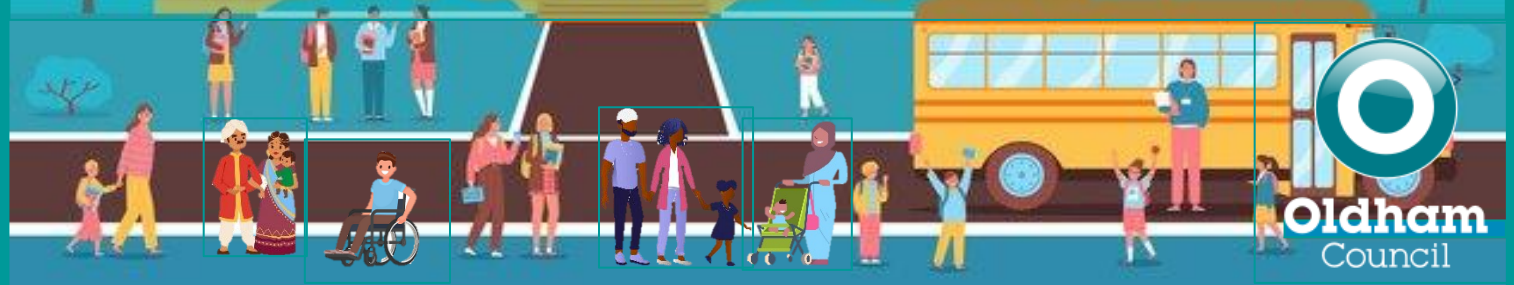


Briefing to Schools and Early Years Settings



Volume:	7 – Spring 2026	Week No:	19 - 20	Date:	Thursday 5 February 2026
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Report on Oldham Local Area Partnership shows significant progress made in improving support for children and young people with SEND

A letter from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission highlights clear improvements across the local SEND system.

Inspectors have recognised the growing impact of a joined-up approach in Oldham, with services becoming more responsive, inclusive and better focused on meeting the needs of children, young people and their families.

There was also positive recognition of partners' clearer strategic direction, stronger ambition for improvement, and increasing focus on early intervention and inclusion.

Cllr Mohon Ali, Oldham Council Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, said:

"This is an encouraging and well-deserved recognition of the hard work taking place across Oldham to improve SEND services for our children, young people and their families.

This letter shows we have listened to families, listened to feedback and taken action. It reflects the dedication of our staff, schools, health colleagues and wider partners, who are working together to build a system that is more responsive, inclusive and supportive.

Most importantly, it reflects our ongoing commitment to listening to families, learning from their experiences, and making real improvements that positively impact everyday lives."

Mike Barker, Place Director, Greater Manchester ICB said:

"I am delighted with the progress we have made in Oldham and that this has been recognised by the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted.

We are determined to ensure all children, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities, can flourish. The hard work of our teams and partners is paying off, leading to better outcomes for children and families.

I want to thank colleagues at the Northern Care Alliance and Pennine Care Foundation Trust for their continued commitment and adaptability.

We are not complacent and know there is more to do. We will build on this progress to deliver consistently good, inclusive services for even more children and families."

Andrew Robinson, Chief Executive Officer at POINT, said:

"Oldham's SEND partnership have worked incredibly hard over the past 2 years to improve SEND services in Oldham with, and for, children, young people and their families.

This Ofsted CQC inspection report highlights the positive work that we have started in Oldham but our partnership are ambitious and know there is more to do.

POINT will continue to champion the voice of Oldham families to ensure their lived experience is at the heart of decision making as we continue to implement our ambitious plans for SEND in Oldham ensuring every child or young person with SEND can achieve the best possible outcomes."

The council and its partners remain committed to building on this progress through continued investment, service improvement and close engagement with children, young people and families, ensuring that SEND provision in Oldham continues to strengthen and deliver better outcomes for all.

