

Being a Student Parent at Oxford

Being a parent and being a student at Oxford are both very demanding in themselves, so it's no surprise that being both at once is no piece of cake. This handbook aims to provide an overview of the services and facilities available, inside and outside the University, for students with children. It seeks to offer an honest appraisal of what's on offer; if you find anything to be inaccurate or have suggestions for improvements please let OUSU's Vice President (Women) know.

Oxford University Student Union's Vice President (Women) is responsible for producing this guide and works on many student parent issues. If you have any info, queries or want to be added to the Student Parent mailing list get in contact. If the VP (Women) can't help you, she'll pass you on to someone who can. The Student Union exists to help out students, and we also have a free, confidential Student Advice Service if you would like advice, support or advocacy. To contact the Student Advice Service, please email advice@ousu.org.

We try to hold one event each term for student parents to socialise with their children. If you have any ideas for days out, or if there's anything you think should be added to this booklet or changed, please let me know!

Katharine Terrell
(OUSU VP(Women) 2010/11)

Tel: 01865 (2)88462
Email: childcare@ousu.org

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University Help for Student Parents

The University deals with childcare for both student and staff parents through its Equal and Diversity Unit (EDU). The EDU exists to ensure students and staff are not discriminated against and parents fall within their remit. In theory, this means that childcare issues are taken very seriously. You are accepted to Oxford on the grounds of your academic potential, and you should be allowed to succeed regardless of any parental responsibilities.

The EDU has a Childcare Services department with a full-time manager, who can offer advice and information on funding and nursery provision within the University.

Please see the directory at the back for contact information.

Day Nurseries

Nurseries are for children under five years old to play and learn in groups while their parents work or study. Open all day for most of the year, nurseries usually provide a full day care service, including meals, changing nappies, washing, and indoor and outdoor play. Part-time places may also be available. Nurseries are often oversubscribed, so put your name down on a number of waiting lists as early as possible.

All nurseries must be registered with their local authority. They are then inspected by OFSTED (the Office for Standards in Education, which also inspects UK schools) every three to four years. This means checks are carried out to make sure the staff are suitable to look after children. You should find one member of staff for every eight children aged three to five, one member of staff for every four children aged two, and one member of staff for every three children aged under two. At least one member of staff must hold a level 3 NVQ in childcare and at least half the rest must hold at least a level 2 NVQ in childcare. All staff must also have a Criminal Records Bureau check. A check on the nursery premises is also

carried out to make sure the building is safe and suitable for children. The nursery's registration certificate must be hung on the wall and you can ask to see the nursery's latest inspection report; alternatively you can find it on the OFSTED website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

There are different types of nursery:

- University and college nurseries run for students and staff
- Private nurseries
- Workplace nurseries run for its employees.

University Nurseries

There are three university nurseries, Mansion House in Summertown, Bradmore Road, just north of the University Park and Jack Straws Lane in Headington, which are all managed by Kidsunlimited, a private company. Plans for a fourth University nursery at 92 Woodstock Road (North Oxford) have been approved, and it is due to open by spring 2011 to accommodate around 84 full time equivalent nursery places. Applications for this nursery cannot be accepted yet however further information regarding the nursery and when parents should apply will be circulated in due course.

The University has also bought 45 places divided between Oxford Business Park, Milton Park and Harwell Nurseries, 30 places at Waterways (all run by Kidsunlimited) and 18 places at Turbo Teds nursery (run by Buffer Bears). They are all OFSTED inspected, usually every 3 years.

The advantage of University nurseries over the private sector is that fees are subsidised at a specially low, centralised rate: as of summer 2010 a full-time monthly place will cost £657.66 for Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm care. This includes food and nappies, and a 15%

sibling discount is also available. Part time share places may also be available - these are available for two or three full, consecutive days a week only, and must include a Monday or a Friday. Fees for part-time share places will be £432.51 for 3 days or £288.34 for 2 days a week. Fees are reviewed annually.

Demand for nursery space is very high, and the waiting list is often in excess of 300. If you fall into one or more of the priority categories below, you will be offered a place at a nursery as soon as one becomes available. People who do not fulfil these criteria will only be offered a place when all priority cases have been dealt with. For this reason, they are advised to seek alternative childcare arrangements by contacting Oxfordshire Family Information Services (OXFIS) (08452 262 636) in the meantime.

The priority groups are:

- parents or children with a disability;
- those who have been nominated under the sponsored places scheme (Certain colleges and departments contributed to the cost of building Bradmore Road and Jack Straws Lane nurseries, and reserve the right to nominate their staff or students for their priority place on the waiting list. You can ask your college or departmental administrator if they have such a place and whether it is occupied.)
- lone parents;
- those with a sibling already in a university nursery or a nursery where there are subsidised places.

OUSU's VP (Women) is currently (December 2010) working with the University to make students a fifth priority place (this would not affect a student who fitted into a "higher" priority bracket – e.g. if you were a disabled student you would fall into the first category still.) For more information, please contact the VP (Women) on childcare@ousu.org.

To apply for a place at a university nursery or sponsored place, go to: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child/nursery.shtml>

College Nurseries

Some colleges also have their own nurseries, and will give priority to their own students and staff, although they do accept applications from university staff and students from other colleges. These are run independently from the University, and thus have their own rates and policies. (f/t = full-time, p/t = part-time)

Balliol College Nursery 2a Rawlinson Road

Email: rosalind.thomas@balliol.ox.ac.uk

Tel: (01865) 515654

Places: 16, f/t places only. Priority to Balliol members

Ages: 3 months – 5 years

Fees: Non-Balliol Members £190 per week, Balliol Members £164 per week (plus £8 pw for food).

Wolfson College Nursery Linton Road

Email: daynursery@wolfson.ox.ac.uk

Tel: 01865 (2)74085

Places: 29, f/t and p/t places available. Priority to Wolfson members.

