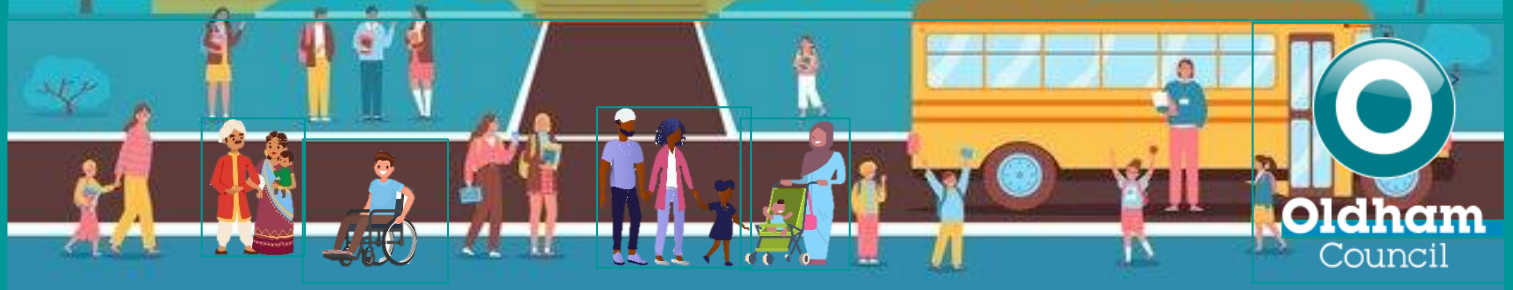


Briefing to Schools and Early Years Settings



Volume: 7 – Spring 2026	Week No: 23 – 24	Date: Thursday 12 March 2026
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Contents

1.	Early Years	2
2.	Safeguarding.....	3
3.	Sufficiency.....	4
4.	CPD and Training	4
5.	Transition	5
6.	SEND and Inclusion.....	5
7.	Community.....	6
8.	In the Press.....	6

Early Years

Message from Ofsted regarding Suspicious Text Messages

Dear Early Years Provider,

Suspicious Text Messages Claiming to Be from Ofsted

We are aware that a small number of providers have recently received text messages claiming to be from “Ofsted Support”, stating that their registration has been temporarily suspended and directing them to click a link.

These messages are not from Ofsted. Ofsted would never contact you by text message to inform you of a suspension. Any communication regarding your registration, including matters as serious as suspension, would always be sent through our official channels.

If you receive one of these messages, please report it to your mobile provider and then delete it.

If you have received the text, clicked the link, and provided any personal information, you may wish to change your passwords as a precaution. You do not need to tell us if you have received this text. If you need to get in touch with us regarding any aspect of your registration, you can do so using the contact options available on our website: [Contact Ofsted | Ofsted](#)

I also want to reassure you that mobile phone numbers were not obtained from Ofsted. As you will know, many providers, for understandable reasons, share their mobile phone numbers, including on local authority information services.

Thank you for your continued vigilance and for the important work you do.

Invitation to Take Part in National Early Years Workforce Data Project

 **Attached – GMCA Workforce Data Pilot – Provider Recruitment Poster**

 **Attached – Pay Policy for GMCA Providers**



Oldham Early Years has been invited to participate in an exciting national data research project — a valuable opportunity to help shape future developments in the Early Years sector.

Early Years providers from Stockport, Rochdale, Oldham, and Manchester are being asked to contribute their views and expertise to the co-design of a Workforce Data “Test and Learn” Project. Participants will be **paid for their time and professional input**.

The project, led by the **Early Education and Childcare Coalition**, aims to trial a new and improved approach to collecting Early Years workforce data.

The goal is to develop a system that:

- Works effectively for settings like yours
- Provides Government with an accurate, up-to-date picture of sector needs
- Offers providers real-time local workforce insights

Please find the project overview, agenda, and pay policy attached for your reference.

