



OXFORDSHIRE  
PARENT CARERS FORUM

The Voice of Parent Carers in Oxfordshire

# Autumn Newsletter

*For parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and/or special educational needs in Oxfordshire*



---

[Waiting Lists](#)

UPDATE ON CURRENT  
WAITING LIST TIMES  
IN OXFORDSHIRE

[Who's Who](#)

INTRO TO THE SEND  
CASEWORK TEAM

[Parent Carer  
Journeys](#)

HEAR FROM PARENT  
CARERS IN  
OXFORDSHIRE

[Meet the  
Head of  
SEND in  
Oxfordshire](#)

---

# Welcome to the OxPCF Autumn Newsletter



---

**A VERY WARM WELCOME  
TO PARENT CARERS IN  
OXFORDSHIRE**

---

## Letter from our Co-Chairs

### About Us

Oxfordshire Parent Carers Forum (OxPCF) is an independent group enabling the voices of parent carers of children and young people with SEND across Oxfordshire to be heard. The forum is committed to making parent carer participation an integral part of service and information development and provision in Oxfordshire, with the aim of creating better outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.

We are run by parent carers for parent carers and are here to give parent carers a voice. By joining us, we can work together to improve services for our children.

### Join our mailing list

Get in touch:

By phone: 07394 735666

By email: [info@oxpcf.org.uk](mailto:info@oxpcf.org.uk)

Website: [www.oxpcf.org.uk](http://www.oxpcf.org.uk)



[www.facebook.com/oxpcf](https://www.facebook.com/oxpcf)



OxPCF would like to offer a warm Autumn Welcome to all our families, both old and new. Our newsletter now reaches more than 600 families across Oxfordshire and we hope you find it's content helpful.

If there are topics that may interest you, then please let us know and we will do our best to include them next time.

It's been a busy few weeks for families, we've seen the end of half term holidays for many, Halloween and the clocks changing 😞 Something, which many families greatly struggle with and alongside this the children informing us that it's nearly Christmas!!

Where does the time go?

Here at OxPCF we are as busy as ever and are very excited to welcome three new members to our steering group. Their involvement will help strengthen and broaden our understanding of parent carer experience in the county and we look forward to sharing this journey with them. Schools have now returned once more and the Covid safe routines that we have lived with for more than a year, are just a part of our new everyday. Schools and some families though, are still struggling with the impact that this virus is having on them and their lives. Anxiety around returning to school is high and many young people are experiencing mental health issues for the first time, or a worsening of existing problems around mental well-being.

Along with all those whose children are enjoying being back at school, or meeting together with other Home Ed families, it's important that we do not forget the children and young people, who maybe do not have a school place yet, or whose situation is not yet clear.

For these parents this is a difficult time and one that may be filled with worry about their child's future. Do feel free to share any of your experiences of returning to school or not, with the Forum. Your feedback helps us inform the local authority and also support other parents.

Take care,  
Steph and Jules

## Delivery of specialist 1:1 and group interventions for children and young people in education settings

Covid-19 has clearly impacted on the services that our children are accessing. Many specialist services have had to adjust their delivery models during their recovery.

The DfE, DHSC (Department of Health and Social Care), NHS England, Council for Disabled Children and the National Network of Parent Carer Forums have developed guidance which sets out the exceptions for the delivery of specialist support for children and young people which you can read

[here](#)



## Covid-19 Vaccination Updates

If your child is 12-15 and is classed as vulnerable, then they are eligible for a Covid Vaccine and should have received an invite in August. If you haven't received one then we would suggest the following:

- ▶ Contact your GP. All GP practices are required to identify the eligible children on their register by 19th August. If your GP is unaware of the process then refer them to [this NHS letter](#)

## Vaccination Anxiety

Is your child anxious about receiving the Covid jab? If so, the following resources may be helpful:

[Easy read PDF: Coronavirus vaccine for children and young people](#)

[Simple text: Covid-19 vaccination for children and](#)

# News from Oxfordshire County Council

Thank you to everyone who attended the SEND Parent Carer Feedback Session that took place on the 27th September.



We have recently received the response from Oxfordshire County Council to the current key issues that were raised by you during the session.

Click on [this link](#) to view it and feedback your views by emailing your thoughts to [info@oxpcf.org.uk](mailto:info@oxpcf.org.uk)



[www.oxpcf.org.uk](http://www.oxpcf.org.uk)

OXFORDSHIRE  
PARENT CARERS FORUM  
*The Voice of Parent Carers in Oxfordshire*

## Join Us!

**Are you a parent carer of a child or young person  
(0-25 yrs) with SEND?**

We need your help to improve services in Oxfordshire for ALL our children and young people in Oxfordshire.

We have lots of exciting projects to be involved in!

Fill in our [expression of interest form](#) or email [info@oxpcf.org.uk](mailto:info@oxpcf.org.uk) for more info!