Ages: 6 weeks – 5 years

Fees: On application

St Paul's Nursery (Somerville College) 119a Walton Street

Email: louisa.metayer@some.ox.ac.uk

Tel: 01865 (2)70686

Places: 16, f/t and p/t available, priority to Somerville members

Ages: 3 months – 5 years

St Anne's College Nursery 48 Woodstock Road

Tel: 01865 (2)74868.

Places: 12, f/t and p/t places available priority to St Anne's members.

Ages: 6 months – 5 years

Private and Workplace Nurseries

If you are unsuccessful in applying for a University place or end up on a long waiting list you may wish to consider private nursery care. The waiting lists are far shorter, but you may find the fees higher than at University or college nurseries, approx £175-200 a week. This may not include the price of food, nappies, activities or trips.

ABC Nursery | | Sandfield Road, Headington, OX3 7RG

Tel: 01865 439051

Ages: 0 months-5 years

Open: 7.30am-6.30pm, Monday- Friday

Acacia Care & Education The Cherwell School, Marston Ferry Road, OX2 7EE Tel: 01865 316602

Ages: 4 months – 5 years

Open: 8am – 6pm, Monday – Friday

Cleverkidz Oxford 2 Armstrong Road, Littlemore, OX4 4XT

Tel: 01865 748607 Email: oxford@cleverkidz.co.uk

Ages: 0 months – 5 years

Open: 8am – 6pm, Monday – Friday

Bartlemas Nursery School Comper Foundation Stage Centre

Hertford Street, Oxford OX4 3AJ Tel: 01865 245768

Ages: up to 8

Open: 3:15pm - 5:30pm (school terms) 9am – 5pm (holidays)
Monday-Friday

Dinky Doo Nursery School Dragon School, Bardwell Road, OX2 6SS. Tel: 01865 552 601/07850 231 293

E-mail: info@dinky-doo.co.uk

Ages: 3 months – 5 years

Open 8.30 am – 5.30 pm Monday - Friday

Fieldhouse Montessori Nursery St Gregory's and Augustine's Church Hall, 322 Woodstock Road, Summertown, OX2 7NS

Tel: 01865 316641 and 01865 554954

Email: enquiries@montessori-fieldhouse.co.uk

Ages: 2 years-5 years

Open: 8am-3pm, Monday – Friday

Grandpont Nursery, White House Road, OX1 4QH Tel: 01865 794350 Email: office.1010@grandpont-nurs.oxon.sch.uk

Ages: 3.5 years - 5 years

Open: 8am – 5:30pm, Monday – Friday

Slade Nursery School (3yrs +) and **Slade Day Nursery** (6m+)

Titup Hall Drive, Headington, Oxford, OX3 8QQ Tel: 01865 750670

Headington Quarry Foundation Stage School Quarry School Place, Headington, Oxford, OX3 8LH Tel: 01865 762345

Ages: 3-5 years

Slade and Headington Children's Centre

("One-stop shop" for parents: play, information, advice, support and good company.) Titup Hall Drive, Headington, Oxford, OX3 8QQ Tel: 01865764067

Headington School

Quarry School Place, Headington, OX3 8LH Tel: 01865 762345

Email: headteacher@headington-nurs.oxon.sch.uk (school) or daycare.1006@headington-nurs.oxon.sch.uk (daycare)

Julia Durbin Day Nursery Churchill Hospital, Old Road, Headington, OX3 7JU Tel: 01865 744448 Email: juliadurbin@childbase.com

Ages: 6 weeks – 5 years

Open: 7:30am – 6:30pm , Monday - Friday

Priority to NHS staff

Kiddies Korner Day Nursery Quarry Village Hall, 67 Quarry Road, Headington, OX3 8NX Tel: 01865 766762

Ages: 18 months - 5 years

Open: 8am-5.30pm, Monday - Friday

Kidsunlimited Garsington Road, Oxford Business Park, Cowley,
Oxford OX4 2DQ Tel: 01865 500222
Ages: 3 months - 5 years
Open: 7.30am – 6pm, Monday - Friday

Little Scholars Day Nursery Oxford & Cherwell Valley College,
Oxpens Road, Oxford OX1 1SA Tel: 01865 551877
Ages: 3 months – 8 years
Open: 8am – 5:30pm, Monday – Friday

The Nursery 17 Lathbury Road, Oxford OX2 7AT Tel: 01865
516636
Ages: 2 years - 5 years
Open: 8.30am – 5pm, Monday – Friday

Oxford Montessori Nursery (Iffley) Iffley Village Hall, Church Way,
Iffley, OX4 4EG Tel: 01865 358210 Email:
omns@montesso.demon.co.uk
Ages: 2 years – 5 years

Oxford Montessori Nursery (Wolvercote) Wolvercote Village
Hall, Wolvercote Green, OX2 8BD Tel: 01865 358210 Email:
omns@montesso.demon.co.uk
Ages: 2 years – 5 years
Open: 8:30am – 3:00pm, Monday – Friday

Pippins Day Nursery & Nursery School Nuffield Orthopaedic
Centre, Old Road, Headington, OX3 7LD Tel: 01865-227872
Email: bramleys@fsbdial.co.uk
Ages: 3 months – 5 years
Open: 7:15am – 6:30pm, Monday – Friday

The Oxford Nursery Sanders Road, The Oxford Science Park,
Oxford OX4 4GD Tel: 01865 396792
Ages: 0 – 5 years
Open: 8am – 6pm, Monday – Friday

Sandfield Day Nursery Arthur Sanctuary House, Sandfield Road,
Headington, OX3 7RH Tel: 01865 744200
Email: sandfieldnursery@childbase.com
Ages: 0 - 5 years
Open: 8am – 6pm, Monday-Friday