If you would like to take part in an interview, please use the following link to select a suitable time:

<https://doodle.com/meeting/participate/id/aO9oyWEd>

We strongly encourage you to have your say and get involved in helping shape this important work. After reading the attached information, please let the LA Early Years team know if you would like to participate by emailing - early.years@oldham.gov.uk

Survey – CCTV and digital device usage in early years settings

In December 2025, the Secretary of State for education announced that she would appoint an expert panel to review how CCTV and digital devices are used in early years settings. The panel will provide recommendations to Government regarding whether CCTV should be mandated. It will also inform safeguarding guidance the Department will develop by setting out best practice, technical information and expectations regarding CCTV and digital device usage.

To assist with this work, we would be grateful if providers and early years staff could complete the below survey by Friday 20 March 2026. The results of this survey and the views expressed will be considered by the panel during their review.

[Click here](#) to access the survey

Point of Contact: foundationyears@beginbright.com

Early Words Matter Conference

The National Year of Reading is a chance to enhance how we approach early literacy - and cultivate lifelong readers.

At the National Literacy Trust annual early years conference, we'll be joined by leaders from the full spectrum of early years practice, with evidence-backed insights to support your literacy provision. Science to stories: How research transforms early words into lifelong reading spans research to anti-racism, practice to policy, and science to storytelling - across a broad range of contexts such as inclusion, digital tools, play, SEND, and antenatal/neonatal. Through keynotes, workshops and discussions, you'll leave with practical takeaways to ensure each child's story gets the best start – from policy to practice.



Friday 27 March 2026 9am-4pm, London, £120

Find out more and book your ticket now: [Early Words Matter Conference 2026 | National Literacy Trust](#)

Point of contact: laura.williams@oldham.gov.uk

Safeguarding

Early Intervention Matters: Insights from the Baby Victoria Review

The national panel's review - [Protecting all vulnerable babies better](#) examines the tragic death of Baby Victoria Marten and highlights wider safeguarding lessons. While her death was rare, issues such as concealed pregnancy, parental disengagement, domestic abuse, and complex histories are common.



Over 5,000 unborn babies and infants were on child protection plans last year, many in families struggling and poorly supported, creating both risk and opportunity for early intervention. The review stresses that risks should have been identified even before Baby Victoria's conception and that earlier, coordinated, persistent engagement with her parents may have reduced harm.

Protecting vulnerable babies requires supporting their parents, and the national panel calls for stronger national guidance for safeguarding unborn babies and better support for parents after child removal.

The [full report](#) is available alongside [a short briefing note](#) summarising the key learning and practical recommendations to strengthen safeguarding for vulnerable unborn babies and infants under one.

Refreshing the OSCP Neglect Strategy

Neglect in childhood can have profound and lasting effects on wellbeing, development, and lifelong outcomes. Recognising this, OSCP has reaffirmed neglect as a key partnership priority, with a commitment to ensuring children and families receive clear, consistent, and robust support at the earliest opportunity. The ambition is to strike the right balance between early, effective help and child centred intervention and protection where needed, while also playing our part in narrowing the gap for children living in poverty.

Over the past year, we have made encouraging progress; however, we recognise there is still more to do. The [refreshed strategy](#), available on the OSCP website, sets out a clearer vision, shared expectations, and a stronger framework for collaborative action.

The focus now is on embedding this approach consistently across all agencies so that every child receives the timely, coordinated support they deserve.

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

Sufficiency

Sufficiency Questionnaire Summary Spring 2026

 *Attached - Sufficiency Questionnaire Summary Spring 2026*

This summary is based on responses to the sufficiency questionnaire that was sent out in January 2026.

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

CPD and Training

Safer Recruitment Refresher Course

Education settings 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 specifically 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.

