

School Readiness newsletter

September 2020- Issue 2

Oxfordshire School Readiness Strategy 2020

Oxfordshire's goal has been for all services working with young children and their families to play an important role in supporting school readiness.

The school readiness strategy reflects key principles that school readiness is achieved through families, ready communities, ready services and ready children. Through the School Readiness consultation 4 main priorities have been identified as being key for children to be ready for school and lifelong learning.

- Strong Home Learning Experience to support children's learning and development
- Early Engagement
- High Quality Provision
- Information-sharing and high-quality transitions through life

http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/starting-school/Oxfordshire_school_readiness_strategy.pdf

The next steps are to find out how colleagues in Oxfordshire meet the 4 priorities identified in the strategy. From reviewing this information, we will identify the gaps and meet the identified needs in Oxfordshire.

For further information please contact SchoolReadiness@Oxfordshire.gov.uk



In Oxfordshire we recognise the importance of early education and believe that every child deserves the best start in life to support them to reach their full potential. One of the ways we can improve outcomes for children is by working together.

It is our community supporting the Early Years Sector that makes a difference and shapes the quality of provision, raises the sectors knowledge and skill base, supports and motivates early years practitioners. If you have resources and information you would like me to share in this newsletter, please email SchoolReadiness@Oxfordshire.gov.uk by the 27th of every month.

Strong Home Learning Experience to support children's learning and development

Boogie Mites - engaging, interactive music-making to support all areas of your children's development!

Children AND adults love our catchy songs, exciting themes and eco-friendly instruments. Bring the brain-boosting power of Boogie Mites' interactive music-making to your children to support their readiness for school:

- Clear links to supporting all areas of EYFS
- Perfect for building early literacy and mathematical skills
- Helping close the attainment gap for school readiness
- Encouraging self-expression and boosting self-confidence
- Great for mental and physical well-being

We're experienced in online delivery, or in person (with appropriate COVID-19 secure measures). We've plenty of great feedback we can share, from settings who have already discovered how easy it is to weave music into daily life!

Please do get in touch to discuss how we can support you:

lizziel@boogiemites.co.uk or 07876 030129.

Free eBook: Everybody Worries by Jon Burgerman

Inspired by conversations with his parent friends who weren't sure how to explain what is happening right now to their small children, artist and writer Jon Burgerman decided to do something to help. <https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/books/jon-burgerman-everybody-worries-free-ebook/>

Street Tag

The Street Tag app was launched in Cherwell on 10th August and in first week there were 209 people signed up. See the flyer sent out with this newsletter for more information. For communities, Street Tag is exceptional at bringing families, neighbours and communities together and encouraging them to get out more, by turning their streets into a virtual playground, to increase residents' outdoor experience in walking, running and cycling more to earn rewards.

<https://streettag.co.uk/blog/2020/8/10/free-app-launched-turning-cherwell-into-virtual-playground>

Outdoor Learning with Muddy Faces

Muddy play ideas & inspiration developed as part of our campaign encouraging mud & natural materials play in the everyday lives of children.

<https://muddyfaces.co.uk/activity/a-z-mud-play/>

Oxfordshire Library Service

Oxfordshire Libraries are open! Over the summer 20 of our libraries have re-opened and we are working on the others. Our libraries are Covid-safe spaces for children and families to browse and choose books to borrow. There are a few differences to your library experience, but customers tell us they feel safe and glad we are open. Click here for more information: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries .

All activities are being run on our Facebook pages at oxfordshirelibraries, including the Summer Reading Challenge: Silly Squad. Our online eBook service is very popular, and we add more titles every month. Sometimes a real book is just what you need though, and we have plenty of those in libraries. If you have still have any books borrowed before lockdown started, now is the time to return them! We look forward to seeing you.

The Community Dental Service (CDS) Lottery Fund

CDS has a family fun page that had a lot of downloadable fun and educational activities for children. <https://communitydentalservices.co.uk/oral-health/family-fun/>

The CDS Lottery Fund - The CDS need your help need to support the smiles of young Cherwell children. Healthy Smiles is an accreditation programme to support early years settings and primary schools to improve the oral health of local children who are at high risk of tooth decay; a painful and preventable disease. The money raised through Cherwell lottery will support these settings to promote better oral health to children and their families and to become tooth friendly environments. This aims to reduce treatment needs such as fillings or a general anaesthetic, to remove teeth. It will also ensure that children will be able to eat, speak and sing with confidence. Children within areas of Cherwell will really benefit from your support. To start supporting visit: WWW.cherwelllottery.co.uk