The Roundabout Centre Omerod School, Waynflete Road,
Headington, OX3 8DD Tel: 01865 764952
Email: theroundaboutcentre@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Ages: 3 months – 5 years
Open: 8:00am – 6:00pm, Monday – Friday

St Thomas' Day Nursery 40 St Thomas St, Oxford OX1 1JL
Tel: 01865 249800
Age range: 4 months - 5 years
Open: 8.15am - 5.30pm, Monday – Thursday.
8.15am – 5pm Friday

Turbo Ted's Nursery 1 Roger Dudman Way, Oxford OX1 1HW
Tel: 01865 200967 Email: oxford@buffetbear.co.uk
Ages: 3 months – 5 years
Open 7:30am – 6:00pm, Monday – Friday

Stepping Stones Nursery 55 Glanville Rd, Oxford OX4 2DD
Tel: 01865 717139
Age range: 1 1/2 - 5 years
Open: 8am – 6pm, Monday - Friday

Nursery Classes and Schools

Nursery classes and schools provide early education for children between three and five years old, although some take children from two and a half. Some are part of the state education system (and so, free) others are run by private and voluntary sector organisations whose fees vary across the country.

Nursery classes and schools are open during school hours, usually 9am to 3:30pm during term time for full or half-day sessions. Some are open earlier and later to assist working or studying parents and some have outside term-time activities. At nursery schools and classes children will experience learning and development activities suitable for their age group.

Both nursery classes and schools are staffed by teachers and nursery assistants. The size of a school or class will vary, but at least one practitioner should be allocated to every 13 children. All nursery schools and classes are regularly inspected by Ofsted. You can ask to see the most recent inspection report for any nursery you are interested in or look it up on the OFSTED website.

Pre-Schools and Playgroups

Pre-schools and playgroups provide care and often early education for children aged between two and five years old. They usually aim to provide learning experiences through structured play activities working to an early years curriculum.

Many pre-schools are community-based and voluntarily-run and most encourage parental involvement. Pre-schools cost about £4.50 to £7 per session; some may ask you to pay for a block booking of half a term in advance. Many also provide free part-time Early Years education for three and four-year-olds funded by the Government (see below). Children in funded Early Years settings work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. Other pre-schools may offer less structured more informal play sessions. Some

parents arrange for children to go to pre-school with a childminder or consider other types of day care as well as the playgroup.

Registration and inspection of pre-schools and playgroup is arranged by your local authority, they are regularly inspected by OFSTED. Most staff are trained to work with children or are mid-training. Pre-schools and playgroups generally provide places for between 24 and 28 children. Minimum staffing ratios are 1:4 for children aged 2 and 1:8 for children aged three to five.

Nannies & other home-based childcare

Trained nannies can provide you with high quality, professional childcare in your own home. They can look after children of any age and they can often work flexible hours to fit in with your working hours. Many nannies are happy to work part-time. They often take children to school, pre-school or other activities.

Nanny-share arrangements can be set up to share a nanny with another family. A nanny looking after children of more than two families must register with the local authority as a childminder. Most nannies have a recognised childcare qualification or nursery nurse training, but this isn't compulsory.

You can use a nanny agency or advertise for a nanny but always interview thoroughly, check all references and make sure the applicant has undergone a police check. If you decide to employ a nanny directly rather than through an agency you will need to provide a reasonable salary and make simple tax and national insurance arrangements. Nannies are covered by national minimum wage regulations and as such are more expensive than childminders and other forms of childcare. Many parents are now entitled to financial support to help pay for childcarers who work in the child's home if they are registered or approved.

Au Pairs can be an alternative to nannies. An au pair is someone visiting from overseas to learn English and will look after children for up to 25 hours per week for 5 days a week in return for

accommodation and an allowance. An au pair can also often help with basic housework such as cleaning and cooking. Employment is controlled by the Home Office.

Childminders

Childminders look after children in the childminder's own home. They can care for up to six children aged under eight including their own, of whom no more than three must be aged under five, at any one time. Children can go to a childminder from a few months old right through until they reach secondary school. As they can accommodate a mixed age-range of children, they can usually keep brothers and sisters together.

As childminders are self-employed, they decide on their own working hours. Most are willing to work early mornings, evenings and weekends, as well as part-time.

Many are happy to provide families with part-time places for children. They often drop children off at school, playgroup or pre-school and pick them up. A disadvantage of using childminders, however, is that they are usually working on their own and may have no back-up if they fall ill.

All registered childminders are required to undertake a basic training course (including first aid) and most do further training. They must be checked and registered before they begin to work with children. People over 16 living in the childminders' household are also checked. Inspections are carried out to make sure the childminder is continuing to provide a safe and suitable service. You can ask to see a childminder's registration certificate and latest inspection report. In this sort of childcare your child should experience learning and development activities suitable for their age.

Childminders set their charges themselves; most childminders will charge between £3.75-£5 per child an hour. If you want to know about childminders presently available The Oxfordshire Children's

Information Service can produce individual reports detailing childminders near you including info on costs, opening hours and vacancies.

Other Facilities for Under Fives

If you don't need full day care but would still like your child to have some pre-school care and education, then there are several options available. Parent and Baby or Toddler groups meet once or twice a week, and are usually run by the parents who attend. They provide toys and books for the children and tea and coffee for the parents. For many parents they are important as a chance to meet others. Groups are often advertised in doctors' surgeries or community noticeboards and up-to-date information about local groups can be found on the Oxfordshire Services Directory (www.oxfordshireservicesdirectory.org.uk).