To register email OSCPtraining@oldham.gov.uk with your name, job role and organisation

Point of Contact: OSCPtraining@oldham.gov.uk

Early Language Local Innovation and Excellence (ELLIE) programme and National Centre for Family Hubs (NCFH) programme Events for Spring 2026

Launch of the Inclusion Tool Kit to Support Best Start in Life and Family Hub Delivery

Wednesday 25 March 2026 10:00am – 11:30am

This webinar is aimed at local authority and partner strategic and operational leaders for inclusion, early years, BSIL, FH, early help, family support services, childcare sufficiency, quality improvement and parent carer engagement. [Booking link](#)

Talking to Families About Talking

Monday 30 March 2026 10:00am – 11:30am

Families have a key role to play in their children's speech and language development, but they need the right information to help them do this. **Speech and Language UK** have been working with three local authorities to distribute key messaging to families about helpful speech and language strategies. In this webinar you'll hear from Speech and Language UK about how they developed the messaging from insights gained from parents about what was important to them. [Booking link](#)

Point of Contact: training.lgps@local.gov.uk

Transition

Transition Hub

Supporting smooth transitions to primary school is vital for children's future success. Early years providers play a key role in building confidence and emotional resilience, ensuring children feel prepared for new routines and expectations. Effective communication between settings and schools, alongside opportunities for visits and familiarisation, helps ease the transition. By fostering social skills and self-esteem, we can ensure every child feels supported and ready for this important milestone. Provided below is a link to more information and resources on supporting effective transitions:

[Preparing your child for primary school | Oldham Council](#)

Transition Document - [Early Years Foundation Stage Transition | Oldham Council](#)

Starting Reception

 **Attached – Starting Reception – Oldham**

 **Attached - Starting-Reception - Oldham - Posters**

Please also find attached Oldham's Starting Reception Booklet and Oldham posters for you to put up in your entrances and share with parents.

Early Years Transition Hub

Please **Save the Date** to come and join us for our annual **Early Years transition hub**.

We are inviting professionals from schools and PVI settings to come together to share vital information to enable all children to have an effective transition into school.

This year promises to be bigger and better than previous years, so we have moved into a larger space to accommodate the event.

Date: Thursday 21 May 2026

Time: From 9:30am

Location: Smokies Park, Ashton Road, OL8 3HX

Please use the below link to secure your place:

[Early Years Transition Hub: Thursday 21 May 2026 | Eventbrite](#)

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

SEND and Inclusion

Every Child Achieving and Thriving

This white paper and accompanying documents set out the government's vision for schools and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) reform to support every child to achieve and thrive. 'Every child achieving and thriving' outlines our ambition to improve the lives of all children and young people.

We aim to achieve this by:

- shifting children's school experience from narrow to broad
- ensuring those who have been sidelined are included
- taking children and communities from withdrawn to engaging with schools

[Click here](#) to access the full white paper

[Click here](#) to access the easy read version of the white paper

Community

Spring events bloom in Oldham for the GM Live Well Festival

There's lots happening in Oldham as part of the GM Live Well Spring Festival (9–23 March).

Get involved in a wide range of activities taking place right on your doorstep including the Chadderton Local History Walk and Talk – exploring the area's rich heritage, stand-up comedy with the Support and Action for Women's Network (SAWN), learning woodland management skills at Daisy Nook and a Community Toddle in Fitton Hill – a chance to meet your neighbours and get active.



[Click here](#) for the full programme of events

In the Press

Building skills for the future

Cllr Mohon Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, was proud to open the Environmental Services Recruitment Day at the Environment Centre.

"Events like this are about giving local people a real opportunity to step into work and build skills for the future," he said. "We want Oldham residents to feel confident applying and to see the range of roles available right here in their community."



Once Upon a Time at Gallery Oldham

Gallery Oldham's latest exhibition creates a magical world to spark imaginations and discover the joy of storytelling.

'Once Upon a Time' features the work of five incredible children's illustrators: Gillian Flint, Gillian Hibbs, Holly Sterling, Jarvis and Sharon Davey. The exhibition gives an insight into the life of a children's illustrator and should inspire visitors young and old to get illustrating too!



Sunday is for Scooting by Holly Sterling

[Click here](#) to read more

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.

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