

OXFORDSHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL UPDATE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS



Issue 2

Term 2
2022/23



Welcome to the 2nd 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

CONTACT US

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What is a Virtual School?

The Virtual School is a service within the Local Authority that acts to promote the education of children and young people who are in care (Children We Care For) or who have been in care (Previously Cared For Children). The school doesn't have a building and children don't attend it - they remain the responsibility of the school at which they are on roll.

Our focus is on access, engagement and excellence. Virtual School staff work closely with educational settings and other agencies to ensure pupils have the best possible provision, educational opportunities and outcomes. We can advise and guide educational settings and help pupils gain access to specialist support, as appropriate. We also work strategically to influence policy, provide relevant training and ensure the voice of the child is always at the heart of our work.

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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 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](#).

Training Programme 2022/23

[Click here](#) for details

Upcoming training:

Weds 16th November
Attachment Theory

Weds 7th December
Speech, Language and Communications Needs
and Challenging Behaviour

Half-Term Activities

[What's On for Kids: October Half Term
Oxfordshire 2022 - Red Kite Days](#)

Admissions Deadlines

See below for the important deadlines for this academic year:

Applying to primary school*

- 1st November 2022 - Applications open
- 15th January 2023 is the closing date for Reception and Junior transfer applications each year

Applying to secondary school*

- 6th September 2022 - Applications open
- 31st October 2022 Closing date

* These are Oxfordshire dates – do check dates on your Local Authority's website if you do not live in Oxfordshire.

UCAS

- 17th May 2022 - University applications open
- 25th January 2023 - Deadline for applications

Post 16 courses

Many colleges have open events. Check college websites for details. Applications are open right up to August 2023 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.

Online Safety

Refer to the pdfs uploaded to the website to access information that relates to the social media sites "Snapchat", "Discord" and "Reddit" which your children may access. Please share these resources with others to promote safe use of these sites and applications.

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.

It is also a key family time and so be sensitive if your children are living away from their families and missing the way their community celebrates.

**Opportunities on offer via
The Oxford School of Drama at Wychwood**