Donnington Doorstep Townsend Square, Donnington Bridge Road, OX4 4BB Tel: 01865 727721
Free drop-in centre for children, parents and carers.
Monday - Friday 10am - 3pm, Saturday 11am - 2.30pm

Toddle In St Aldate's Church, 40 Pembroke Street, Oxford.
Mondays, 10-11.30am, free
Tel: 01865 254800
Email: toddle-in@staldates.org.uk
<http://www.staldates.org.uk/content.asp?pageRef=302>

St Andrew's Baby & Toddler Group St Andrews Church, Linton Road, OX2 6UG (North Oxford) Tel: 01865 311212
Web: www.standrewsoxford.org
Tuesdays 09.30 and 11.00, Wednesdays 10.15 and 13.45
www.standrewsoxford.org/Groups/68631/St_Andrews_Church/Children_Youth_Families/Parents_and_Families/Parent_Baby_and.aspx

Baby massage Ferry Leisure Centre, Diamond Place, Summertown, OX2 7DP Tel: 01865 467060
Web: www.oxford.gov.uk/leisure/ferry-sports-centre.cfm

Monkey Music Summertown
Tel: 01865 424612
Web: www.monkeymusic.co.uk
Ages: 3 months+

Baby college
Summertown Church Hall, Portland Road, Summertown, OX2 7EZ
Web: www.babycollege.co.uk
Age: up to 3 years
Wednesdays.
Tel:01865 436920

Tatty Bumpkin Oxford Summertown Church Hall, Portland Road,
Summertown, OX2 7EZ Tel: 0845 6801519
Friday 10.30am & 11.30 am
Email: classes@oxford.tattybumpkin.com
Web: www.oxford.tattybumpkin.com

Bouncy fun Ferry Leisure Centre, Diamond Place, Summertown,
OX2 7DP Tel: 01865 467060
Web: www.oxford.gov.uk/leisure/ferry-sports-centre.cfm
Ages: up to 8
Fridays 14:30-15:30 during school holidays

St Michael's Baby & Toddler Group St Michael & All Angels,
Lonsdale Road, Summertown, OX2 7ES
Tuesdays 10.30-12.00
Web: www.stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

Stepping Stones Toddler Group Woodstock Road Baptist Church,
Woodstock Road, Summertown, OX2 7NQ
Thursdays 10.00-12.00
Tel: 01865 873592
Ages: 0-5 on

Oxsrad Toddler Play (trampoline/bouncy castle) Oxsrad Sports &
Leisure Centre, Court Place Farm, Marsh Lane, Oxford OX3 0NQ

Tuesdays 10-12 and Fridays 10 - 11
Tel: 01865 741336

The Oxford University Newcomers' Club, The University Club,
11 Mansfield Road, Oxford OX1 3SZ

(For wives, husbands or partners of visiting scholars, graduate students and newly appointed academics)

Fridays during term, 10.15-11.45 'Newcomers' with children meet.

<http://sites.google.com/site/oxforduniversitynewcomersclub/>

e-mail: newcomers@ox.ac.uk

Early Years

All three and four-year-olds are now entitled to a free part-time early education place. This means that every child will be provided with a maximum of 5 sessions of 3 hours for 38 weeks of the year. Parents can choose a place at any registered provider – the Oxfordshire Children's Information Service can give details of registered providers, which include school nursery classes, state or private nursery schools, day nurseries, playgroups, pre-schools or with accredited childminders who are part of a quality assured network. You can use more than one provider. To find out more about accessing Early Years education, including when your child will become eligible contact the Oxfordshire Children's Information Service.

Starting School

In Oxford all eligible children are entitled to free education from the beginning of the term when they turn five, and head-teachers have the discretion to offer places to 'rising fives', those who will be turning five the following term. Children are entitled to a free place at an Oxfordshire County Council School if they are a British or EC National, from a Commonwealth country with the right to live in the UK or if their parent is qualified to remain in this country under UK immigration rules because of their refugee status or because they have been granted exceptional leave to remain.

Most schools hold open days or evenings, or alternatively parents and prospective pupils can arrange an individual visit. All schools produce their own prospectus which will help to answer any questions that you might have regarding the curriculum, exam performance, activities, and clubs. It is important to be aware of the catchment area of the school, which determines who has priority for places based on where the child lives.

Out-of-School Services

Out-of-school services are for school-age children to learn and play in groups. You may find that school hours and holidays are incompatible with the University schedule; you may have lectures after school finishes at 3.30 or school half-terms may fall during Oxford term time. In these circumstances, out-of-school services may be very useful! They aim to fill the gap between school and working hours, both during term and holidays and are usually based in or near schools.

Out-of-school services are registered with OFSTED provided they are caring for children aged under eight years of age for more than two hours a day, and are regularly inspected. A check is also done on the premises of the registered out of school service to ensure it is safe and suitable for children.

There are different types of out of school services: breakfast clubs open in the mornings before school so children can enjoy breakfast and activities. After school clubs open in the afternoons between about 3.30pm and 6pm and are often run in first and middle schools as well as in local communities. Holiday playschemes operate during school holidays between about 8.30am and 6pm. There are many playschemes available in Oxford, run by schools, the council and local or private groups, for example Donnington Doorstep (see section for under-5s) who offer a holiday drop-in playscheme for children aged 8 to 14. Activities include art and crafts, pool, table-tennis and outdoor games.

The Oxford University Playscheme

Oxford Active Playscheme provides a holiday playscheme every school holiday for children aged 4 to 14. The scheme is open from 8.15 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. Children can attend for the whole day or for half a day and will have an exciting range of activities and play to choose from.

The playscheme is organised with a high staff/child ratio (no more than 1:8 for under-eights). The quality of the staff is exceptionally high, with an experienced team of playwork assistants. The children will be supervised at all times and no child will be permitted to leave the playscheme unaccompanied without prior written permission from their parent or guardian. Oxford Active Playscheme is run by Owen McGovern, who has run children's activity camps and courses on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council for the past 5 years.

