

Designated Safeguarding Lead Update

Issue 5
Term 1,
2024-25



Welcome to the 5th edition of the Designated Safeguarding Lead update which is published termly. The aim of this publication is to provide some information, updates, contacts, useful strategies and ideas to support the work you do with children subject to CIN and CP planning, and children who have at some point been open to Children's Social Care. Please also take time to look at this webpage [Children with a social worker | Oxfordshire County Council](#) to support your work with this cohort. If you have any questions/requests regarding content, contact virtualschool@oxfordshire.gov.uk

CONTACT US

Website:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool

Direct Line: 01865 328550

Email:

virtualschool@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Training Programme 2024/25

* [BOOK HERE](#) *

Upcoming training:

[Thursday 26th September](#)

De-escalation Training (1 of 2)

[Thursday 3rd October](#)

Intro to Parental Imprisonment (1 of 2)

[Tuesday 8th October](#)

PACE for School Staff (1 of 2)

[Tuesday 15th October](#)

Formulation: Planning interventions for complex children

[Thursday 17th October](#)

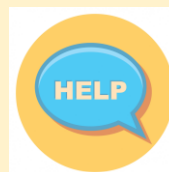
Brain development and the impact of trauma (1 of 2)

SENDCO Helpdesk

The SENDCO helpdesk is an early advice service. It is run by specialist SENDCOs who can:

- support SENDCOs to deliver a comprehensive graduated response within their schools/settings
- answer queries and problem-solve
- signpost and consider the next steps
- raise awareness of Oxfordshire County Council's [Local Offer](#)

For more information, [click here](#).



OSCB Safeguarding in Education Bulletin

[OSCB Safeguarding in Education bulletin: Summer 2024](#)
([cloud.microsoft](#))

ADHD in Focus: Strategies for Classroom Success

from The Beacon School's School Behaviour Secrets Podcast

[Click here](#)

Free downloadable resources

[Click here](#) to view free downloadable behaviour resources from the Beacon School.

Guidance for Developing Relational Practice and Policy

“All of us need to feel safe and cared for and enjoy a sense of belonging. Schools play a vital part in developing both relationships and the sense of belonging for all children.

Schools where children achieve well and enjoy their learning are those where relationships are at the centre of all they do. In these schools we see teachers who are able to create an atmosphere where all feel valued, where the life chances of all children are improved and where children take with them the ability to form meaningful and caring relationships into their adult life.”

- Ian Hemelik, Virtual School Headteacher,
Devon County Council

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/virtual-school/GuidanceforDevelopingRelationalPracticeandPolicy.pdf>

Attendance is everybody's business

The attendance of children on CIN and CP plans is your business

Average attendance

Status	Year groups 0 - 6			Year groups 7 - 11			All year groups		
	Last year	This year	Change	Last year	This year	Change	Last year	This year	Change
EHCP (all children)	92%	93%	1%	91%	90%	-1%	92%	92%	0%
EHCP (children with open cases)	90%	90%	0%	88%	83%	-5%	89%	88%	-1%
LCSS	93%	93%	0%	87%	83%	-4%	92%	91%	-1%
Early Help	93%	93%	0%	86%	74%	-12%	91%	89%	-2%
Open C&FA	92%	92%	0%	90%	81%	-9%	91%	90%	-1%
ChIN	90%	91%	1%	88%	80%	-8%	89%	88%	-1%
CPP	86%	88%	2%	69%	52%	-17%	83%	82%	-1%
CWCF	96%	96%	0%	93%	88%	-5%	95%	94%	-1%

Attendance of children in Oxfordshire at the end of Term 6 2023/24

Don't wait until a child's attendance drops below 90% to act! As soon as you see signs of attendance slipping, take action!

Median average. "Last year" includes entirety of last academic year. "This year" includes current academic year to date. "Change" shows difference between the two. Changes of at least +/- 5% are highlighted

Count of Children

	Year groups 0 - 6	Year groups 7 - 11	All year groups
EHCP (all children)	2329	1881	4210
EHCP (children with open cases)	458	418	876
LCSS	951	547	1498
Early Help	446	299	745
Open C&FA	145	85	230
ChIN	379	358	737
CPP	178	117	295
CWCF	78	140	218

Looking at the data circulated at the end of the last academic year (see above), you can see that the attendance of all vulnerable groups was down from the year before. This was particularly the case for secondary-aged learners, with the attendance of those open to Early Help and CP planning down significantly.

You can see from the table above that:

- Primary-aged children subject to CIN and CP planning were on average absent from school for the equivalent of at least 1 day a fortnight;
- Secondary-aged children open to C&FA and subject to CIN planning were on average absent from school for the equivalent of 2 days a fortnight; and
- **Secondary-aged children subject to CP planning (the most vulnerable) were on average absent from school for the equivalent of nearly 5 days a fortnight – over 4 and half months!**

If children are not in school, how can you be sure they are safe? What can you do to make school unmissable?

**** CALLING ALL SECONDARY SCHOOL DSLs ****

We urge you to uphold your duties to consider every one of your young people subject to CP planning and work with the team around those young people to find a way forward.

A NEW SCHOOL YEAR IS A FRESH START FOR EVERYONE

Good attendance at school is important to create a sense of belonging

Children absent from school miss out on much more than learning. They miss social opportunities, clubs and events, feedback and play. Good attendance is a big focus in Oxfordshire and we know that **being in school is a huge protective factor** for our vulnerable learners. Outcomes for these groups are typically significantly below that of their peers. **Good school attendance is critical if we are to improve outcomes for our children.**

**** In some cases, not attending school (including suspension from school) can escalate problems at home for our children ****

We know you will have systems and processes in place to support attendance. Examples of actions include: Calling home for all children who are absent, providing meet and greet check ins/providing key adult support, scheduling 111 time so issues are noticed before they escalate, working closely with the SENDCo to identify SEND barriers, creating nurture spaces in school, giving responsibilities in school such as putting chairs up or looking after a class pet, **being aware of triggers** such as tests, trips, etc. For other ideas, please refer to [Improving attendance: good practice for schools and multi-academy trusts - Case study - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Make contact with parents/carers and allocated professionals without delay if you notice that attendance/engagement is becoming a problem and seek to intervene early with strategies that might meet presenting needs.

Oxfordshire's Back to School Campaign

Watch out for our new campaign to encourage school attendance, highlighting the positive experiences of school for the majority of pupils, from stimulating learning experiences, to opportunities to make music, play sport, perform, develop lifelong friends, and learn to stay healthy. The campaign will last a year - and begins with these videos.

- ❑ <https://youtu.be/y6fHRWVA6ac>
- ❑ <https://youtu.be/5VASjgxOFT0>
- ❑ <https://youtu.be/DOI3eLDGQqE>
- ❑ <https://youtu.be/xodxg45wifk>

What is the SDQ for?

The strengths and difficulties questionnaire is an important tool to help professionals identify emotional and behaviour concerns and to flag up needs for further assessment. It enables professionals to see specific areas which may need targeted intervention. Tracking SDQ data is important as unmet SEMH needs are one of the main reasons for educational underachievement in children with a social worker. For more on strategies to support in meeting SEMH needs in your setting, view the [SEND Ordinarily available toolkit \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

Vulnerable and SEND pupils are more likely to be excluded and there is an understanding that more compassionate schooling is needed. See this thought-provoking trailer '[Excluded](#)'.

[Click here](#) to access a copy of the SDQ and for guidance on how to use it.