Designated Safeguarding Lead Update

Welcome to the 3rd 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 **laura.east@oxfordshire.gov.uk**

Training Programme 2023/24 – BOOK HERE
Upcoming training:

Tuesday 23rd April
PACE for School Staff

Tuesday 7th May
Designated Teacher Network Meeting

Tuesday 18th June
PACE for School Staff

Thursday 27th June
Oxfordshire Virtual School Conference
Theme: *Nurturing a strong sense of identity and belonging in care-experienced children*

We will share our updated 2024-25 training and support offer in next term's newsletter – there will be much more available to support your work with children in need

Create a positive learning environment for pupils with SEND

"Creating an inclusive environment is the most important thing a school can do. An inclusive culture is a prerequisite for an effective school: it brings happiness, a feeling of safety and being part of the community, and, of course, it impacts positively on learning, both in the classroom and beyond. It is our job to prepare pupils to flourish and feel truly included in society." - Frances Steel, Assistant Principal and SENCo, Totteridge Academy

For more on this, visit: **Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)**

The NSPCC has a series of posters to encourage children to contact Childline if they need to talk. Click here **https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/childline-posters** for more information and to view the posters.

Working Together is Essential

Click on the link below for a list of key contacts with Children's Social Care:
LCSS_Family_Help_Front_Door_FSP_Front_Team_At_a_Glance_Feb_2024.pdf (oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB)

Access a wide range of training, support, advice and resources via the OSCB website.

See below for recent articles on topical issues:
March 2024 - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (oscb.org.uk)

See below for the Multi-Agency Toolkit:
Multi-Agency Toolkit - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (oscb.org.uk)

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%	92%	91%	-1%	92%	92%	0%
EHCP (children with open cases)	90%	89%	-1%	88%	85%	-3%	90%	88%	-2%
LCSS	93%	93%	0%	87%	86%	-1%	92%	92%	0%
Early Help	94%	93%	-1%	84%	75%	-9%	91%	91%	0%
Open C&FA	92%	92%	0%	81%	78%	-4%	91%	90%	-1%
ChIN	90%	91%	1%	88%	82%	-6%	90%	90%	0%
CPP	86%	88%	2%	66%	63%	-3%	83%	83%	0%
CWCF	96%	97%	1%	94%	93%	-1%	95%	95%	0%

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

Attendance of children in Oxfordshire at the end of Term 4 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!

Count of Children

	Year groups 0 - 6	Year groups 7 - 11	All year groups
EHCP (all children)	2300	1743	4043
EHCP (children with open cases)	472	401	873
LCSS	1032	499	1531
Early Help	428	267	695
Open C&FA	181	116	297
ChIN	400	339	739
CPP	179	111	290
CWCF	83	120	203

While there remains some improvement in the attendance primary-aged children subject to CIN and CP planning compared to last year, **secondary school attendance (and the attendance of children open to EHCNA and Early Help) is still a significant concern**.

You can see from the table above that:
➢ Primary-aged children subject to CIN and CP planning are on average absent from school for the equivalent of at least 1 day a fortnight;
➢ Secondary-aged children subject to CIN planning are on average absent from school for the equivalent of 2 days a fortnight; and
➢ **Secondary-aged children subject to CP planning (the most vulnerable) are on average absent from school for the equivalent of nearly 4 days a fortnight – that's nearly 4 months!**

If they 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.

Relational Practice is Best Practice

"When children and young people feel safe and their words, thoughts and actions are valued they develop a sense of belonging to school and this is the heart of the whole-school Relational approach." – ARC, April 2024

For more information on what a relational approach to education is, open the email attachment which is a recent publication from the Attachment Research Community (ARC).

OXFORDSHIRE RELATIONAL SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

A move away from 'train and hope' to supporting sustainable culture change in our schools.

Oxfordshire's Relational Schools Programme is about embedding trauma-informed, relational and restorative practice in our schools. We know that when the culture is right, and staff are well trained and confident, this benefits everybody – particularly those who've experienced trauma or who experience other SEMH needs.

For more on Oxfordshire Relational Schools Programme, visit: [Oxfordshire Relational Schools Programme | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Staff Question of the Week:
What is LCSS and what do they do?