 JOIN US

# News from Oxfordshire County Council

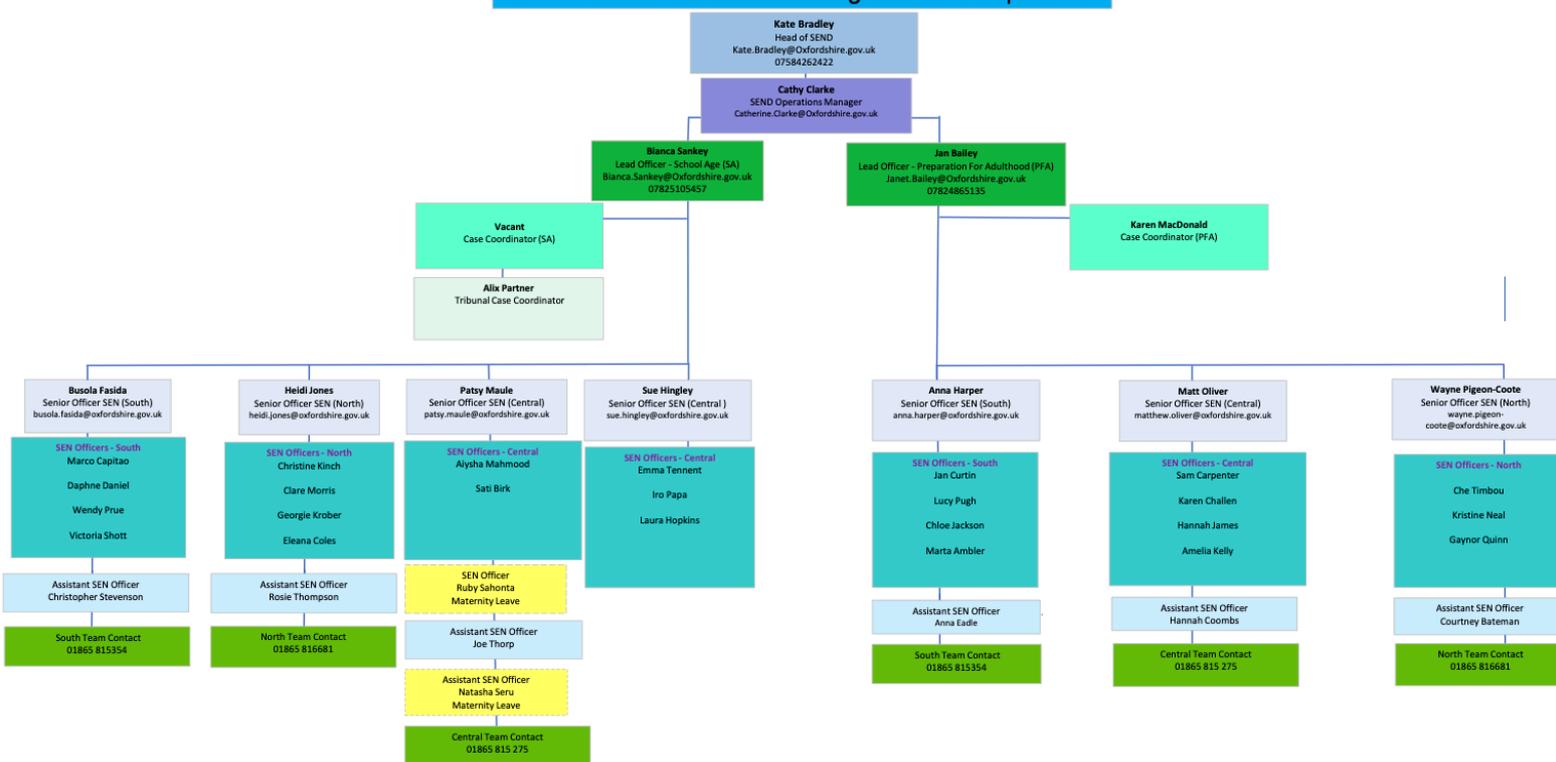
## Panels and LA Decision

Oxfordshire County Council have provided OxPCF with an update regarding panels and decision making with the Local Authority (LA). To read this update, please click [here](#)

## SEND Casework Team

At our last meeting with Oxfordshire County Council, we asked them to provide us with the SEND Casework Team Structure which you can see below:

**SEND Casework Team Staffing Structure Sept 2021**



If you would like to download this image, please click [here](#)

# News from Oxfordshire County Council



## Spotlight on Head of SEND, Kate Bradley

Oxfordshire County Council have appointed Kate Bradley as the Head of SEND for OCC.

We thought it'd be nice to put a face to the name and so we met up with her to find out more about Kate, her role and her vision for the future.

**How long have you worked with Oxfordshire County Council?** *I have been with OCC since September 2020.*

**What brought you to work with OCC?** *I relocated to Warwickshire from London and kept my job in London which was as a Programme Leader (like a senior lecturer) in the Centre for Inclusive Education, which I loved. The advert for Strategic Development and Improvement Officer for SEND came up whilst I was doing a different google search and it was like the role had been written for me. It was about working with families, young people, education staff and many professionals to make a real difference. Being the newly appointed Head of SEND, I get to continue this work across the service and I look forward to the chance to meet with many more families as I become established in my role.*

**What does your job entail?** *At the heart of my role is the need to ensure that children and young people have good outcomes. My role is wide in its breadth and I work with other senior leaders across health and social care to ensure that we are as joined up as we possibly can be to ensure your child is at the heart of provision and decisions.*

