DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILDREN WE CARE FOR AND PREVIOUSLY CARED FOR CHILDREN UPDATE

OXFORDSHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL
Looking After Learning

Many care-experienced children have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and many of them have special educational needs (SEN). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. Designated teachers should take lead responsibility for ensuring that all school staff understand the things which can affect how care-experienced learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. The aim of this termly publication is to provide some information updates, contacts, useful strategies and ideas to support the work you do with our pupils. Watch out for each edition and do pass on, print and display. Please also take time to look at our webpages – click here. If you have any questions/requests regarding content, contact clare.pike@oxfordshire.gov.uk or laura.east@oxfordshire.gov.uk

CONTACT US

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Training Programme 2023/24
– BOOK HERE

Upcoming training for Term 3:

Weds 17th January
Planning interventions for complex children: where to start and how to go on

Tues 30th January
PACE for School Staff

Tues 6th February
Speech, Language and Communication Needs + Challenging Behaviour

Tues 20th February
Best practice for schools on working with adoptive and special guardian children and families

Weds 21st February
Designated Teacher Induction / Refresher Training

** Personal Education Plan (PEP) reminder **

The deadline for holding Spring PEP meetings is **Friday 9th February 2023** before the half-term week, as this gives Virtual School case holders time to quality assure the ePEP documents and process Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding requests before the close of the 2023/24 financial year.

PEP meetings after this date will be processed in the new financial year (from 1st April 2024).

- The Virtual School provides up to £2,000 per financial year for pupils placed in Oxfordshire.
- The Virtual School provides up to £2,500 per financial year for pupils placed out of county.

Designated Teachers who do not update the ePEP in time risk missing the 2023/24 Pupil Premium Plus deadline. Unfortunately, this money cannot be rolled over.

Year 10s and 11s with EHCPs

Please let us know if you are concerned about any Year 11s with EHCPs who do not have a clear destination named on their plan for Post-16 education, employment or training. Due to the lengthy consultation process, there is often a last-minute rush in March to name somewhere, which may end up not being the appropriate destination *or* may not provide the preferred course option which can lead to confusion, disappointment and/or a young person becoming NEET.

For those with Children We Care For in Year 10, especially those with EHCPs, it is a good idea to encourage them to attend Open Events this year to start getting an idea about their preferred destination. See p.5 for a list of provisions in or near to Oxfordshire. Those with EHCPs should have their Annual Review at the end of Year 10 or very early in Year 11 to enable those early consultations to take place.

If you have specific questions or concerns regarding Year 11 to Post-16 transition, please contact Izzi Crowther Isabel.Crowther@oxfordshire.gov.uk

This term is key for Post-16 students

Please build in time to support applications to Sixth Forms, universities, colleges and apprenticeships. Carers and social workers are not always as informed about options, so will need support. Try to take a copy of college applications that young people make, and ensure they put their social worker down as one of the key contacts. This makes following up applications much easier – i.e. have they actually applied, have they missed phone calls asking them to interview, etc.

Remember our Year 11 mentor Izzi Crowther is available to support this process, email: Isabel.Crowther@oxfordshire.gov.uk Alternatively, you can contact our Post-16 Team by emailing our Post-16 Phase Lead: mark.walker@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Safer Internet Day is on Tuesday 6th February - this is highly relevant for vulnerable children. The 2024 theme is: *Inspiring change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online*. There are lots of resources and ideas for activities on the website linked **here**.

Early Years Oral Health Newsletter

Amazing PEPs

We are well into the school year now and so many DTs will already have held PEPs for Children We Care For. Most are being held online. This has practical benefits but can also make the meetings less personal.

Here are some key elements that work well and make the PEP experience much more worthwhile.