Run by Oxford Active, this lasts from 8.15am to 6.15pm every holiday, including half-terms and is suitable for 5-16 year olds. University staff and student parents are offered places for their children on the playscheme at a discount, and there is a reduced rate for siblings.

The OU Playscheme is based at the Cherwell school (South Site) which is served by a free bus from the University Museum, Parks Road. A full programme of outings and activities is offered, with two structured activity sessions, lunch, snacks and informal playtime each day. In addition to swimming, games, arts and crafts and drama sessions, the children are able to take part in outings such as to Shotover Nature Park, the ice-rink and the cinema, and to learn archery.

If received 7 days before the start of the playscheme, the following prices apply. A booking for one child will be £23.50 per full day, or £100 for one week. Half days will be £14. Bookings for a second or further children will be £21.50 for a full day, £94 for one week and £11 for a half day. Student parents can apply to the University

Childcare Fund (see below). To find out more information and to book, see the website:
<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child/play.shtml>

Children with Disabilities and/or Special Educational Needs

The Oxfordshire County Council Special Educational Needs department may be able to help you find childcare to suit your situation. A guide called “Your Child and You” is also produced by The Oxfordshire Children’s Information Service which has lots of information about the options available. Tel 01865 815 671 for more details.

Preschool

All childcare providers are bound by the duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ for disabled children and through the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice to meet the needs of children with SEN. Using this legislation and guidance, all childcare providers have to ensure that they must not treat a child ‘less favourably’ for reasons related to the child’s disability or special need.

Most early years settings/providers have an SEN coordinator who will be able to discuss what’s right for you and your child in that particular setting.

The Early Support Programme will be able to provide informal advice on the availability of appropriate services for disabled children from birth to five and their families. For more information, visit www.earlysupport.org.uk

Many special schools share in the running of a joint nursery class on the site of a nearby nursery school, although children with severe special educational needs may attend an assessment class at a special school.

Many community pre-school groups are willing to accept a child with special needs, as will some childminders. Private day nurseries may also give your child a place. If extra help or equipment is needed for your child, the childcare provider can apply for a grant from the County Council's Inclusion Support Scheme. This is a single payment of up to £250 for children under 5 and £500 for older children. Application forms can be obtained by contacting The Childcare Development Team on 01865 323004 or inclusion.support@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

The County Council is also supporting the setting up of an Enable Childminder Network. This is a network of childminders who have undertaken training specifically to meet the individual needs of disabled children and parents are supported by a network coordinator who can help identify them an appropriate childminder. For more information contact toni.gaul@triochildcare.co.uk or wendy.ockenden@triochildcare.co.uk

The Oxfordshire Children's Information Service run an enhanced service for children with disabilities and additional needs which can help parents find placements for their child. They can provide parents with information about childcare arrangements, but in the enhanced service will also contact potential childcarers and enquire about the provider's capacity to meet the individual needs of a child.

School-Age

Most children with special educational needs will attend mainstream schools. In a small number of cases a child's needs may be better met at a special school or unit attached to their mainstream school. Every school will have a policy they have adopted to support children who have special educational needs, and a teacher or governor with responsibility for SEN provision. Schools are guided by a National Code of Practice that sets out how children with special educational needs are to be identified and their progress assessed.

Childcare outside school hours, particularly during the long summer holidays, is a problem for many parents. Integrated and special play provision is still scarce. If you use respite care, the person responsible for co-ordinating it may be able to help you find a suitable arrangement for out-of-school care. Alternatively here are some suggestions (see the directory for contact details):

Guidepost Trust Fun Clubs

Tel: 01993 899980

Term-time 3.30-6pm (Springfield/Madley Brook School, Witney, Oxfordshire.)

School holiday schemes

John Watson Kids club runs an inclusive out-of-school (after school and holidays) childcare in Wheatley.

The Parasol Project supports disabled children and young people to access local registered playschemes and youth groups. There is also an After School club and Holiday Playscheme Northway Kids Club at Tower Playbase.

Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN) is an Oxford charity offering activities and sports for children and young adults with learning difficulties in the local area. They run a range of events weekly during Oxford termtime. Check their website at <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~keen/> for more details.

Some special schools are running Liaison Worker Projects to support disabled children into activities or childcare in their local communities. Currently this is available at Fitzwaryn School (Wantage) and Kingfisher (Abingdon) with Mabel Pritchard School (Blackbird Leys). This works with support from the Childcare Development Team and where appropriate use of the Inclusion Support Scheme. The aim will be to roll this out across all Special School sites in Oxfordshire.

Funding for Children with Disabilities or Special Educational Needs

There is some additional financial help for parents of children with disabilities or SEN. For example Direct Payments are cash payments from your local authority for parents of disabled children to buy their own support or care. Call 0845 602 2260 for a copy of 'A Parent's Guide to Direct Payments'. The Child Tax Credit can include additional amounts for children with disabilities or SEN and the Working Tax Credit can include help with childcare costs. For advice or a claim form call 0845 300 3900. Through the OFSTED Childcare Register working parents may now also be eligible for financial support to help pay for approved home-based childcare.

Financial support - What's available from the University?

If you'd like any help or advice on what you are entitled to, the VP (Women) is a member of OUSU's student advice service and can help you – please email childcare@ousu.org. Alternatively, if you'd like to speak to the permanent student advisor, email advice@ousu.org.

Oxford Opportunity Bursaries

The Oxford Opportunity Bursary (OOB) was established to provide maintenance support for UK students from lower income households. The University receives the financial assessment made by your LA/ELB/SAAS/SLC and if you are eligible (based on your family's household income), will administer a bursary of between £100 and £4,000. The OOB is awarded annually as long as students remain eligible, though the award in the first year may be slightly higher than in subsequent years. No application is necessary – if you are eligible, you will receive a letter from Student Funding Services detailing your entitlement and how to organise payment.

