Senior Management and relevant programme leads.

17. Where validated programmes are affected, validating partners will be formally notified and directly engaged in planning and decision-making.

### **Regulatory Alignment**

18. This Plan is maintained in compliance with the OfS Condition C3 (Continuation of Study) and relevant contractual terms.

19. Updates or activations of this Plan that affect validated programmes will be undertaken in consultation with the relevant validating partner, and will respect all agreed escalation, notification, and termination processes.

### **Contractual Obligations**

20. This Plan operates in alignment with the following agreements:

- a. North Hertfordshire College Subcontract (for BTEC provision from 2025 entry onwards)
- b. The Knights Templar School (for BTEC provision entry 2024 or prior)
- c. University of Bedfordshire Memorandum of Agreement (for Cert HE and BA Hons programmes)

### **Student Awareness**

21. Any updates to this Plan will be published on the Academy's Policies page and communicated to all enrolled students.

22. Through this governance framework, Emil Dale Academy ensures that student protection is embedded into its strategic planning, quality assurance, and risk management processes.

## **7. Refund and Compensation**

23. Emil Dale Academy recognises that financial considerations are an important part of student protection. In the event of disruption, we are committed to ensuring that students are treated fairly and in accordance with published policies and contractual agreements.

### **Private Sector Fees (paid directly to Emil Dale Academy)**

24. Refunds and compensation for fees paid directly to Emil Dale Academy are managed in line with our Fee Payments, Debt Collection & Refunds Policy, published on our website.

25. This covers circumstances such as course withdrawal, non-delivery of private sector hours, or major disruption that prevents continuation of study.

26. In exceptional circumstances, compensation may extend beyond direct fee refunds to cover reasonable additional costs, such as increased travel, accommodation, or relocation expenses where disruption causes students financial loss. This is at the discretion of, and financial ability at the time of the college.

### **Validating Partner Fees**

27. For students enrolled on validated programmes, tuition fees are paid directly to the validating partner:

- a. BTEC students: Fees paid to North Hertfordshire College or The Knights Templar School are subject to their respective refund and compensation policies.
- b. Cert HE and BA (Hons) students: Fees paid to the University of Bedfordshire are subject to the University's refund and compensation procedures.

28. Emil Dale Academy will liaise directly with validating partners to ensure affected students are supported in accessing the correct processes quickly and fairly.

### **Commitment to Equity and Fairness**

29. Refunds and compensation will be administered in a way that does not disadvantage any student group, with particular consideration for students from widening participation backgrounds, those with caring responsibilities, or those with additional learning needs.

30. Where disputes arise, students will be advised of their rights to appeal through both Emil Dale Academy's complaints procedure and the validating partner's processes.

### **Additional Financial Guidance**

31. Students will be offered individual financial advice to help manage the impact of disruption.

32. In exceptional circumstances and dependent on the finances available, hardship funding or bursary support may be made available to help students meet unexpected costs.

33. This approach ensures that students are not left at a financial disadvantage due to circumstances beyond their control, and that processes remain transparent, equitable, and accessible.

## **8. Contact**

34. Students who have questions or concerns about this Student Protection Plan, or who are affected by disruption to their studies, are encouraged to contact us as soon as possible. We are committed to providing clear advice and personalised support.

### **Primary Contact**

35. Business, Compliance and Strategy Manager

Email: [sarah@emildale.co.uk](mailto:sarah@emildale.co.uk)

Phone: 01462 677808

### **Alternative Contacts**

36. For safeguarding or wellbeing concerns: [siobhan@emildale.co.uk](mailto:siobhan@emildale.co.uk) or [vicky@emildale.co.uk](mailto:vicky@emildale.co.uk)

37. For financial queries relating to Emil Dale Academy fees: [accounts@emildale.co.uk](mailto:accounts@emildale.co.uk)

### **Escalation Routes**

38. If a matter relates to a validated programme, students may also contact the validating partner directly (North Hertfordshire College, The Knights Templar School, or the University of Bedfordshire).

39. If concerns remain unresolved, students may escalate to the Office for Students (OfS), in line with national regulatory processes.

40. Emil Dale Academy is committed to responding to all student protection enquiries within ten working days.

## Document Control

| <b>Version Number</b> | <b>Date of Issue</b>         | <b>Review Date</b> | <b>Author</b> | <b>Changes Made/ detail</b>            |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--|
| 01                    | 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2025 | July 2026          | Sarah Moore   | First draft for publication on website |