



COVID-19 Academy Closure Arrangements for Child Protection and Safeguarding at Q3 Academy Great Barr

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This addendum of the Q3 Academies Trust Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements for Q3 Academy Great Barr in the following areas:

Context	3
Key Contacts	3
Designated Safeguarding Lead	4
Vulnerable Children and Young People	4
Attendance Monitoring	5
Working with other agencies	7
Reporting a concern	7
Safeguarding Training	8
Staff Recruitment and Induction	8
Online Safety	9
Remote Teaching and Learning	10
Supporting Students	11
Peer on Peer Abuse	12

Context

From January 2021 parents/carers were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools and all childcare providers to provide care for a limited number of children - children who were vulnerable, and children whose parents/carers were critical to the COVID-19 response and could not be safely cared for at home.

This addendum outlines the safeguarding and child protection procedures that Q3 Academy Great Barr will follow during this period of closure to ensure that we continue to undertake our safeguarding duties. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children remains everyone's responsibility, and all staff have a role to play in safeguarding all of our students whether they are at home or in the Academy. At all times staff must consider what is in the best interests of the child.

This addendum is to be read in conjunction with the Q3 Academies Trust Child Protection Policy; Q3 Academy Great Barr Positive Behaviour Policy; Q3 Academies Trust Code of Conduct Policy; Q3 Academy Great Barr Remote Learning Policy; Q3 Academy Great Barr COVID-19 Risk Assessment.

This addendum will be reviewed and revised as local and national advice and guidance is updated.

Key Contacts

There are a number of staff who are appropriately trained and can take responsibility for and co-ordinate safeguarding:

- ✓ Designated Safeguarding Leads: Mr R Brocklebank; Miss S Callaghan; Mr L Price
- ✓ Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Ms A Kudryl
- ✓ Designated Safeguarding Practitioners:
 - Head of School – Mr M Arnull
 - Vice Principal – Mr A Slack
 - Attendance & Welfare – Mrs A Ruby
 - SENCo – Miss L Chamberlain
 - Head of Year 7 – Mr M Kulyna
 - Head of Year 8 – Mrs R Baines
 - Head of Year 9 – Mrs S Ward
 - Head of Year 10 – Miss M Samuel
 - Head of Year 11 – Mr J Webster
 - Director of KS5 – Mrs V Noakes

Other key contacts:

- ✓ Chair of Governors: Mr C Pritchard
- ✓ Safeguarding Governor: Mr D Lomax
- ✓ Lead for Remote Education: Mr M Harris; Mr A Slack

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Q3 Academy Great Barr has three Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and a Deputy DSL (DDSL).

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mr R Brocklebank, Miss S Callaghan, Mr L Price
The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Ms A Kudryl

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case, a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available via phone or email - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, the Head of School or Vice Principal will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to MyConcern and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy), and as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the Academy.

It is important that all Q3 Academy Great Barr staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy).

Vulnerable Children and Young People

Vulnerable children, for the purposes of continued attendance during the COVID-19 outbreak, are those across all Year Groups who:

- ✓ are assessed as being in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan, or who are a looked-after-child;
- ✓ have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment;
- ✓ have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by Q3 Academy Great Barr or local authorities, including children's social care services, and who might benefit from continued attendance. This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers, those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study), care leavers and others at our discretion including students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

Attending education settings is known as a protective factor for children receiving the support of a social worker. It is right that we prioritise support for those who will benefit the most. We are balancing this carefully with the urgent need to reduce social contact and support the work to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Q3 Academy Great Barr will continue to work with and support children's social workers and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with the Local Authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person(s) for this will be the DSLs/DDSL and Heads of Year.

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 increased risk. The exception to this is where an individual assessment identifies that an exception can be made in the best interests of children, and that there is a clear rationale for this, and the child, carers, school and social worker are in agreement.

Where a parent/carer is concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, Q3 Academy Great Barr or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

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 an Academy place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists, or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with an EHC plan can safely remain at home.

Annual Reviews will still need to take place in order for statutory deadlines to be met but this will be communicated with families in good time and will be carried out via phone call, conference call or virtual meeting. The lead person for this will be the SENCo – Miss L Chamberlain.

Q3 Academy Great Barr will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend the Academy where it is safe to do so.