Lenny and Lily in Lockdown and Lenny and Lily Return to School

These stories will help children make sense of their experiences during the coronavirus pandemic, communicate their feelings and prepare for more change as they go back to the classroom. As the stories are told in pictures alone, it is not necessary for children to be able to read words to enjoy them. This means they are appropriate for pupils in both mainstream and special education settings. Supporting text at the end of each story gives teaching staff and parents guidance on how to use the stories with children <https://booksbeyondwords.co.uk/lenny-and-lily-childrens-stories>

Early Engagement

Chatty Tuesdays!

Look out for our new 'Chatty Tuesday' posts on the Early Years Facebook Page beginning on Tuesday 8th September 2020.

Each Tuesday, we will be posting top tips, helpful hints and playful activities to promote early language development. The ability to communicate is fundamental to life chances and we want language and communication development to be a priority for everyone playing with and working with young children, from birth onwards.

Chatty Tuesdays will help highlight the importance of early language by citing useful research and suggesting practical activities that will be helpful to practitioners and parents and carers. Pop along to our [Oxfordshire Early Years Facebook Page](#) to join in with the chat!

Free early education for vulnerable two-year olds.

We are keen to encourage those eligible to attend their funded place in the autumn term, to play and learn whilst meeting friends old and new. The number of eligible two-year olds has gone up quite substantially this term and the council has written to every family to make sure they know that they are eligible if they choose to send their child.

So far 1231 families have had codes verified but only 740 have had places confirmed. We would encourage those working with families to spread the word and encourage families to contact Oxfordshire's Family Information Service who can help with applications and finding places. A childcare search can be completed by a parent/carer at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/familyinformation or alternatively parents can e mail fis.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call 01865 323332

Two-year-old reviews

From September the Health Visiting Service will send a letter to all parents of pre-school children to acknowledge they have missed their two-year review due to COVID-19 and to encourage them to make contact with their health visitor if they have any outstanding concerns about their child's physical and emotional development. The service will provisionally recommence universal 2-year reviews from December, dependant on the current COVID-19 situation.

The government [guidance](#) says that settings will not be required to undertake the progress check at age 2 during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak until further notice. However, the [disapplication's guidance](#) states that the end date of these legislative changes could be the 25 September or earlier if the government advice on self-isolation and social distancing is amended.

We know that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented some unique challenges for families and we expect you to identify emerging concerns about a child in your care and seek additional support if needed, so it is important that your 2-year progress checks resume as soon as is practical once children return to your setting.

With this in mind we would like you to work in partnership with the Health Visitors and embrace the chance to strengthen partnerships with families by completing the missed 2 yr. progress checks during the pandemic. Please do not hesitate to contact the linked [Health Visitor](#) with parental permission if you have any concerns about a child in your setting.

Back to school campaign posters

These posters and postcards are aimed at parents and carers to remind them to check that their child is up to date with their vaccinations before starting nursery, primary and secondary school. It features the MMR vaccine and the pre-school booster. Further information can be found at

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/94/resources/4879>

It is never too early to establish healthy habits.



Oxfordshire County Council is working in partnership with Active Oxfordshire to offer an exciting, fully funded programme to your setting. 'Little Feet' is a great way to get families and young people more active by travelling to schools or early years settings by walking, scooting or cycling.

Since 2017, over 90,000 car journeys have been saved in Oxfordshire. 36,000 of these were because children walked to school. We will be launching the Little Feet Challenge during Walk to School Week (w/c 5th October) Little Feet walking challenge is a great way to encourage families with young children to commit to healthy travel throughout childhood - and hopefully for life!

For more information or to book a place email lucydisley@activeoxfordshire.org

Are you ready for pregnancy?



Good mental health before, during, and after pregnancy is as important as your physical health. Make sure that you make time to look after yourself.

#ReadyforPregnancy <https://tinyurl.com/yblztbhl>

High quality provision

A SENCO Story

In this series, Early Years Consultant Rebecca Fisk describes how she worked with a newly qualified early years SENCO to devise a programme that supports children's communication and language development.