**What does a typical day look like for you and what are you currently working on?** *You will be pleased to know that I have no typical day. Today I met with HR to consider wellbeing for staff, I had a meeting with a multi academy trust to discuss strategic priorities for the year and how they can support young people in their trust and it is the start of the month which means reviewing the finances. I have a number of projects I am currently working on and this includes improving the quality and consistency of Education Health Care Plans, the DfE are coming for a monitoring visit in a few weeks and I am working with place planning*

## Spotlight on Kate Bradley (Head of SEND) continued.....



**What do you find most challenging in your role?** That the answer cannot always be yes.

**What do you like most about your job?** *I love working with people and that is a key part of my role. Covid has meant that I have been predominantly home based and we are just starting to get out to schools which is where I am happiest. I work in education as I am committed to children engaging in teaching and learning and seeing that in action is a real joy.*

**What are you most excited about at OCC?** *The national picture is that changes need to be made around how support and services are delivered for children and young people with SEND, I am excited to be leading the SEND Service in Oxfordshire to work with you all to develop what this means for your children.*

**What would you do (career-wise) if you were not in your current job?** *I am fascinated in neuroscience and so would still stay in this field but I would love to research how the brain learns and how we can adapt teaching and learning to utilise different neural pathways.*

**What do you like to do when you aren't working?** *I am nearing the end of a full renovation of our home so spend my free time reading Elle Decoration and saving images to Pinterest.*

**If you had or do have a child with SEN, what would you want most for him/her?** *I don't have a child with SEND, but I am in my role as I really do want the very best for all children and young people.*

**Who is your hero and why?** *I am not sure that I have a hero, but when I was younger it used to be Sally Gunnell. I used to be in the county athletics team when I was at school so loved watching her race.*

**What is your favourite quote?** *The one that springs to mind is 'not everything that counts can be counted' by Einstein, he has another about a fish which used to be on the wall of a classroom that I taught in from a previous teacher.*

**If you could meet anyone in the world, dead or alive, who would it be and why?** *It would probably be Queen Elizabeth the first. I am fascinated by her history of being out of favour and then turning into a strong leader in a period of time that was male dominated.*

## CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENTS' MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN OXFORDSHIRE



We successfully merged the Central CAMHS service into our newly formed teams, *Oxford North* and *Oxford South* as part of our transformation plan to bring about a more consistent service across the county. This development has also enabled us to be more creative with our services and to appoint a new Manager who is working closely with the Oxford University Hospitals to ensure young people are seen quickly and if a

mental health inpatient bed is needed that we find this as soon as possible.

The delayed impact of the pandemic really started to be experienced in our mental health services over the past few months post lockdown, as we have observed increasing numbers of urgent presentations of young people, particularly in A&E and in the CAMHS Eating Disorder and Getting More Help (GMH) services requiring an urgent assessment. During lockdown we had a significant increase in referrals for young people suffering from Eating Disorders.

The rate of calls to the Duty line in GMH has also increased requiring more staff to be made available to respond to the level and complexity of enquiries coming through. We want to reassure you that our clinicians are working hard to meet this demand, but in combination with a few other factors which I will outline next, it has unfortunately meant that our routine access rate, has slowed down as we have redistributed our resources to attend to the increased urgent presentations. This increase in demand is not local to Oxfordshire, is felt nationally across all CAMH services.

### **Waiting for Assessment**

*All our referrals for care are screened by our Single Point of Access team and if they believe the referral is urgent, they will be seen within one week and for emergency referrals on the same day.*

Our current waits for a routine assessment for Getting More Help is between 8-20 weeks and Getting Help is around 20 weeks. We recognise this is a long time to wait and are working on reducing these times. We are going to be implementing a text messaging system to be able to check in with parents while they wait and also thinking additional input could be useful to young people and parents/carers while they wait.

Our Walking with You parent support group has had an increased attendance and has had some great feedback. See details further on in the newsletter for details.

Our Eating Disorders team is around an 8 week wait for routine referral. The Eating Disorders team are running a parent support group which offers 6 weekly sessions while parents wait for treatment which has been positively received.

We are grateful that our specialist services have no waits for assessment and continue to give consultation to other professionals regularly.

NDC (Neurodevelopmental Diagnostic Clinic) remains a long wait for assessment. We are working closely with our commissioners to try to address these waits. At the moment, families waiting can access the current resources on our website and we also send information out with their waiting list letter. Visit our website: [Oxfordshire | Oxford Health CAMHS](#)[Oxford Health CAMHS](#)

The NDC team are currently working with the parent carer forum to revise some of post-diagnostic resources to make them available to families waiting.



**Walking With You Parent Support Group:** WWY is open to any parents & carers who have children experiencing difficulties with their mental Health and Well being up to the age of 25yrs. This is a safe space to meet other parents, ask questions and share experiences, if you choose to. You do not need to be receiving a service from CAMHS or waiting for an appointment in order to join the group.

Sessions take place on the first Friday of every month. We offer two sessions 11- 12 noon & 2pm - 3pm

### **3<sup>rd</sup> December - Sensory Processing and Anxiety**

Please go to the CAMHS Website for the Flyer and Newsletters that are produced following each session [Participation in Oxfordshire | Oxford Health CAMHS Oxford Health CAMHS](#)

**Partnership with Unloc** - Over the summer young people aged 12 - 25yrs were asked to complete a survey to tell us about the things that are important to them and their mental health and well being. In total 1453 responses were received. Work is not ongoing to review the findings from the survey and get started with the next phase of the project. This will involve recruiting young people to be part of a Youth Board for Oxfordshire. The Youth



Board will strengthen the voice of young people within the Trust and will have a key role in influencing how services need to be developed. Further details will be provided over the next few months.