Access to Learning Fund

The Access to Learning Fund is a Government fund, administered and distributed by the University. It is designed to provide financial

aid to Home students who experience hardship. The maximum a student could receive in one academic year is £3,500, though this would be in exceptional circumstances. Only those from the UK, those with settled status, or those who are recognised by the Home Office to be legitimate refugees can apply to the fund. Students from the Channel Islands and Isle of Man are ineligible for support.

You can collect an application form for this fund from you college, or you can email Student Funding Services who will send you an electronic copy of the form. SFS can also provide advice about making your application.

student.funding@admin.ox.ac.uk.

Childcare Relief Fund

All full time matriculated students with dependent children in registered or approved childcare, who encounter unexpected circumstances leading to financial hardship are eligible to apply. Matriculated students with dependent children in registered or approved childcare studying a full-time course part-time because of disability are also eligible to apply.

Home students are advised to apply first to the Access to Learning Fund for assistance with childcare provision costs. The maximum Childcare Relief Fund award is £2,000. Application forms are available from Student Funding Services. student.funding@admin.ox.ac.uk.

University Hardship Funds

For those whose financial circumstances change unexpectedly the University Hardship Fund can provide grants or loans to assist students. The Committee meets once a term to consider applications and students should apply through their college.

University Bursaries

Georgina Horlick Childcare Bursaries

Two bursaries are available to children at the Balliol Day Nursery whose parents are undergraduate or postgraduate students at Balliol. One bursary covers the full cost of a place at the Balliol Day Nursery and the other covers half the cost.

The bursaries will be awarded by the Balliol Nursery Committee. Anyone interested in applying for one of the bursaries should contact the Chair of the Nursery Committee, Dr Rosalind Thomas (email: rosalind.thomas@balliol.ox.ac.uk).

Wolfson Childcare Bursary Fund

The Wolfson Childcare Bursary Fund provides funding to student parents who hold a University nursery place. The Bursary Fund is administered by the University's Joint Committee on Student Hardship and Childcare Funds, and matriculated student parents who hold a University nursery place are eligible to apply. The Bursary awarded is up to half the annual cost of a nursery place. Students will be expected to provide evidence of the actual cost of the nursery place and confirmation that it is a University nursery place.

In order to be considered, student parents should fill in an Access to Learning Fund application form (Home students) or a Childcare Relief Fund application form (EU and Overseas students). Contact Student Funding Services at student.funding@admin.ox.ac.uk

This section gives information about the sources of funding available to student parents. It is not a definitive list of sources of entitlements, and not all the funds are specifically for student parents, but some should be able to help. Please contact the VP (Women) for more personal advice.

Financial support: What's available from my Local Authority? (Home undergraduates only)

All figures given in this section are for England. Please check with the agency relevant for your area (Local Authority, Education and Library Board or the Student Awards Agency for Scotland) for more information on the income thresholds and amounts of support available.

Maintenance Loans and Grants - undergraduates

When making an application for student finance, most undergraduates are assessed as dependent students and their parents' income is used to assess support entitlement. However, students with any dependent children are automatically assessed as independent students and therefore only their own income (and that of any partner) is taken into account when calculating support. This often means that student parents are entitled to maximum support from the Government.

Full-time students with children may qualify for extra financial help on top of the standard student finance package. Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to get:

- the Childcare Grant (to help with childcare costs)
- the Parents' Learning Allowance (to help towards course costs - like books, materials and travel)
- help through the Access to Learning Fund (if you're in financial difficulty)
- Child Tax Credit

See www.studentfinance.direct.gov.uk for more information.

Financial Support: What's available from the Government?

Please be aware that the situation around benefits is changing rapidly due to changes by the government. There is not guarantee of the accuracy of this information. To find out what you're entitled to, please speak to the Citizen's Advice Bureau (see directory).

Your fee status will have a major impact on your entitlement to benefits; that is, whether you are a Home, EU or Overseas student. The eligibility criteria differ for each of the benefits. It is possible that a non-student partner who is eligible for any income-related benefits may claim on behalf of the couple, although the student partner's income will be taken into account when assessing the non-student partner's entitlement to means-tested benefits.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

The Sure Start Maternity Grant is a one-off payment of £500 to help with the costs of having a new baby. If you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit or if you receive a certain level of support from Child Tax Credit, you could be eligible for this grant. Claims can be made from 11 weeks before the week your baby is due until 3 months after birth. Contact your local Jobcentre to check your eligibility www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Child Benefit

Child Benefit is a tax-free payment that you can claim for your child(ren). It is usually paid every four weeks but in some cases can be paid weekly, and there are separate rates for each child. The payment can be claimed by anyone who qualifies, whatever their income or savings.

You may be able to claim Child Benefit if your child is under 16, or is over 16 and in relevant education or training. In 2010/11, you will get £20.30 a week for your oldest child and £13.40 a week for

each of your other children. From 6 April 2011, the Child Benefit rates will stay the same for three years.

If you've come from another country to live in the UK you may be able to get Child Benefit for your child. To qualify for it you'll have to satisfy some complicated rules. You can download a leaflet from the HM Revenue and Customs website which gives more information about the rules you need to satisfy: www.hmrc.gov.uk/childbenefit/ch5_notes.pdf

Income Support

If you can't be available for full-time work and don't have enough money to live on, you may be able to get Income Support benefit. Whether you qualify or not and how much you get depends on your circumstances. As a lone student parent with a child (or children) under 16 you may be eligible for Income Support during the summer vacation, and should contact your local Jobcentre to find out about your eligibility www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Jobseeker's Allowance

If you are a full-time student parent, you may be able to claim Jobseeker's Allowance during the summer vacation if you are one of a couple who are both full-time students. Contact your local Jobcentre to check your eligibility. www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Housing Benefit

If you are a full-time student parent living in non-university or non-college accommodation, you may be able to claim Housing Benefit. Check your eligibility with your local council.