Attendance Monitoring

From the start of autumn term 2020 student attendance was mandatory and the usual rules on attendance applied, including:

- a parents/carers' duty to ensure that their child, of compulsory school age, attends regularly at the school where they are a registered student;
- the Academy's responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence;
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with the Local Authority's codes of conduct.

Normal attendance procedures will continue when the Academy is fully open – see the Q3 Academy Attendance Policy.

As vulnerable children are still expected to attend the Academy during this period of lockdown, they should not be marked as Code X if they are not in the Academy (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining). The Academy will encourage vulnerable

children to attend but if the parent/carer of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent from the Academy, the parent/carer should let the Academy know that the student will not be attending.

The Department for Education expects schools and colleges to grant such applications for leave given the exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the Academy) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

As with vulnerable children, critical worker parents and carers should let the Academy know if their child will not be attending and, if not, the Academy will grant a leave of absence (code C) given the exceptional circumstances. All students who are not expected to be in the Academy will be marked as Code X. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.

If a student is not attending the Academy we will offer them access to remote education through Google Classroom. See the section on Remote Teaching and Learning for further details.

We will use a RAG rated risk assessment to identify our vulnerable students. This will determine the frequency of contact required. This will vary from 1-3 days, but contact will be no longer than every 3 days.

Red	Most risk of harm or neglect and fewest protective factors (would include those with a child protection plan).
Amber	A moderate risk of harm but with some protective factors (would include those identified as 'Child in Need'; and those with a social worker).
Green	Some concerns escalating or unmet needs; or have been red or amber and need monitoring.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not attend the Academy we will notify their social worker/family support worker. In addition we will follow our normal absence procedures of sending a text message, making a telephone call, and conducting a home visit.

All communication with parents/carers, social workers, key workers, virtual school workers, etc. will be recorded on the chronology of the students profile on MyConcern with the Profile Update Type as 'COVID-19 Welfare Check', and also on the relevant Key Stage Lockdown Tracker on Google Drive.

We will continue to monitor the Movelt inbox for Operation Encompass Domestic Abuse Incident notifications and take any appropriate action as advised by the MASH Education Team. We will also follow our normal Academy procedures for checking with the affected student.

Working with other agencies

All staff will continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after, and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- ✓ our three local safeguarding partners;
- ✓ the Local Authority about children with EHC plans;
- ✓ the Local Authority designated officer (LADO) and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds, and children in need.

We will continue to attend all relevant welfare and safeguarding meetings, including ICPCs/reviews called by the local authority, via a conference call, or appropriate virtual meeting platform.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Q3 Academies Trust Child Protection Policy; this includes making a report via MyConcern, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access MyConcern from home, they should email the DSL (or deputy) and Head of School. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. It is vitally important to do this.

All staff will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on students' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular children are more likely to be spending more time online and could be at risk.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the Academy, they should report the concern to the Head of School. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Head of School whilst away from the Academy, this should be reported by an email.

Concerns around the Head of School should be directed to the Q3 Academies' Chief Executive, Mr A Martin, or the Chair of Q3 Academy Great Barr Local Governing Body, Mr C Pritchard.

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2020 with regards to allegations against those in a Position of Trust.

We 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 paragraphs 178-182 of KCSIE 2020.

We will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 178 of KCSIE 2020 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

Safeguarding Training

DSL training is unlikely to take place face-to-face whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus. Therefore, many CPD organisations are now offering online DSL training. The Academy will ensure that the DSL/DDSL have up-to-date training and will continue to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters, and professional advice groups.

All Academy staff have had appropriate safeguarding training both face-to-face and online - Hays and Home Office Prevent, and have read Part 1 of KCSIE 2020. In addition the DSL/DDSL and senior team have undertaken additional Home Office Prevent training – Referrals and Channel.

The DSL will communicate any new local arrangements, so that staff know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Staff Recruitment and Induction

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, Q3 Academy Great Barr will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in Part 3 of KCSIE 2020.

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.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our Academy, 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.

Where Q3 Academy Great Barr utilise volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183-188 of KCSIE 2020. Under no

circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Where new staff are recruited or new volunteers enter Q3 Academy Great Barr, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction, a copy of the Q3 Academies Trust Child Protection Policy (and this addendum), KCSIE 2020 Part One, The Prevent Duty, Q3 Academies Trust Code of Conduct Policy, and Q3 Academy Great Barr Positive Behaviour Policy.