### **Thames Valley Children and Young People with Complex Needs Scoping Project:**

A scoping project has been completed across the Thames Valley to identify current gaps in services for children and young people with complex needs. Interviews with a small number of young people from SOFEA & parents from Oxfordshire were included in the scoping project and their feedback has been included in the final report. The next stage of this project is to submit an expression of interest and a bid for funding to work on the development of a new service framework. It is important that the voice of young people and parents continue to influence this work through co-production. If you are interested in being involved with this work please contact [diane.statham@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:diane.statham@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk)

**Participation Opportunities open to young people:** Participation Leads at CAMHS would like to invite young people to co-produce a number of projects. It isn't necessary to be waiting for or receiving a service from CAMHS to get involved. All you need is an interest in raising the profile of the mental health and well being and improving support for young people. Taking part is fun and looks great on your CV. To find out more please contact THE Participation Leads at [PEICYP@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:PEICYP@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk)

### **Community in Reach**

CAMHS work in partnership with a range of charities across Oxfordshire. A CAMHS Community-In Reach Worker is based within each charity and works directly with young people who have been referred from CAMHS, offering 6 sessions. Young people can also access these charities directly.

**SOFEA** Provide education, employability and wellbeing programmes for vulnerable young people. SOFEA tackle food insecurity and the disadvantage it causes while having a positive impact on the environment by reducing food waste. SOFEA is based in Didcot.

**ARK-T** - An Oxford Community Arts Charity who use the power of creativity to change lives. ARK-T are based in Cowley.

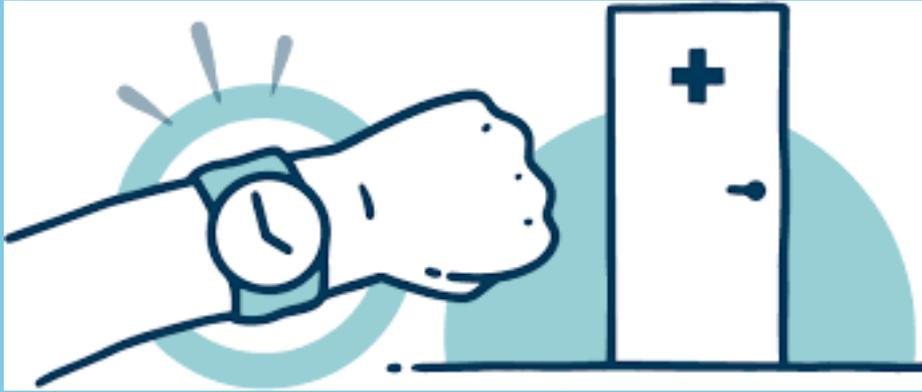
**TRAX**- An alternative education route combining counselling, vocational training and key skills education. Courses are based around mechanic and other practical skills such as catering, gardening, hair and beauty and push bikes.

### **CAMHS Website**

If you are looking for some resources to help you or your family members to cope with difficulties around their mental health, please take a look at the CAMHS Website. There is advice for young people, parent & carers on understanding a range of mental health difficulties and some self care resources to support mental health and well being

[Oxford Health CAMHS Good advice | Oxford Health CAMHS](#)

[Oxford Health CAMHS My wellbeing | Oxford Health CAMHS](#)



## Children's Integrated Therapies Waiting List Update

The below are the current waiting times for each profession. They represent the average waiting times for all of the patients seen in September. Some children and young people would have actually waited longer or shorter than these times depending on their priority and individual circumstances.

- For Speech & Language Therapy the average (mean) waiting time was 23 weeks.
- For OT the average (mean) waiting time was 21 weeks.
- For Physiotherapy the average (mean) waiting time was 19 weeks.

## Key Worker Pilot Update

**What is it?** The aim of the Key Worker Pilot is to deliver flexible, personalised and child-centred support, to ensure the complex and often varying needs of children, young people and their families are met. The key worker role will work with children, young people, their families and clinical teams to ensure we all work together to get the best outcome for them.

**The Oxfordshire Key Worker pilot has been renamed to: Autism and LD Liaison Team.** The team will continue to support children and young people and their families to navigate complex care systems and ensure that their individual needs are met. Currently, the team only accepts referrals from CAMHS. The change of name occurred after feedback from professionals and families, and will be launching a competition for young people to design their logo, on the theme of individuality.

# OUR AUTISM JOURNEY



In May 2017 we finally had a date for my three year old twins Multi Disciplinary Assessment, where we would have a long week of different assessments each day and with two of them I needed back up, so either my mum or my dad came with me to children's paediatrics.

On the first day my dad came and he was so emotional, I literally had to walk away from him because I knew I needed to be strong and if he started crying I would too.

We decided that he would go with the speech and language therapist with one twin, I'd go with the paediatrician to answer LOTS of questions and then we'd swap twins.