[Click here](#) to read the report (Published 5 February 2026)

Ofsted Early Years Inspections: frequently asked questions

Since Ofsted [published the renewed inspection framework](#) on 9 September 2025, they have put on lots of online and face-to-face engagement with early years settings to answer your questions. Ofsted have also published the most frequently asked questions (FAQ), so you can see all the answers in one place.

Ofsted will regularly update this as they continue to inspect with their renewed approach, so do bookmark it and check back in future.

[Click here](#) to access the FAQs

If you want to watch any of our webinars, you can find them on Ofsted's [YouTube playlist](#).

We update our early years YouTube playlists regularly:

- [Early years: registered providers](#)
- [Early years: childminders](#)

Point of Contact: claire.burton@oldham.gov.uk

Share your views on delivering entitlements to parents

DfE are conducting research to gather feedback on early years professional's experiences of delivering the following entitlements:

- the working parent (9 month - 4 years)
- universal 15 hours (3 - 4-year-olds)
- the 2-year-old disadvantaged entitlement

We'd like to hear about your experiences and needs for delivering entitlements to understand how to improve the experience in the future. We are looking to speak to early years professional's involved in the process of childcare entitlements, those who process finances relating to these entitlements and support parents with understanding entitlements.

We would love to hear your thoughts and feedback on how you deliver entitlements in your setting(s) in a 60-minute session:

- **When:** 2nd - 18th February 2026
- **Format:** Online session, or potential options for in-person or a phone call
- **Incentive:** £40

Sessions will include a one-off discussion with a researcher about aspects such as what you do to deliver entitlements to parents, what that experience is like, who is involved, what systems you use etc. Your insights will play a key role in improving the experience of delivering entitlements across the country.

[Click here](#) to register your interest

Point of Contact: gabrielle.mitchem-evans@education.gov.uk

Nursery: Where the Best Start Happens – National Day Nursery Association (NDNA)



National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) is proud to champion the vital role that private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries play in giving children aged 0–5 years the best possible start in life. As the backbone of early years education in the UK, PVI nurseries are already delivering high-quality care, education and support to families across every community – and we are so proud of you.

Let's change the narrative and highlight the need for equitable treatment across all early years settings.

Join the campaign

Help us celebrate and protect the incredible work of PVI nurseries:

Share your story: How does your nursery give children the best start?

Parents: Tell us how your nursery supports your family

Contact your MP, local media and community using our downloadable resources.

Together, we can ensure every child gets the best start in life.

[Click here](#) to find out more about the campaign

Point of Contact: info@ndna.org.uk

Safeguarding

Oldham Safeguarding Partnership Newsletter



Remember to sign up to Oldham Safeguarding Partnership newsletter to keep up to date on developments.

[OSCP | Welcome](#)

You can also access the catalogue of 7-minute briefings. The briefings provide a mixture of new information such as learning from Serious Case Reviews or a reminder of basic information with challenge questions for teams to think about the application to practice within their teams.

[7 Minute Briefings | Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

You will also find a range of safeguarding topics including safeguarding babies; safe sleep, neglect and more.

[Safeguarding topics | Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Point of Contact: OSCP.group@oldham.gov.uk

Understanding Exploitation Training

This course is delivered by members of Oldham's Complex Safeguarding Team and representatives from services supporting adults in Oldham. It aims to equip practitioners with enhanced knowledge and skills to identify and respond appropriately to the exploitation of children, young people and adults.

The purpose of the course is to raise awareness about Criminal, Sexual and Financial exploitation including Modern Slavery and Cuckooing, and to help practitioners recognise the potential signs of exploitation and risk factors. The session focuses on how best to offer help and support, the local response pathways and local practitioner resources available; highlights national and local learning; and covers aspects including the point of view of survivors, complex safeguarding, intersectionality, the importance of language and trauma informed approaches, and transitions planning for young people preparing for adulthood. There are additional training sessions available which are designed to complement this course including 'Contextual Safeguarding'; 'Appropriate Use of Language'; and 'What is Complex Safeguarding'.

