

OXFORDSHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL UPDATE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS



Issue 10

Term 5
2023/24



Welcome to the 10th edition of the Oxfordshire Virtual School's termly update for parents and carers of Children We Care For and Previously Cared For Children. Please circulate this newsletter to other people with parental responsibility or care responsibilities for Children We Care For or Previously Cared For Children. If you have any questions/requests for content of upcoming issues, laura.east@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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Transition Planning for Terms 5 and 6

Summer Term is a key time for planning new beginnings and endings. Change is unsettling and for many children a move up a year or to another setting is tricky. Parents and carers play an important role in helping children prepare for their next steps. You know the story of your child/ren and will be able to notice changes in behaviour or motivation and recognise these as potential anxieties about the end of the school year.

Look out for tummy aches, attendance wobbles, lack of motivation, bravado or ambivalence. All these may be masking feelings your child may not be able to articulate. **Year 6s and Year 11s particularly will be realising that they are leaving.** It is a good time to hold a PEP / meeting with school and make sure there is good communication and planning between year groups and settings. Don't leave things to chance – ensure school have invited key staff from new settings to meetings, enquire about extra visits and transition events. Talk to your child's school for ideas about how best to support a smooth transition.

- Ensure your child's school has put together a Transition Profile.
- Keep school up-to-date with your worries and hopes.
- Ensure school have linked up with the SENCo for identification and sharing of SEND information.
- Ask about booster groups and 1-1 tuition opportunities.
- Plan for endings – don't forget to support your child's setting with setting opportunities to say goodbye such as creating a memory book, signing a card, special goodbye sessions with key adults in school. This will make a huge difference.

Are you a kinship carer?

Did you know that the government have commissioned a new national offer of advice, information, training and peer support for all kinship carers via [Kinship](#) from April 2024.

Kinship is the leading kinship care charity in England and Wales who work with all kinship carers – the grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and family friends – who are caring for children when their parents can't.

You can also contact us if you have any concerns and needs regarding education.

For more information, visit: [Children in kinship care | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Wellbeing

It is Spring at last! Lighter evenings, blue skies and buds blossoming. This might be the time to focus on getting our children and young people outside and moving more. Being outside in nature is a great tonic for mood.

Ideas for things to do with children:

- ❖ Why not try a [well being calendar](#) for April?
- ❖ Visit www.relaxkids.com for exercises based on yoga.
- ❖ Visit [Place2Be](#) for great resources for mental health.
- ❖ Connect with people - make a play date with someone from your child's class.
- ❖ If your child is under 5 – visit [50 Things to Do Before You're Five in Oxfordshire](#)
- ❖ Set some goals with your children. Ask them to choose a goal. Write it down and put it on a post it on the fridge. Plan the steps needed. Celebrate success and share how it feels. Goals could be small – e.g. helping at home, reducing social media time, looking after a pet, practising a skill, doing a walk every day.
- ❖ [20 Best Things To Do In Oxfordshire](#)

[5 steps to mental wellbeing](#)



2024/25 Pupil Premium Plus for Children We Care For

The new 2024/25 financial year has started so our Children We Care For (CWCF) have a full Pupil Premium Plus pot. Summer Term funding can be useful to bridge the transition between year groups with interventions such as tutoring to boost confidence, key worker support, time with new teachers, etc. Are there trips, visits or other enrichment opportunities coming up in the Summer Term your children would benefit from? Schools may also consider using funding strategically to upskill new and existing staff.

The individual funding amounts for each pupil have increased from April 2024 to March 2025. For CWCF attending primary and secondary settings, their 2024/25 Pupil Premium Plus allocation is:

- Oxfordshire-based: £2000*
- Out of County: £2500*
- Early Years - £388

* N.B. Year 11s are only entitled to 1/3 of the above as Post-16 funding comes from a separate pot.

For more information, refer to our updated [Pupil Premium Plus Policy](#).

Pupil Premium Plus for Previously Cared For Children

From April 2024, the Pupil Premium Plus allocation for children adopted from care, children who left care under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and children who left care under a Child Arrangement Order (CAO) rises to £2570.

For more information on how schools can access and utilise this funding, visit our [Previously cared for children | Oxfordshire County Council](#) webpage.

Upcoming Open Days

Please encourage your Year 11s to attend the next College Open Events, especially if they have not yet applied or chosen a course. Please let Isabel Crowther Isabel.Crowther@oxfordshire.gov.uk know if they would like someone to support them on the visit or with their applications. It is also a good time to encourage your Year 10s to attend Open Days to start getting some ideas for their Post-16 options. Any Year 10s with EHCPs should have their Annual Review in the Summer Term to start considering post 16 providers.

18th April, 5:30-8pm, The Henley College [Information Event 18th April | The Henley College](#)

24th April, 4:30-7:30pm, Banbury and Bicester College [Banbury and Bicester College Summer Open Event - Banbury and Bicester College \(activatelearning.ac.uk\)](#)

1st May, 4:40pm-7:30pm, Blackbird Leys Technology Campus [Blackbird Leys Technology Campus Summer Open Event - City of Oxford College \(activatelearning.ac.uk\)](#)

1st May, 4:30-7:30pm, Reading College [Reading College Summer Open Event - Reading College \(activatelearning.ac.uk\)](#)

1st May, 5:30-7pm, Sparsholt College [Experience Sparsholt - Sparsholt College Hampshire](#)

8th May, 4:30-7:30pm, City of Oxford College [City Centre Campus Summer Open Event - City of Oxford College \(activatelearning.ac.uk\)](#)

8th May, 4:30-7:30pm, Bracknell and Wokingham College [Bracknell and Wokingham College Summer Open Event - Bracknell and Wokingham College \(activatelearning.ac.uk\)](#)

19th June, 3:30-7pm, Abingdon and Witney College [Open Day June: Witney - Abingdon & Witney College \(abingdon-witney.ac.uk\)](#)

Care Leavers' Bursary

From 1st August 2023, the Care Leaver Bursary for Apprenticeships went up to £3,000. For more information, visit:

[Apprenticeships bursary for care leavers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)