In Part 1, Rebecca looked at the rationale for the group support and the nature of the children's identified needs. <https://family.co/blog/the-adult/a-senco-story-part-1-why-choose-language-support/>

In Part 2, we'll hear from Rebecca about the practical steps of the programme she devised to meet the children's needs.

https://family.co/blog/the-adult/senco-rebecca-fisk-part-2/?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ES%20Email%20%5BUK%5D%3A%20Weekly&utm_content=Module%201.1

In Part 3, Rebecca offers her reflections on the success of the 12-week support programme, and how it helped enhance children's listening, attention and language abilities. https://family.co/blog/the-adult/a-senco-story-part-3-did-language-intervention-make-a-difference/?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ES%20Email%20%5BUK%5D%3A%20Weekly%20&utm_content=Module%201&autopilot_id=paula.lochrie@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Early Years TV – Are you signed up to get your Professional Development?

<https://www.earlyyears.tv/>

Tales Toolkit webinars

Alistair Bryce Clegg - Speaker, blogger and author

24th September 2020, 8pm

Webinar: "Can you really learn through play?"

Families welcome!

Register here https://talestoolkit.clickmeeting.com/can-you-really-learn-through-play-alistair-bryce-clegg/register?_ga=2.63105071.1249030469.1598337417-2033386421.1592820705

Information-sharing and high-quality transitions through life

Activities to do with Foster children

The Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY) website features a range of activities you can do with your foster child to help in preparing them for the transition to primary school, during their first few weeks, and throughout their first year in school. <https://www.pacey.org.uk/parents/toolkit/>

Healthwatch Oxfordshire

'Healthwatch Oxfordshire are currently mapping the community and voluntary organisation support to parents and carers of children across the county. This work will help us and our Parent Representative Ambassador on the Children's Trust, to reach out to parent groups across Oxfordshire. We want to promote the Children's Trust and understand what issues and concerns organisations have, that can be raised with the Trust.

Please let us know of any voluntary and statutory groups that you are in contact with or aware of by sharing their contact details such as email, telephone, and website. I understand that due to GDPR there may be cases where sharing personal contact details is not appropriate. In that case please forward this email onto them. Please respond to emma.teasdale@healthwatchoxfordshire or if you would like to talk to Emma about this call 01865 520520'.

Thinking about recovery as children return to school?

Jigsaw PSHE have FREE materials available for students from ages 5-16.

- Rainbow 3-11/12: <http://jigsawpshe.com/recovery/>
- Rainbow 11/12-16: <http://jigsawpshe.com/recovery/11-16/>

Approach discipline with a restorative mindset.

Go to <https://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/node/6570> for more information on free training in restorative practice available to all Oxfordshire schools.

Magic Breakfast Campaign

The school food charity, [Magic Breakfast](#), is campaigning for a "Breakfast Bill" which would ensure Government funding for breakfast for eligible children.

The Charity says: 1.8 million school-age children are currently living in a household experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity. This contributes to an attainment gap, with children from disadvantaged backgrounds more than 19 months behind their wealthier peers by the time they leave school.

DfE research has found that a child who achieves 1-2 good GCSEs contributes an additional £141,000 to the economy over their lifetime. Teachers also report school breakfasts lead to improvements in children's behaviour, concentration, social skills, emotional and mental wellbeing and healthy eating habits. The Bill will give all schools, with significant evidence of need, the support they require to provide a free breakfast to eligible children. https://fhcappg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/School-Breakfast-Bill-Background-Briefing-19_2.pdf

Clear Sky provides therapeutic Play and Creative Arts service

Clear Sky provides therapeutic Play and Creative Arts services to parents, children and schools and were able to continue to provide a mix of remote and face to face interventions whilst schools were closed.

Their latest professional face to face training courses including 'Baby Bonding' will be running from October in Oxfordshire, restrictions allowing.

Play and Attachment CPD training is also offered online through their membership body, The Institute for Play and Attachment; to support practitioners, social workers, therapists and family support workers around the globe. It provides 2+ hours of expert online CPD each month, plus research, self-care and free resources.

