



Welcome to the 7th 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, contact clare.pike@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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Children in Care Council

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) is a group of children and young people with experience of being in care. They help improve how children are cared for in Oxfordshire. CiCC works with young people up to 25 years old and is open to anyone in care or leaving care to join. Membership has grown over lockdown and the ambassadors have been spreading the word more widely. Meetings are online which means CiCC can reach out to more people. Some events are in person such as the visit to the City Farm, sailing at Farmoor Reservoir and the Christmas meal.

The CiCC have developed welcome packs for new into care children, met with Ofsted and the Children's Commissioner and held workshops and meetings alongside fun events such as Fusion Arts and leadership training.

Want to get your children and young people involved?
Find out more on the [OXME website](#).



Pupil Premium Plus for Previously Cared for Children

For educational settings to secure the above Pupil Premium Grant for children subject to an Adoption Order, Special guardianship Order or other Child Arrangement Order where a child is not returned to their birth parents, it is the responsibility of the educational setting to prompt parents and guardians who will have needed to inform the setting about their child's circumstances in time for the setting to record the child's status on the January census. From 1st April 2023, Pupil Premium funding is also available for pupils who have been adopted from care or have left care from outside of England and Wales.

For more information, visit: [Previously cared for children | Oxfordshire County Council](#) and go to 'Pupil Premium Grant'

Admissions Deadlines

See below for the important deadlines for this academic year:

Applying to primary school

- September 2023 - Applications open
- 15th January 2024 is the closing date for Reception and Junior transfer applications each year

Applying to secondary school

- 31st October 2024 Closing date

UCAS

- **31 January 2024 for 2024 entry at 18:00 (UK time)** – for the majority of courses.

Post 16 courses

Many colleges have open events. Check college websites for details. Applications are open right up to August 2024 but apply early for popular courses.

Apprenticeships

Look out for vacancies early in new year which is when many businesses start to advertise.

Post 16 Transition

Remember that if your child is in Year 11, they may need additional support with the process of applying to Post-16 courses.

Ideas to support your child:

- Phone their school to ask about the process (especially if you have not had a Year 11 before).
- Request time in school to research courses, talk to ex-students and support with application forms.
- Find out about open events and go with your child to these events.

Anti Bullying Week 2023: *Make A Noise About Bullying*

Anti-Bullying Week takes place from **Monday 13th to Friday 17th November**. The week kicks off with Odd Socks Day on Monday 13th November. For more information, [click here](#).

Research tells us that **care-experienced children are twice as likely to get bullied compared to their peers**. For more information on how to safeguarding care-experienced children from bullying and from being bullies, [click here](#).

Remember, Remember...

Bonfire night and fireworks are a big part of November. Please be aware that for some children who have experienced trauma, fireworks can be a cause of distress.

Christmas time can also be a difficult time with lots of feelings flying around. [Click here](#) for a Beacon House resource which explores how to **use PACE at Christmas time**.

Dolly Parton Imagination Library



Enroll your child & give them the gift of reading...**FREE!**

Oxfordshire Virtual School participate in the Imagination Library book gifting programme which enables children under 5 years old to receive a Dolly Parton Imagination Library book every month through the post to keep. The Imagination Library are in the process of putting together their annual report for the Looked After Children (England) programme. The report is an essential part of ensuring the funding for this programme, from the charity [Make My Day Better](#), continues each year.

Foster carers are invited to contribute, highlighting how valuable the programme has been to their children, provide evidence that the programme is making a difference, is valued and provides a service that people want to continue.

Please send your feedback to christine.grandison@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Early Years Lead – Virtual School)