Council Tax Benefit

If you are a full-time student parent, you will not be liable to pay council tax, although if your partner is a non-student then they may

be. If this is the case and your partner is on a low income, you may be eligible to receive Council Tax Benefit. Check your eligibility with your local council.

Tax Credits

If you're responsible for at least one child or young person who normally lives with you, you may qualify for Child Tax Credit. If you work, but earn low wages, you may qualify for Working Tax Credit.

To check if you qualify, fill in the online questionnaire on the HM Revenue and Customs website: www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits/do-you-qualify.htm

Child Tax Credit (UK undergraduates and postgraduates)

This is available through the Inland Revenue. You do not need to be working to receive CTC. The amount you receive depends upon your circumstances and income. If you receive the maximum CTC for which you're eligible and don't receive Working Tax Credit, you will be entitled to free school meals for your children.

Working Tax Credit

You do not have to claim the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit; full time students have a choice between receiving either the Working Tax Credit childcare element or the Childcare Grant. Full time students cannot claim both.

Working Tax Credit is paid to working people on a low income. To qualify for the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit a lone parent must work at least sixteen hours per week, and for couples, both must work at least sixteen hours a week. The childcare element can help towards childcare costs by paying 70% of registered or approved childcare costs.

Child Trust Fund

The Child Trust Fund (CTF) is a long-term tax-free savings and investment account for children born on or after 1 September 2002. The government will give every eligible child a voucher worth at least £250 to start the fund. This fund belongs to the child and cannot be used by parents.

N.B. On 24 May 2010 the Government announced that it intended to reduce and then stop payments to Child Trust Fund accounts. These changes will start in August 2010. See the website for more details. www.childtrustfund.gov.uk/

Nursery Education Fund

The Government will now pay for an early education place for all three and four year olds; in Oxfordshire, children qualify for free sessions in the term following their third birthday. These children have a right to five, free, two-and-a-half-hour sessions of pre-school education a week for 38 weeks a year.

Many providers of early education will allow you to claim two funded sessions in one day; however you may still have to pay for extras, such as lunch clubs, registration fees, uniform, any time over two-and-a-half hours in a session and extra sessions. Your provider should tell you beforehand about these charges.

Your provider will claim the grant for you after checking with you that your child is not receiving free sessions anywhere else. They may reduce your charges at the start of the term, or may pass the grant on as a refund cheque when the funding arrives. Ask your child's provider to explain how this will work for you.

For more information about fee early years education in Oxfordshire please contact: Early Learning and Childcare, Oxfordshire County Council, Macclesfield House, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1NA, Tel: 01865 815765
Email: earlyyears.education@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Is there any charitable funding available?

Funds for Women Graduates (FfWG)

FfWG helps women graduates with their living expenses (not fees) in Great Britain in their final year of a PhD or DPhil. They can also provide emergency grants to assist with the completion of an academic year's work. www.ffwg.org.uk

Foundation Grants

FfWG offers Foundation Grants to help women graduates with their living expenses (not fees) while registered for study or research at an approved institution of higher education in Great Britain. The criteria are the proven needs of the applicant and their academic calibre. They are not likely to exceed £4,000. All grants are offered on a needs basis and therefore not all grants will be for £4,000.

Emergency Grants

FfWG offers Emergency Grants to graduate women who face an unforeseen financial crisis whilst engaged in study or research at institutions of higher education in Great Britain. Grants are not likely to exceed £1,500.

All grants are offered on a needs basis and therefore not all grants will be for £1,500. They are offered three times a year.

Elizabeth Nuffield Educational Fund

The Elizabeth Nuffield Educational Fund (ENEF) makes awards only towards paying for the care of children, or other family members with specific needs, to women who are studying for a first qualification at higher education level to improve their employment prospects. The awards are competitive, and depend on the ability of applicants to complete their courses successfully, as well as on financial need. Awards are not intended to meet the full costs of care.

Applicants who are eligible to apply for the Student Loan for Maintenance and the Student Loan for Tuition Fees must do so before applying to ENEF. Applicants who are eligible to apply to the Access to Learning Fund must do so before applying to ENEF.
www.nuffieldfoundation.org

Directory

University

OUSU Student Advice Service Oxford University Student Union,
Thomas Hull House, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford, OX1 2DH
Monday-Friday 10am-6pm

To speak to a student advisor, email advice@ousu.org.

To speak to the VP (Women) specifically, email childcare@ousu.org, or phone (01865) (2)88462

Oxford University Student Information and Advisory Service
Examination Schools, 75-81 High Street, Oxford, OX1 4BG
Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm
Tel: 01865 (2)86223, Email student.information@admin.ox.ac.uk
http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/student_information/

Oxford University Childcare Services Team 2 Worcester Street

Childcare Officer (Tel: 01865 289841) in the first instance.

Louise Edwards
Manager of Childcare Services
01865 289942
louise.edwards@admin.ox.ac.uk

Tim Perry
Childcare Officer
01865 289841

timothy.perry@admin.ox.ac.uk

Jackie Wilkins
Finance Officer
01865 289835
jackie.wilkins@admin.ox.ac.uk

Postal Address: University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford,
OX1 2JD

Fax: 01865 289830
<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child/>

Oxford University Playscheme
Cutteslowe Primary School,
Wren Road, Oxford, OX2 7RS
Tel: 01865 773502
info@oxfordactive.co.uk
www.oxfordactive.co.uk
<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child/playdet.shtml>

External

4Children (formerly Kids' Clubs Network) City Reach, 5
Greenwich View Place, London E14 9NN Tel: 020 7512 2100
Info@4Children.org.uk
www.4children.org.uk

Bookstart Scheme

A national scheme offering free books to children.
www.bookstart.co.uk

Care to Learn Government Program

If you are a student (under 20) you might get help paying for
childcare.
Tel: 0845 6002809 or visit www.dfes.gov.uk/caretolearn/parents.cfm

