



**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for
Safeguarding and Child Protection**

Lead Governor & Member of SLT:	Mrs Helen Reeves
To be approved by:	Strategy Committee
Frequency of review:	Annually
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Next review date:	May 2021

Helen Reeves (Headteacher)

Date: April 2020

Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the Queensbridge School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Ian Horgan	0121 464 5566	Ian.horgan@queensbridge.bham.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Malisha Kassim	0121 464 5566	Malish.Kassim@queensbridge.bham.sch.uk
Headteacher	Helen Reeves	0121 464 5566 07900242571	Helen.reeves@queensbridge.bham.sch.uk
Deputy Headteacher	Jayne Ashton	0121 464 5566	Jayne.ashton@queensbridge.bham.sch.uk
Designated teacher for looked after children	Aiden Herron	0121 464 5566	Aiden.herron@queensbridge.bham.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Darrell Harman		DHarman@Queensbridge.bham.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Phil Smith		enquiry@queensbridge.bham.sch.uk

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This is the role of the school SENDco Craig Thorneycroft in discussion with Ian Horgan Deputy Headteacher. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the pastoral team know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support. This provision will be agreed with the Deputy Headteacher in daily meeting with Headteacher. Pastoral team will refer all decisions to provide for a child on school site to the DHT, to ensure that the safety of the child drives decision taken by the school and that a consistent approach is followed for all families.

Queensbridge School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers

and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. This work is led by Ian Horgan Deputy headteacher.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Queensbridge School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent and work collaboratively to ensure family are supported.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Queensbridge School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

Queensbridge School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Queensbridge School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child and the child subsequently does not attend.

To support the above, Queensbridge School will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Queensbridge School will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Ian Horgan

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Malisha Kassim. A member of the school Senior management team will coordinate the provision in school each day:

Monday – Eleanor Clarke

Tuesday – Alison Lee

Wednesday – Helen Reeves

Thursday – Ian Horgan

Friday – Mike Barlow.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader or middle manager will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site in collaboration with the DSL who is available remotely every day. The on line system of recording – My Concern, will be used by all staff to log information to be disseminated. The daily meeting of the Headteacher and

two deputy Headteachers discuss issues with pupils that arise and disseminate information to appropriate staff.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via My Concern, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their My Concern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should use verbal communication/phone communication to report the concern immediately to the Headteacher. This should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Darrell Harman.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Queensbridge School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that: -

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, Queensbridge School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

Where Queensbridge School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Queensbridge School will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

Queensbridge School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Queensbridge School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety in schools and colleges

Queensbridge School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. Weekly on line safety information is distributed to keep pupils safe on line whilst working on their own equipment.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school code of conduct.

Queensbridge School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Queensbridge school will only be providing live virtual lessons using webcams in the most exceptional circumstances, where need is defined as a necessity agreed by the headteacher.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- The teacher will not use their webcam, children will hear their instructions only.
- Children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Queensbridge School to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting children not in school

Queensbridge School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person and that weekly contact is recorded. The Queensbridge School pastoral team all have caseloads of pupils and report weekly on their contact. Immediate issues are referred through my Concern to DSL.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its weekly newsletter that started May 1 via text and on the school website.

Queensbridge School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. The Deputy Headteacher will oversee this area.

Supporting children in school

Queensbridge School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Queensbridge School will continue to be a safe space for children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Queensbridge School will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

Queensbridge School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be be-spoke to each child and recorded on My Concern.

Where Queensbridge School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the Chair of Governors.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Queensbridge School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi- agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on My Concern and appropriate referrals made.