Oh I also did a hearing test in between with each twin which they had no attention span for UNTIL I whipped out the Moana sound track on my phone!

At the end of the day the speech and language therapist wanted to talk to me about the assessment that she had done on the boys and pretty much as soon as she sat me down she said "Here's the spectrum, Luca is here and Jude is here" this was a massive shock to me, I didn't have a clue that they could have autism.

Since their two year check the health visitor had flagged that they were behind and something was wrong, it left me filled with anxiety and frustration that I didn't know how to help my boys. I felt so alone.

How could I not understand my boys when they pulled me into a room and expect me to know what they wanted and when I didn't they had a meltdown?

How could they not come running to me when the therapist said "where's mum"?

I felt like I was living in limbo and at times I felt like it was all my fault.

Although getting a diagnosis so instantly was a shock, I felt like the weight of the world had been lifted from my shoulders I finally had something that I could spend endless hours researching, I could find support groups and other people were also going through this and that's exactly what I did!

In the four years since the boys were diagnosed we've faced even harder challenges than before, sleep or lack of, hurting each other, communication, special interests, separation anxiety, starting school, toilet training and so much more. But being able to share your challenges with someone who understands is so important and helps keep me sane.

Which is why I share our autism family journey because I want others who might be going through a similar situation to know that they're not alone, so reach out online or locally if you can because autism parent friends are friends for life. Ana (*Follow Ana on instagram @anabonasera and read her blog [here](#)*).

## PARENT CARER JOURNEY



By 2020, we had spent the last 17 years being treated under 8 different medical departments at GOSH. G was born with a very rare chromosome disorder and has very complex health coupled with severe physical and learning disabilities.

We always knew that G would need a kidney transplant at some point, she was born with very tiny cystic kidneys amongst other multiple health needs. In recent years numerous ultrasounds haven't even been able to find her left kidney. Her renal function hovered around 20% for the last few years but then dipped suddenly about two years ago. You can't tell by looking at her that she is so poorly, she's so full of life and ready to do new things all the time. In 2019, we started preparing for dialysis and at the same time I started tests to see if I could donate my kidney to her.

Luckily G's function stabilised at 15% just as the first covid lockdown started and GOSH decided it was better to move G to Oxford adult renal services so that she was closer to home and both of us could have surgery in the same hospital. We had heard so much about how adult services in hospital were so different from children's and how difficult it was to adjust. We started off with joint clinics at GOSH with The Churchill Hospital Oxford consultant and G's GOSH renal team.

Covid hastened the whole transition and I must say our experience was so seamless. The buildings are different and very "grown up" but the staff are amazing. We settled into The Churchill really well and G has bonded well with the nurses. Donating your kidney is quite daunting, there are numerous tests, ultrasounds and x-rays to do. Once all the tests are done and you're signed off as a donor - then you just want the transplant done asap! The consultants recognised G's additional needs and even before I had a chance to discuss the procedure with them they had already agreed to keep me in hospital as long as G is there and have her in a separate room to allow family and carers to visit her. G needs someone who knows her with her at all times to reassure her, otherwise it's close to impossible to understand her gestures and signs, she gets super anxious and would probably pull out all the IV's etc and want to go home. Their recognition that I am her main carer (the only adult in the house and single mum to 3) was so reassuring, they understand the pressures I am feeling as G won't understand what is going on so just being there with her has put my mind to rest - even though I will be recovering from surgery. They are working with CHC to ensure that G has enough care at home too and that the post-transplant meds are able to be given via gastrostomy.

Fingers crossed that the transplant goes well and we both recover quickly! G has had 19 surgeries at GOSH and she has shown such strength through each one. She is ever smiling and happy despite everything and always excited about everyday the adventure it brings for her. The decision to donate my kidney to her was not even in question, I would do anything for her to be able to live her life to her full potential!



## Transport Update

Supported Transport are currently dealing with a high volume of calls and emails regarding changes to transport at the start of this term.

Please be assured that we are endeavouring to ensure that any issues are being addressed as quickly and as fully as possible.

If you have any questions regarding transport for your child, please contact the Supported Transport Hub through the usual contact details below:

- SEND Transport: 01865 323795 -

[ee-specialeducationalneedsitu@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ee-specialeducationalneedsitu@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

- Mainstream Transport: 01865 323500 -

[Mainstream.SchoolTransport@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Mainstream.SchoolTransport@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

For students eligible for Home to School Transport an alternative to contracted vehicle's is the Direct Travel Payment scheme. Details can be found on the County Council website:

[SEND school travel assistance | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Supported Transport are currently rolling out a programme of Independent Travel Training for SEN students. Further details can also be found on the County Council website:

[Independent travel training for young people | Oxfordshire County Council](#)



We believe your child/ren and young people are amazing and at SENDIASS we continue to learn every day by listening to you tell us about the things they say about what life in and out of school is like for them. Children and young people with SEND are the experts in what it's like to have their particular blends of strengths and needs. They have much to teach us about what best helps and supports them in their learning.

We have therefore recently added a dedicated section on our website, called From Me to You, to provide this space for children and young people to tell us, in their own words and own way, what they think people working with them or their peers would benefit from knowing. Alfie and Ben have already kindly got us started and you can see what they say at <https://sendiass-oxfordshire.org.uk/from-me-to-you/>

We would be grateful for any contributions and insights your children and young people can send to us. Email us at [sendiass@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or call 01865 810516 if you would like discuss further.