Dates, Venue and Booking Your Place

This training course will be delivered in person at Rock Street Resource Centre, Rock Street, Oldham OL1 3UJ and is currently on offer on the following dates:

- 9:30-16:30 on 17 March 2026
- 9:30-16:30 on 16 June 2026

Places for these sessions are limited. If you are interested in attending, please complete the [online booking form](#). You will then be contacted to discuss availability.

Point of Contact: OSCPtraining@oldham.gov.uk

Safer Internet Day

To help you deliver sessions for Safer Internet Day (which will take place on Tuesday 10 February 2026), the UK Safer Internet Centre have created a range of [free, engaging and interactive resources](#) on this year's official theme: 'smart tech, safe choices – exploring the safe and responsible use of AI'.



These educational resources have been specifically designed to support educators in delivering messages about AI that are suitable from age 3.

Reducing Child Accidents

Every year in England, around 370,000 children under five require hospital care for an injury. Approximately 40,000 are admitted, and tragically around 35 children lose their lives. Most of these incidents happen in the home, and many are preventable, particularly among families living in disadvantaged areas.

The Stay One Step Ahead (SOSA) programme is an evidence based, co produced intervention developed by the University of Nottingham in partnership with Small Steps Big Changes and the Child Accident Prevention Trust. The programme supports parents and carers to create safer home environments and reduce the risk of childhood accidents.

A free webinar taking place on Thursday 12 February 2026 at 1pm registration is available via [Eventbrite](#)

GMFRS prevention offers to partners and the public

'Preventing Emergencies by Protecting People and Places' is a comprehensive brochure from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) outlining its full range of prevention activities, including home fire safety, reducing deliberate fire-setting, road and water safety.

It explains what services are available, how partners and the public – including at risk groups - can access them, and how these programmes reduce risk across the region.

[Click here](#) to access the brochure

Point of Contact: OSCP.group@oldham.gov.uk

Partnerships

Information for parents and carers of little ones under 5 – NHS GM

Parents/Carers Leaflet for Under 5s

Printed copies have been delivered to locations across GM, but we know some parents may not manage to pick one up, so it would be great if schools/nurseries can pass it on to parents.

This clear and accessible publication breaks down the different symptoms of common childhood illnesses, giving tips on how to manage at home, and advice on when it's time to see a healthcare professional.



[Click here](#) to access the PDF version

The leaflet is also available in other languages. If you think there are any particular languages that would be relevant for your setting, please contact gmhscp.gm-campaigns@nhs.net to request an electronic version in a particular language.

Point of Contact: gmhscp.gm-campaigns@nhs.net

Health and Wellbeing

Children's Mental Health Week 2026

 **Children's Mental Health Week – Early Years Guide**



Children's Mental Health Week is a chance for early years settings to pause and reflect on children's emotional wellbeing. Each year, the week brings a different focus. In 2026, the theme 'This is My Place' invites us to think about belonging — and how young children experience their setting as a place where they feel safe, welcomed, and cared for. For young children, their early years setting is one of the most important places in their lives. It's where they play, explore, form relationships, and begin to understand themselves and others. How children feel in this place matters.

The attached guide has been created to support early years practitioners to explore this year's theme in practical, relational ways. It includes simple activities, circle time plans, and everyday approaches that can be adapted to suit your children, staff, and setting. You do not need to do everything. Small moments, repeated consistently, make a meaningful difference.

You can also visit the [Thrive website](#) for more information

Point of Contact: enquiries@thriveapproach.com

CPD and Training

Training and Professional Development

We would like to remind and encourage all Early Years practitioners of the range of training opportunities currently available.

Engaging in regular professional development not only helps ensure that you are meeting your statutory responsibilities but also strengthens the quality of practice across your team. Investing in staff training supports confidence, up-to-date knowledge, and the delivery of high-quality provision for children and families.