For movement within the Q3 Academies Trust, the Academy should seek assurance from the HR Manager or appropriate DSL, that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training. Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the Child Protection statement, confirmation of local processes, and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national pandemic, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that Q3 Academy Great Barr is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the Academy, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, InVentry will be monitored daily, and we will continue to keep the Single Central Record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 164-171 in KCSIE 2020.

Online Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate communications and online material. As such Q3 Academy Great Barr will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of appropriate procedures, filters and monitoring systems in accordance with our eSafety policy.

Where students are using Academy equipment at home, the ability to filter access is limited. This will be the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that they have appropriate parental controls applied.

Students have been reminded of internet safety, and parents/carers will be expected to manage their children's safety at home. Students can raise any concerns whilst online with the Academy. However, we have also signposted students to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

- ✓ [Childline](#) for support
- ✓ [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) to report and remove harmful online content
- ✓ [CEOP](#) for advice on making a report about online abuse

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk for example inadequate supervision at home, the impact of food poverty or comments or questions about child abuse or neglect. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Q3 Academies Trust Child Protection Policy, and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Remote Teaching & Learning

Students who are working from home have access to a range of learning materials to ensure that they are able to stay up-to-date with their studies.

We use Google Classroom, and all students have a Q3 Academy Great Barr Google Account that they can use to access this which will allow them in turn to see resources and activities specific to their classes. Students can log in to Google Classroom using their Academy email address which is in the format username@q3academy.me and their password which is the same as the one they use to log on to an Academy device.

Where a Live Lesson is offered this will be conducted through Google Meet, and students will only be able to access this through their Academy Google Account. Students should mute their microphone and not display their webcam when joining a Live Lesson, opting to toggle their microphone on if they wish to ask a question, or use the chat feature. Students should seek consent from a parent/carer before joining Google Meet lessons noting that they are recorded for internal quality assurance and safeguarding purposes, and may be shared on Google Classroom for students who were unable to join at the time of the lesson.

Below are some things for staff to consider when delivering virtual lessons:

- ✓ Avoid one-to-one contact, join Google Meet as a class/group only;
- ✓ Staff teaching from home should not use their webcam;
- ✓ Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone in the household;
- ✓ Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms;
- ✓ The Live Lesson should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed;
- ✓ Live Lessons should be held at the normal lesson time;
- ✓ Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background;
- ✓ Staff must only use platforms specified by the senior team, and approved by our IT network manager to communicate with students;
- ✓ Where lessons are delivered live (KS4 only) staff should record the lesson and attendance of students.

Q3 Academy Great Barr will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Please see the Q3 Academy Great Barr Remote Learning Policy for details.

Supporting Students

Q3 Academy Great Barr is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

o In the Academy

We will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Head of School will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to student ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Q3 Academy Great Barr 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 COVID-19.

Where Q3 Academy Great Barr staff have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they will discuss them immediately with the Head of School or Chief Executive.

We will continue to offer our current support for mental health for all students. Any planned virtual meetings will continue as normal where possible. We will also signpost all students and parents/carers to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

o Not in the Academy

Where the DSL/Head of Year has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral support in the Academy, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Students will be identified using the RAG rated risk assessment as described in the Attendance Monitoring section. Details of this plan will be recorded on the relevant Key Stage Lockdown Tracker on Google Drive and/or MyConcern.

All communication and records of contact with parents/carers, social workers, key workers, virtual school workers, etc. will be recorded on the chronology of the student's profile on MyConcern with the Profile Update Type as COVID-19 Welfare Check, and on the relevant Key Stage Lockdown Tracker on Google Drive.

Q3 Academy Great Barr and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The Academy will share safeguarding messages from the LA, police, and other safeguarding partners on its website and social media pages. In addition Heads of Year will share the information with students during virtual assemblies.

Q3 Academy Great Barr recognises that the Academy is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Teaching staff at Q3 Academy Great Barr need to be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

We will continue to offer our current support for student mental health for all students. Any planned virtual meetings will continue as normal where possible. We will also signpost all students and parents/carers to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

Those students who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) and are at home due to self-isolating or closure, will be provided with food hampers or food vouchers.

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Q3 Academy Great Barr will continue to follow the principles set out in Part 5 of KCSIE 2020 when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Concerns and actions must be recorded immediately on MyConcern and appropriate referrals made.