THANK YOU.



Providing impartial Information, Advice and Support on SEN & Disability Matters

HELPLINE - 9:30am - 2:30pm: 01865 810516

# Person Centred Thinking & Planning

## (Online via Zoom)



**We are running two (Free) courses online in November and December for parent carers of children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities)**

### The course covers:

- An introduction to person centred thinking & planning
- What the person centred thinking tools are and how to use them
- Developing a one page profile and starting your first plan

### Comments from past participants:

*"I think you have given me back my little boy. Person Centred Planning has just freed me to get on with being a parent who loves and cares for their child" (Parent)*

*"Person Centred Planning gave my son a voice. It helped us to see him as the unique individual he is and helped us lose the labels he'd been given throughout his childhood. It helped us plan for his future and working this way continues to ensure he lives the life he wants to lead" (parent)*

Each course is 10 hours long in total and runs over four separate 2.5 hour sessions. We have 12 places available per course and you must be able to commit (as much as possible) to attend all sessions.

**Course 1** - Thursday - **18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> Nov and 2<sup>nd</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 12pm** until **2.30pm**

**Course 2** - Friday - **19<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> Nov and 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> Dec. 10am** until **12.30pm**

**To book please email Kathy Liddell on [kathy.liddell@oxfsn.org.uk](mailto:kathy.liddell@oxfsn.org.uk)**

**These courses have been funded by**





**OXFORDSHIRE  
PARENT CARERS FORUM**

*The Voice of Parent Carers in Oxfordshire*



### **OXPCF SEND WIDE WORKING GROUP**

We are looking for up a group of parent carers to join a working group that will support the work we do on SEND wide issues.

The role will include contributing to the development and implementation of a survey to find out about families and parent carers experience of SEND services in Oxfordshire, commenting on OCCs SEND strategy and getting involved in any other SEND wide issues that may arise.

We anticipate a maximum of 2 (virtual) meetings a month with some documents to read and comment on in between meetings.

**INTERESTED?**

**PLEASE EMAIL:**

**[INFO@OXPCF.ORG.UK](mailto:info@oxpcf.org.uk)**

[WWW.OXPCF.ORG.UK](http://WWW.OXPCF.ORG.UK)



### **Join our CAMHS Focus Group**

We are looking for a few more parent carers to join our CAMHS focus group.

The first thing they would like feedback on is a series of new videos that they have designed for their website.

They would like to do this by organising some online feedback sessions, showing the videos and then discussing your views straight after. The sessions would take place every two weeks on a Friday between 1-2pm

If you are not available for the virtual sessions, there is the chance to feedback via email instead.

If you are interested, please email [forum.chairs@oxpcf.org.uk](mailto:forum.chairs@oxpcf.org.uk)



# OXFORDSHIRE PARENT CARERS FORUM

*The Voice of Parent Carers in Oxfordshire*

Are you a parent and/or carer looking after a child or young person (0-25) with SEND?

Does the person you care for access services in Oxfordshire?

**If so, we need to hear from you!**

We need your feedback on the services your child/young person is accessing.

Give your feedback here:

<https://forms.gle/FXZSM9jx8F5aLusq6>

or scan the QR code below:





OXFORDSHIRE  
PARENT CARERS FORUM



Oxfordshire family  
SUPPORT NETWORK

# Oxfordshire SEND Room

Welcoming and non-judgemental  
peer-to-peer support group  
for parents and carers of children and young  
people with SEND in Oxfordshire

[www.facebook.com/groups/oxsendroom](https://www.facebook.com/groups/oxsendroom)



## SURVEYS

Please see below for surveys/forms that parent carers have been requested to fill in:



Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like your help - We'd like to hear about experiences of waiting for the hospital appointment or care people need. We'd also like to know what advice, information, or support the NHS has given you while you wait.

This survey is for people who are waiting now. It is also for people who have had a hospital appointment or care in the last 18 months.

Could you please share the following link with your members so that we can hear about their experiences <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NHSWaitingListExperiences>

The survey will close on Tuesday 9th November

Everything you tell us is confidential and will help the NHS understand how it can better support people like you waiting for treatment.

We are carrying out this survey in partnership with Healthwatch organisations in Bucks, Reading, West Berks and Wokingham Borough.

We will share the results of this survey with local NHS managers in a report. We will also publish the report online so that members of the public can read it and also read how local NHS organisations respond to our recommendations.

As with all of our surveys, you can contact us by calling 01865 520520 or emailing [hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk](mailto:hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk) we can help to fill in the survey. Or people can talk to a member of the Healthwatch Oxfordshire team in more detail about their experiences.

**F.A.O all unpaid carers\* we want to hear from you!! ....please see the link below to our survey**

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6DSM5Q6>

\* Fit 2 Care define a carer as being someone who has an active caring role for a relative or family member who has a disability or disabling condition.



Oxford Hospital School is carrying out a survey to find out what children, young people and their parents think about their experience of the Oxfordshire Hospital School.