Research consistently shows that high quality professional development for early years practitioners leads to improved children's learning outcomes, -quality professional development for early years practitioners leads to improved children's learning outcomes,
Improved pedagogical knowledge → more effective teaching and learning interactions.
More consistent, high-quality practice → stronger learning environments.
Better understanding of assessment and curriculum → more accurate identification of needs and earlier interventions.

We encourage all providers to make full use of the training and development opportunities available to support practitioners' development and in turn, support the best possible outcomes for children. Please follow the Eventbrite link to keep up to date with the current training offer.

[Oldham Early Years CPD Training and Development](#)

Point of Contact: early.years@oldham.gov.uk

Safer Recruitment Refresher Course

You share with others a duty to safeguard the children in their care. Implementing safer recruitment practices is one way of discharging this safeguarding obligation. This refresher training is specially tailored for individuals who have completed safer recruitment training in the last three years. The original certificate will need to be provided to demonstrate they have attended the full course in the last three years.

Please email to book - oscptraining@oldham.gov.uk

Point of Contact: oscptraining@oldham.gov.uk

Nasen – Training

Nasen is the National Association for Special Educational Needs - a not-for-profit charity and the UK's leading professional membership body for SEND. Please see link below for their funding training this month.
[Events listing | Nasen](#)

Point of Contact: welcome@nasen.org.uk

SEND and Inclusion

Early Years inclusion Lunch Breaks

On the second Monday of every month (12:30 – 1:30pm), **Dingley's** runs 'Early Years inclusion Lunch Breaks' funded by the DfE through the EYSEND partnership.

The next meeting will be on **9th February** and the [link for each meeting](#) is the same.

Point of Contact: info@dingley.org.uk

How Best Start and Family Hubs can support transitions for early years children with SEND – Friday 26 March 2026

9:30 – 11:30am

This Dingley's webinar aims to share practice and thinking from regular conversations with hundreds of local authorities and providers about how best to support early years children with send in transitions. Our direct work with Family Hub leads and those currently writing BSIL plans will also be fed into the mix. Examples from different areas will be shared and as usual, we will feature contribution from a parent carer representative.

The session is relevant to strategic leaders for early years, early years inclusion, family hubs, best start in life, family support, early help, parents and carers and those working with them, and early years and childcare practitioners. The link for the session is [here](#)

Point of Contact: info@dingley.org.uk



Drop-in Sessions delivered by POINT in partnership with Oldham Family Hubs

Do you have a child or young person who has or may have additional needs and/or disabilities, aged 0-25 with or without a diagnosis? Want to find out more?

For information, advice and support or just to connect, come down and see us. We offer peer to peer support, signposting, events, referrals into other POINT Services, and much more.

Please promote the following sessions with your parents/carers:



Date	Time	Location
Wednesday 11 February 2026	9am – 11am	Stanley Road Family Hub
Wednesday 18 February 2026	5pm – 7pm	Oldham Library
Wednesday 25 February 2026	5pm – 7pm	Medlock Vale Family Hub
Thursday 5 March 2026	9am – 11am	Shaw and Crompton Family Hub

Wednesday 11 March 2026	9am – 11am	Beever Family Hub
Wednesday 18 March 2026	5pm – 7pm	Oldham Library
Wednesday 25 March 2026	5pm – 7pm	Medlock Vale Family Hub

Point of Contact: jayne@point-send.co.uk

Recruitment and Retention

Check an Early Years Qualification

The CEYQ service is available on GOV.UK via the link below:

<https://check-an-early-years-qualification.service.gov.uk>

CEYQ supports Early Years managers and practitioners by enabling them to:

- Check a qualification and understand the staff:child ratios they can work under.
- Receive a clear, printable outcome based on details such as qualification title, awarding organisation, and course start date.
- Access guidance that provides confidence and clarity about their eligibility under statutory requirements.

Community

Oldham SportsTown

Andy Burnham backs Oldham SportsTown vision at Boundary Park. A session took place last week at Oldham Athletic's Boundary Park focused on the future of Oldham SportsTown and what the next stages of this exciting project could look like.