LCSS is the Locality Community Support Service. Their core offer is
- Locality workers provide visits and review meetings to settings, offering advice and support on delivering Early Help to improve the outcomes for children and their families
- We provide named conversations to discuss Strengths & Needs, Team Around Family Meetings, and give information on other supports in the community and advice on next steps where necessary
- We quality assure community Strengths & Needs and provide professional recommendations to improve outcomes for children and ensure multi agency involvement
- Support professionals with Strengths & Needs and the forming of Team Around the Family meetings and attend where needed to strengthen resources and plans
- Lead Community Around the School/setting offer (CASO)
- Facilitate locality networking events to share knowledge and build relationships in local areas to improve outcomes for children and families
- Facilitate peer to peer support meetings to improve Early help practice

When to contact LCSS
You can call LCSS if you need, advice, support or guidance about Early Help including:
- Use of the Strengths & Needs or Team Around Family Meetings to support families at an early help level
- Advice on what other agencies/voluntary sector services are available to support families in localities

For further information visit [Early Help and the Locality Community Support Service (LCSS) - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (oscb.org.uk)](#)

Children in kinship care

In September 2024, the role of Virtual Schools will expand further to specifically include championing the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children in kinship care.

The Virtual School's strategic role will include:
1. Raising the visibility of the distinct needs of children in different types of kinship care arrangements and the disadvantages that they can experience.
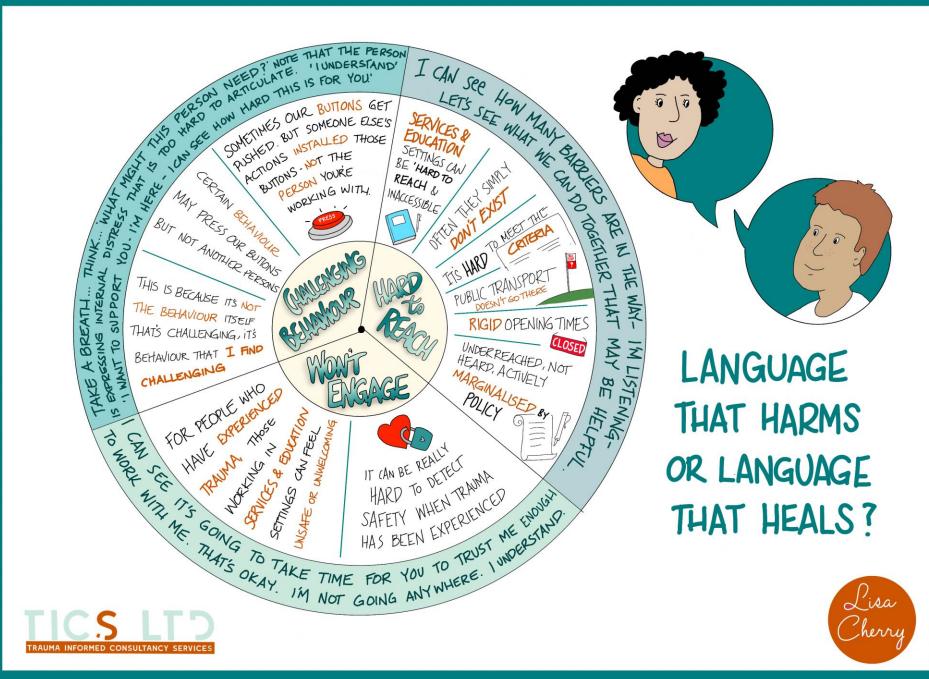2. Promoting practice that supports attendance and engagement in education.
3. Promoting practice that improves children in kinship care's outcomes to narrow the attainment gap, so that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Furthermore, The Virtual School will extend to provision of advice and information, on request, to all kinship carers with Special Guardianship and Child Arrangements Orders as part of their non-statutory role. This will be an important step in helping more kinship carers to navigate the education system, in turn helping them to advocate for the educational achievement of their children. More children in kinship care will receive the help they need to thrive at school.

For more information and links to support, visit: **Children in kinship care | Oxfordshire County Council**

Kinship Together Podcast
Kinship Together is a new podcast that features real-life stories, experiences and advice from kinship carers. You can listen to episode using the player below, or find and subscribe to the podcase on Apply Podcasts or Spotify.
Kinship Together Podcast - Kinship Compass