Parent Carer Survey: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfsflxmfvbLrrv\\_GL2cZEkm53qKSG0i4Hlw7x0MReYRVjpXYA/viewform?fbzx=504371225937522780](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfsflxmfvbLrrv_GL2cZEkm53qKSG0i4Hlw7x0MReYRVjpXYA/viewform?fbzx=504371225937522780)



Understanding the lived experiences of autistic children in years 5 and 6 of mainstream primary school

An invitation to take part in a photographic study to explore the experiences of autistic pupils in mainstream primary schools

Jo Billington, a doctoral researcher at the Centre for Autism at the University of Reading, is looking for more families to take part her research into the experiences of autistic children who go to mainstream primary schools.

She would like to hear from the parents/carers of autistic children in Years 5 and 6.

The children will be interviewed and asked to take photographs of aspects of their school life that are meaningful for them. They will receive a £25 Amazon voucher for taking part.

- Click the link for more details of the research and how to get involved <https://bit.ly/3drFMf7>

See below for some upcoming events that you may be interested in:

## soundabout

### New Soundabout Inclusive Choirs!

If you fancy being part of a uniquely welcoming musical community, join us! From September we'll be in these areas:

Birmingham  
Bristol\*  
Coventry  
Leicester\*

Peterborough  
Oxford & Beyond\*  
Oxford Youth Choir  
Sandwell

Solihull  
Wiltshire  
Worcestershire  
West Midlands (online)



- The choirs celebrate that everyone has their own way of sharing their "voice" - including using soundmakers and movement.
- Most choirs will be run as a combination of face to face and virtual sessions (if safe to do so).
- \*Choirs marked with a \* are for all ages, the others for children and young people and their families.
- They are all FREE to attend but a suggested donation of £5 to the charity Soundabout is welcomed.

Sign up now at: [soundabout.org.uk/soundabout-inclusive-choir/](https://www.soundabout.org.uk/soundabout-inclusive-choir/)

To join the Oxford and beyond choir:-

<https://www.soundabout.org.uk/inclusive-choir-oxford/>

And the Oxford Youth choir

- <https://www.soundabout.org.uk/inclusive-choir-oxfordyouth/>



Inclusive cycling for your child to ride a bike in a safe, supportive environment.

For ages 2-16. Family members welcome.

Every Saturday 10am-2pm.

£3 per session.

Book by phone, email or website:

<https://windrushbikeproject.uk>



Wood Green School,  
Witney, OX28 1DX  
07766 829296

@windrushbikepro  
@windrushbikeproject  
#wheelsforall@windrushbikeproject.uk  
www.windrushbikeproject.uk

Website - [www.windrushbikeproject.uk](http://www.windrushbikeproject.uk)  
Email - [wheelsforall@windrushbikeproject.uk](mailto:wheelsforall@windrushbikeproject.uk)



Getting disabled and elderly people out on the River Thames



For nature watching, picnicking, fishing or just leisure boating on the Wallingford stretch.



Come and enjoy. Meet our Staff Team - they couldn't be friendlier. A big welcome awaits you and a trip on the glorious River Thames.

All outings are free of charge - but donations large or small welcomed.

Email: [enquiries@wabc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wabc.org.uk)  
Tel: 0300 365 3655  
Our season: April to September (Weather & river conditions permitting).



Although "out of season" now, the poster is mainly for info & if you wish to find out more...



ARK-T MUSIC PROJECT: MUSIC FOR EVERYONE - AGES 13-25

## 1-2-1 Online Music sessions

Want to learn an instrument, how to write/record songs or make beats?

1-2-1 Music sessions tailored to your interests & goals

To sign up or for accessibility/other information email [music@ark-t.org](mailto:music@ark-t.org) or text or call 07388 541017

Free Donations welcome No experience necessary



A music project for everyone, prioritising LGBTQIA+ and Disabled young people

Email - [music@ark-t.org](mailto:music@ark-t.org)



## VICTA Student Portal

We are delighted to announce the launch of our new online platform that we hope will revolutionise the way your vision impaired child achieves success and fulfils their potential.

The VICTA Student Portal has been designed to provide advice and guidance to young people from the age of 10 to 29 years old, covering key school and age transition phases. We want it to address the severe lack of support for students with sight loss that has led to a widening of the gap in educational support and the consequential rate of employment compared to their sighted peers.

The VICTA Student Portal is a one-stop information hub. A first in the sector, the portal provides information, guidance and signposting to feed ambition, strengthen self-advocacy, challenge personal limitations, inform emotional development, shape perceptions and create opportunity.

Have a look and let us know what you think - [www.victastudents.org.uk](http://www.victastudents.org.uk)

Get in touch - [students@victa.org.uk](mailto:students@victa.org.uk)

Once on the site, you'll be able to search &...



Discover by age group...

10 to 13

14 to 17

18 plus

## Christmas Market

27th November 10am - 3pm  
FREE entry - No need to book

Join us for our very popular Christmas Market! Shop for your Christmas goodies! Eat lovely festive food whilst the kids can play! Buy tickets for our famous Christmas raffle! Santas Grotto will be available (book on the day) \*Please note our gates will not be locked during the day\*



To book a stall, please contact Amy: [amymcweeney@thomley.org.uk](mailto:amymcweeney@thomley.org.uk)

Where are we?  
Thomley, Menmarsh Road, Worminghall, HP189JZ



## Thomley

We hope to see lots of you at our annual Christmas Market, an accessible and fun way to shop for Christmas. If you are interested in booking a stall, please contact Amy - [amy@thomley.org.uk](mailto:amy@thomley.org.uk)



## AUTISM FAMILY SUPPORT\* OXFORDSHIRE

### CARTERTON COFFEE MORNING

Come and meet our Family Practitioner (under 14's), Vicky Crawley and other parents/carers for friendly support and advice.