The meeting brought together key partners from across Greater Manchester, including Oldham Council Leader Cllr Arooj Shah and Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, alongside organisations working in sport, education, health and regeneration.

The discussion centred on the long-term vision for SportsTown, an ambitious and transformative £70 million sports, education, health and wellbeing campus at Boundary Park, the progress already being made and how partners can align and work together as the project continues to develop.

Help shape the future of travel across Greater Manchester

The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2050 and Delivery Plan 2027-37 sets out bold and exciting plans for the Bee Network and wider transport across the city-region.

Public consultation is now open, giving you the chance to share your views and help shape the future of transport.

[Click here](#) to have your say | Closes on **Monday 9 March 2026**.



Have your say on Oldham's new Local Plan

Oldham Council is inviting residents, businesses and partners to have their say on the Publication version of the Oldham Local Plan.

This follows consultation on the Draft Local Plan in early 2024.

The Local Plan will guide how Oldham grows and develops up to 2039. It sets out where new homes, jobs and services should go, and how we protect the places that matter most.



The Plan will:

- be used to help decide planning applications
- protect important environmental and historic sites
- support our town centres and key employment areas
- help plan the infrastructure we need, including transport, schools and utilities

[Click here](#) for more information and to comment.

Comments are invited from 4 February until **Friday 20 March 2026**.

In the Press

Oldham's Adult Social Care rated 'Good' by Care Quality Commission

Good news!

Inspectors saw first-hand how Adult Social Care is helping residents to live fuller, safer, and more independent lives, staying connected to their communities through compassionate care at home, strong safeguarding, tailored support, and trusted advice.

Read the full story [here](#)



Fall in love with reading again

Cllr Peter Dean, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, is encouraging residents in Oldham to make 2026 the year they rediscover their library in Oldham if they haven't been for a while.

2026 is the National Year of Reading - an initiative led by The National Literacy Trust to inspire more people to make reading part of their lives.

Oldham has 12 libraries across the borough, from the busy and vibrant central library in Oldham's Cultural Quarter, to gems such as the newly refurbished Northmoor Library in Coldhurst and Uppermill Library in St Chad's Gardens.

"There's something really special about getting lost in a good book, and with 2026 being the National Year of Reading, it's the perfect time to fall back in love with reading," said Cllr Dean.

Read the full story [here](#).

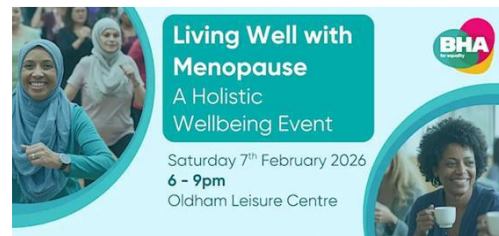
Reminders ...

Living Well with Menopause – A Holistic Wellbeing Event

Attached – Menopause Event Flyer

Please see the attached flyer to book on to a free health event 'Living Well with Menopause' at the OCL on **Saturday 7 February 2026**.

Point of Contact: Bethany@thebha.org.uk



Illuminate Light Night

Don't forget to save the date for [Illuminate](#)

Saturday 21 February 2026 at 6–9pm



Opening the festival in spectacular style will be the **Illuminate Parade** starting at 6pm.

One of the highlights of Illuminate Light Night 2026 will be **Happy as the Day is Long**, a large mirror ball installation lighting up Library Gardens with colourful reflections and atmosphere.

The installation hosts a pop-up silent disco, inviting visitors to grab a pair of headphones and step into a joyful, feel-good atmosphere beneath the glow of a giant mirrorball.

Thank you to colleagues who have contributed to this briefing.

Submissions and House Style

This document has been produced using a standard house style.

If you are emailing in any articles you want including in the weekly briefing, then please use the [Standardisation & Top Tips document](#) for guidance prior to submitting.