Their 'Emotionally Healthy Schools' membership is a framework to support schools to develop and maintain good mental and emotional support across the entire school community. The membership is an online resource and provides access to CPD modules for staff, mental health assemblies, tools, games and a range of parent materials. For further information contact anna@clear-sky.org.uk Phone : 07919 143438

Government and Ofsted Guidance

Meeting people from outside your household

How you can see people that you do not live with while protecting yourself and others from coronavirus (COVID-19). https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household-from-4-july?utm_source=6bf4bf68-67ab-45a8-bf60-7208e5a318b1&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

COVID-19: guidance for supervised toothbrushing programmes in early years and school settings

Poor oral health in childhood has a significant impact on children and families, with tooth decay being the most common reason for 6 to 10-year old's being admitted to hospital to have teeth removed. This guidance also included infection prevention and control advice. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-supervised-toothbrushing-programmes/covid-19-guidance-for-supervised-toothbrushing-programmes-in-early-years-and-school-settings>

Read the guidance: [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

What childcare services early years settings, childminders and local authorities need to provide during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Change made: Added 'What to do if a child is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)'.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures?utm_source=388e75d6-38b6-4ef3-bf0f-f9728055dfb4&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Read the blogs: [Returning to school: your questions answered](#)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2020

The latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 has been published and can be downloaded here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

The London Grid for Learning (LGfL) have translated KCSIE 2020 Part 1 into a number of community languages as part of their commitment to helping schools keep children safe.

The translations were carried out by professional linguists with secondary proofing. However, the original English version should be treated as the official source of statutory school staff duties. Translations available are:

English (original)	Polish
Arabic	Portuguese
Bengali	Punjabi
Cantonese	Spanish
Gujarati	Urdu
Mandarin	Somali

The translated documents can be found here:

<https://national.lgfl.net/DigiSafe/kcsietranslate>

[Ofsted: COVID-19 rolling update](#) – This sets out our guidance and information relating to COVID-19 (coronavirus) for schools, early years, children's social care and further education and skills providers. We are updating it regularly. If you need to see what we've added since you last checked it, you can select '[history](#)' on the page and this lists all the updates.

Ofsted to visit nurseries and childminders this autumn - Ofsted will start carrying out visits to some nurseries and childminders from September 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-to-visit-nurseries-and-childminders-this-autumn>

Early years foundation stage statutory framework (EYFS)

The EYFS framework was updated on 4 September 2020 to reflect new regulations which allow temporary coronavirus (COVID-19) disapplication's to re-apply if a provider is prevented from complying with the EYFS due to coronavirus (COVID-19) related restrictions or requirements. They also add disapplication's around paediatric first aid to the transitional period, which originally only applied to disapplication's around staffing levels.

Download here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Articles/News/Research

Families Active and Sporting Together (FAST) Physical Activity Lockdown Survey

During lockdown the FAST team wanted to learn more about the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on our participants' physical activity levels and behaviours. We also set out to understand current barriers to practising physical activity and preferences in terms of attending sessions under social distancing guidelines. These findings can help FAST better support families in adjusting to being active under our current difficult circumstances. **See the survey attached to the email.**

Advice to parents and carers on keeping children safe from abuse and harm.

This report Provides advice for parents and carers about keeping children safe from abuse and harm during the coronavirus pandemic. Highlights the risks that children may be particularly vulnerable, and signposts help and support available.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-from-abuse-and-harm/advice-to-parents-and-carers-on-keeping-children-safe-from-abuse-and-harm>

COVID-19 and social mobility.

Sutton Trust, Chris Pascal, Tony Bertram, Carl Cullinane and Erica Holt-White examine the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on early years provision in England, with a focus on young children and families from less advantaged backgrounds. The report considers the effects on child development; the challenges of home-schooling during lockdown; and the needs of parents moving on from lockdown. It looks at the impact on providers including potential impacts on the early years workforce. <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Early-Years-Impact-Brief.pdf>

The Importance of Touch

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on a Fit and Healthy Childhood has published a report entitled “Wellbeing and Nurture: Physical and Emotional Security in Childhood”. Sponsored by Liverpool John Moores University, the report cites emergent neuro-scientific evidence showing that nurturing touch is an essential prerequisite of the physical and emotional security that children need in order to grow and flourish. There are many practical recommendations for policymakers, professionals and practitioners. <https://fhcappg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ReportWellbeingandNurtureFinal140720.pdf>

Babies in Lockdown

report - jointly produced by Best Beginnings, Home- Start UK and the Parent-Infant Foundation, revealed the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on those pregnant, giving birth or at home with a baby or toddler.

No other group of parents in recent history has had to navigate pregnancy, birth and beyond under such extraordinary circumstances. Over 200,000 babies were born between 23rd March and 4th July and the survey suggests that the impact of COVID-19 on these babies could be severe and may be long-lasting.

<https://babiesinlockdown.info/download-our-report/>

For up to date information

[COVID-19 Gov guidance](#)

[E-newsletter](#)

[Facebook](#)

[OSCB](#)