We will be at Carterton Library between 09.00 and 12.00 on the following dates:

- Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021
- Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021
- Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021
- Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021
- Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022
- Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSO) are pleased to announce that they are restarting their Carterton Coffee Mornings in September! This will take place at the Carterton Library (6 Alvescot Road, Carterton, OX18 3JH).

This is a chance for parents/carers to meet our Family Practitioner, Vicky Crawley, as well as have a coffee and a chat with other parents/carers. Dates for the next 6 months are as above.

No need to book ahead, just turn up!

## Charity Winter Ball

Saturday 20th November  
6:30pm arrival for a 7pm dinner

Join us for: Drink on arrival, 3 course meal, disco, raffle, auction



For tickets please contact Joe, [joekitchen@thomley.org.uk](mailto:joekitchen@thomley.org.uk)  
The Thomley Charity Ball will be held at Thomley in our pavilion, as you've never seen it before. Your three course meal will be put together by two amazing local chefs and their team. Previously, our Charity Ball has been a fantastic night of getting dressed up, eating good food and dancing the night away all to raise money for Thomley.

You can also stay over the night, by booking one of our camping pods for the night so you don't have to think about getting home!

This event is a fundraiser for Thomley. Your tickets and the proceeds from the event will go towards the running of our crucial services for disabled people.



For tickets, contact Joe - [joekitchen@thomley.org.uk](mailto:joekitchen@thomley.org.uk)

## Useful Links and Resources

Short Breaks Newsletter - read the November issue	<a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/information-parents/breaks-disabled-children">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/information-parents/breaks-disabled-children</a>
SEN Magazine	<a href="https://senmagazine.co.uk">https://senmagazine.co.uk</a>
IPSEA	<a href="https://www.ipsea.org.uk">https://www.ipsea.org.uk</a>
Special Needs Jungle	<a href="https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/">https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/</a>
Council for Disabled Children	<a href="https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/">https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/</a>
Oxfordshire Family Support Network	<a href="http://www.oxfsn.org.uk/">http://www.oxfsn.org.uk/</a>
SENDIASS Oxfordshire	<a href="https://sendiass-oxfordshire.org.uk">https://sendiass-oxfordshire.org.uk</a>
Oxfordshire Local Offer	<a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer</a>
Oxfordshire CAMHS	<a href="https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/oxon/">https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/oxon/</a>
Carers Oxfordshire	<a href="https://www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk">https://www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk</a>
BYFC (Be Free Young Carers)	<a href="https://befreeyc.org.uk">https://befreeyc.org.uk</a>
Local Community Support Service (LCSS)	<a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/childrens-services/integrated-childrens-services/locality-and-community-support">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/childrens-services/integrated-childrens-services/locality-and-community-support</a>
SHIFT	<a href="https://shift-abingdon.org.uk">https://shift-abingdon.org.uk</a>
Thomley	<a href="https://thomley.org.uk/">https://thomley.org.uk/</a>
Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSO)	<a href="https://www.afso.org.uk/">https://www.afso.org.uk/</a>
Autism Oxford	<a href="http://www.autismoxford.org.uk">www.autismoxford.org.uk</a>
Tree of Hope	<a href="https://www.treeofhope.org.uk/">https://www.treeofhope.org.uk/</a>
Bicester Autism/ ADHD	<a href="https://www.bicesterautismadhd.co.uk/">https://www.bicesterautismadhd.co.uk/</a>
Parent Talking Aspergers	<a href="http://www.parent-talking-aspergers.co.uk">www.parent-talking-aspergers.co.uk</a>
Autism Champions	<a href="http://autismchampions.co.uk">autismchampions.co.uk</a>
OASIS	<a href="http://oasonline.org.uk">oasonline.org.uk</a>
Yellow Submarine	<a href="https://www.yellowsubmarine.org.uk">https://www.yellowsubmarine.org.uk</a>
Oxford ADHD Centre	<a href="http://adhdoxfordshire.co.uk">adhdoxfordshire.co.uk</a>
ADHD Centre	<a href="http://adhdcentre.co.uk">adhdcentre.co.uk</a>
Oxfordshire Dyslexia Association	<a href="http://www.oxdys.org.uk">www.oxdys.org.uk</a>
Hearing Impairment Team	<a href="http://www.livewell.oxfordshire.gov.uk">www.livewell.oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Oxfordshire Disabled Support, Sports and Services	<a href="http://www.ableize.com">www.ableize.com</a>
Live Well Oxfordshire	<a href="http://www.livewelloxfordshire.gov.uk">www.livewelloxfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Downs Syndrome Oxford	<a href="http://www.dsoxford.org.uk">www.dsoxford.org.uk</a>
50 things to do before 5	<a href="https://oxfordshire.50thingstodo.org/app/os#!/welcome">https://oxfordshire.50thingstodo.org/app/os#!/welcome</a>