- Check-in with the child's Virtual School case worker before the PEP by email to query anything you are unsure about. Check the carer is okay to log in or attend in person.
- **Check you can access [Looked After Call](#)** in good time – your case worker can help you with login worries.
- **Pre-populate** what you can on the **ePEP before the meeting**, e.g. school details and contacts on Section 3 - adding in data and some notes to review outcomes in Section 7.
- <u>**Make sure the Pupil Voice is completed prior to the PEP**</u> - this can be added to the ePEP ahead of the meeting along with the SDQ. PEPs must be child-centred and without the voice of the child, this is not possible.
- **Ask for input** from the class teacher and support staff or subject teachers in advance. This can be emailed to everyone before the meeting (or printed out to pass to carers in the meeting) and uploaded into the PEP documents. It's really hard for everyone to take in what is in the report when DTs read it out loud during the meeting. People in the meeting can't process the comments or be in a position to ask questions if they are hearing lots of information without a copy to reference.
- **Share data** – It is really important to have some performance data ready to share and discuss.
- Have an idea of **resources available** to support outcomes, e.g. interventions via SEND department, laptop, tutoring availability, trips, etc.
- **Aspirational** – If a child is at expected levels, this can of course be celebrated, but PP+ is available to be used to widen opportunities and accelerate progress further. DTs are in the best position to see beyond potential, so be creative and aspirational with the Pupil Premium funding available for your pupils. Pupil Premium funding requests will be approved in-line with our PP+ policy on our website:

[Pupil Premium Plus funding | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Don't forget to book onto our conference!

Should you have missed these recent updates from the Department for Education, see below for recommended reading:

- Championing kinship care: national kinship care strategy - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements: virtual school head role extension - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- Safeguarding children with disabilities in residential settings: government response - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- DRAFT Guidance for Schools and Colleges: Gender Questioning Children - Department for Education - Citizen Space – Consultation ends on 12th March 2024

OXFORDSHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL — *Lisa Cherry* — Rees Centre — DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION / UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD — DO IT.

Oxfordshire Virtual School presents:

2024 Annual Conference

'Nurturing a strong sense of identity and belonging in care-experienced children'

Join Oxfordshire Virtual School and contributors for our 2024 Annual Conference - a day of connection, learning and sharing of best practice.

The day will consist of keynotes, a choice of 3 workshops, an opportunity to network and a panel Q&A.

For more information and to book your free place, click here.

Upcoming Open Days and Events

City of Oxford College Events

- The City of Oxford College, Activate Rugby Academy, is for 16-18-year- old rugby players who have the ambition and potential to play rugby at the very highest level. The programme integrates both academic and rugby timetables for a developmentally focussed, competition supported programme for highly talented 16-18 year olds. We provide the support for students to pursue their rugby ambitions whilst studying their preferred academic pathway, whether that be through a range of A Levels, BTEC's in Sport, Business or Engineering or other vocational courses.
- Activate Rugby Academy Girls January Open Event - City of Oxford College (activatelearning.ac.uk) – 13/01/24 9:30am – 1pm **Harcourt Hill Campus** Harcourt Hill Oxford OX2 9AT
- Activate Rugby Academy: Rugby Programme Boys Open Event - City of Oxford College (activatelearning.ac.uk)– 13/01/24 9:30am – 2pm **Harcourt Hill Campus** Harcourt Hill Oxford OX2 9AT
- Blackbird Leys Technology Campus Spring Open Event - City of Oxford College (activatelearning.ac.uk) – 21/02/24 4:30pm – 7:30pm – Blackbird Leys Technology Campus, Cuddesdon Way Oxford OX4 6HN
- City Centre Campus Spring Open Event - City of Oxford College (activatelearning.ac.uk) – 06/03/24 4:30pm – 7:30pm – City of Oxford College, Oxpens Road, Oxford OX1 1SA

Banbury & Bicester College

- Banbury and Bicester College Spring Open Event - Banbury and Bicester College (activatelearning.ac.uk) – 07/02/24 4:30pm – 7:30pm Banbury College, Broughton Road Banbury OX16 9QA

Abingdon & Witney College

- Abingdon Campus Open Day - Abingdon & Witney College (abingdon-witney.ac.uk) – 07/02/2024 3:30-7pm Abingdon & Witney College, Wootton Road, Abingdon, OX14 1GG

Henley College

- The Henley College Campus Tour 17th Jan | The Henley College – 17/01/24, 31/01/24, 21/02/24, 20/03/24 10am – 112am
- Information Event 18th Jan | The Henley College– 18/01/24 5:50pm – 8pm
- Deanfield Avenue, Henley-on-Thames RG9 1UH

New College Swindon

- Open Evening - North Star Campus - New College Swindon 24/01/24 5-7pm North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1DY
- Open Evening - Queens Drive Campus - New College Swindon 31/01/24 5-7pm New College Drive, Swindon SN3 1AH

Reading College

- Reading College Spring Open Event - Reading College (activatelearning.ac.uk) 28/02/24 4:30pm – 7:30pm King's Road, Reading RG1 4HJ