CAPT (Child Accident Prevention Trust) 22-26 Farringdon Lane,
London EC1R 3AJ Tel: 020 7608 3828 Email: safe@capt.org.uk
www.capt.org.uk

Childcare Approval Scheme Tel: 0845 767 8111
www.childcareapprovalscheme.co.uk

Child Benefit Enquiry Line Tel: 0845 302 1444 www.hmrc.gov.uk

Citizen's Advice Bureau 95 St Aldates, Oxford, OX1 1DA
Tel/Fax: 0870 2200608/01865 202715, www.oxfordcab.org

Child Support Agency Tel: 0845 713 3133 www.csa.gov.uk

Contact a Family (Supports families with disabled children)
Helpline: 0808 808 3555 – where you may be able to discuss your
needs with other parents in your area. www.cafamily.org.uk

Daycare Trust National Childcare Charity 21 St. George's Rd,
London SE1 6ES Tel: 020 7840 3350 Email:
info@daycaretrust.org.uk, www.daycaretrust.org.uk
Can provide advice and trained support workers if your child has
complex needs.

Crossroads – Caring for Carers
0845 450 0350
www.crossroads.org.uk

Disability Rights Commission For detailed guidance on legal
requirements. Tel: 0845 762 2633
[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations/
DisabilityRights/DG_4001070](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations/DisabilityRights/DG_4001070)

Direct payments (DfES publications) Tel: 0845 602 2260 for a
copy of 'A Parent's Guide to Direct Payments' (quoting reference
0202-2006doc-en).

Early Support Programme

A Government initiative to improve services for disabled children.
For an 'Early Support Family Pack' call 0845 602 2260 and quote reference ESPP1.

www.earlysupport.org.uk

Early Years Equality Tel: 01244 310 569

Email: eyequality@tiscali.co.uk

www.earlyyearesequality.org

Offers support for ethnic minority parents.

Gingerbread (charity for single parents)

Advice line freephone service. Tel: 0800 018 4318

www.gingerbread.org.uk

Fathers Direct www.fathersdirect.com

Useful information for dads.

HM Revenue & Customs Tax helpline

Tax Credits Helpline: 0845 300 3900

www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits

HomeDad Organisation

Supports fathers who are staying at home to raise their children.

www.homedad.org.uk

Home Start

Offers friendship, support and practical help to parents with young children.

Tel: 0800 068 63 68

www.home-start.org.uk

John Watson Kids Club

Inclusive out-of-school childcare for children with SEN or disabilities

Maria Wilkinson (Manager), 01865 876878,

maria.wilkinson@jwkc.org.uk

KEEN Kids Enjoy Exercise Now

keen@herald.ox.ac.uk

<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~keen/index.html>
Tel and Fax: 01865 794198

Kids

Play and opportunity for disabled children
6 Aztec Row, Berners Road, London N1 0PW
020 7359 3635
enquiries@kids.org.uk
www.kids-online.org.uk

National Association of Toy & Leisure Libraries

020 7255 4600
admin@playmatters.co.uk
www.natll.org.uk

National Childbirth Trust

For info and support for pregnancy, birth and early years parenting
Alexandra House, Oldham Terrace, London W3 6NH
0870 444 8707
enquiries@nationalchildbirthtrust.co.uk
www.nctpregnancyandbabycare.com

National Childminding Association (NCMA) Royal Court, 81

Tweedy Road, Bromley, Kent BR1 1TG
0845 880 0044
info@ncma.org.uk
www.ncma.org.uk

Information on choosing a childminder and drawing up contracts.

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) Unit 13, Pennine

Business Park, Longbow Close, Bradley Road, Huddersfield, HD2
1GN Tel: 0870 774 4244
www.ndna.org.uk

For a list of day nurseries and tips on choosing childcare.

National Family & Parenting Institute 430 Highgate Studios,

53-79 Highgate Road, London, NW5 1TL Tel: 020 7424 3460
Fax: 020 7485 3590 email: info@familyandparenting.org

www.familyandparenting.org/

Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services & Skills) email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council Special Educational Needs

Children's Services, Macclesfield House, New Road,
Oxford, OX1 1NA

Tel: 01865 815671 / Fax: 01865 815437

sen@oxfordshire.gov.uk

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/SEN

Oxfordshire Children's Information Services

6 Thorney Leys Park, Witney, OX28 4GE

Tel: 08452 26 26 36

Email: enquiries@oxoncis.org.uk

<http://www.oxoncis.org.uk/>

The Parasol Project (charity for children with learning disabilities)

Tower PlayBase, Maltfield Road, Northway, Oxford, OX3 9RG

Tel: 01865 742816

Fax: 01865 742816

parasol.project@virgin.net

www.parasolproject.org

Parentline Plus (Charity providing free 24-hour helpline and support to anyone caring for a child.)

Tel: 0808 800 2222

www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Pre-School Learning Alliance (For info on pre-school provision.)

Tel: 020 7697 2500

www.pre-school.org.uk

Sure Start

Information on Government support for children, parents and communities and details of local Sure Start settings.

Tel: 0870 000 2288
www.surestart.gov.uk

Useful Websites

- <http://www.new-parent-network.info/about%20us.html>: an independent local voluntary association of people who care for children in and around Oxford. (They have a very useful guide to Oxford for the under-8s.)
- www.oxfordshireservicesdirectory.org.uk: for information about activities in Oxford
- www.direct.gov.uk/childcare: to find childcare, nurseries and schools in your area
- www.parentscentre.gov.uk: for information and advice about your child's learning
- www.surestart.gov.uk for information on Government support for children
- www.publications.doh.gov.uk/birthtofive: Advice on health issues relating to under fives.