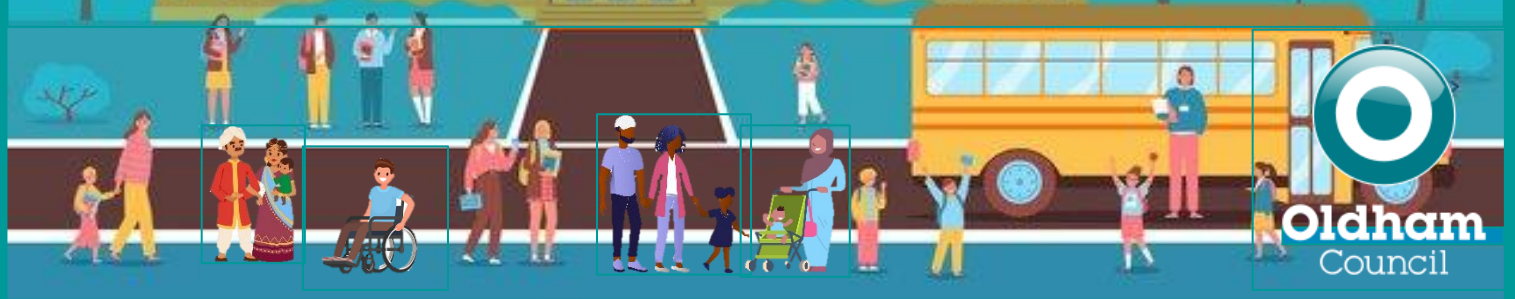


Briefing to Schools and Early Years Settings



Volume:	Spring 2026	Week No:	25-26	Date:	Thursday 26 March 2026
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Contents

1.	Early Years	2
2.	Safeguarding	2
3.	Partnerships	3
4.	Health and Wellbeing	5
5.	CPD and Training	5
6.	SEND and Inclusion	5
7.	Community.....	6

Early Years

Funding Timetable 2026 /27

 **Attached – Funding Timetable 2026/27**

Please find attached the final version of the funding timetable for financial year 2026/27.

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

Signalong Week 2026

Signalong are offering [taster sessions](#) and resources as part of Signalong Week 2026. Please follow Signalong on social media to find out more [Signalong - The Communication Charity](#)



Point of contact: admin@signalong.org.uk

Department for Education Information - Updated guidance for childminders on claiming household expenses

HMRC has published guidance for childminders on how they can continue to claim household expenses, including wear and tear costs deductions, whether they use Making Tax Digital for Income Tax or not. The [new guidance](#) and the updated [Business Income Manual](#) guidance can be found on GOV.UK.

Key points from the guidance:

1. All childminders can claim a deduction for costs of buying, repairing or replacing household items used for their business, including wear and tear of household items and furniture, household costs and food and drink, whether they use Making Tax Digital or the alternative rules for the sector.
2. Only those with qualifying income above £50,000 will begin using Making Tax Digital from 6 April 2026. In 2027 the qualifying income threshold will drop to £30,000 and then in 2028 to £20,000.

If childminders use Making Tax Digital they will record and claim their actual expenditure on buying, repairing or replacing household items and furniture, which can be higher than 10% in some instances. If they are still using the alternative method, they will continue to claim for 'wear and tear' using the flat 10% estimate.

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

Safeguarding

Understanding the LADO: What you need to know

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) oversees concerns or allegations about anyone working with children, whether paid staff or volunteers. The LADO provides advice, liaises with Police and partners, and oversees case progression.



Please note: the LADO does not investigate allegations.

Referrals must go to the LADO in the Local Authority where the incident happened with 24 hours, if someone working with children in Oldham has:

- harmed or may have harmed a child.

- possibly committed a criminal offence against a child.
- behaved in a way that may pose a risk to children.
- behaved in a way that suggests they may be unsuitable to work with children.

Details on how to contact the [LADO is available on the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership \(OSCP\) website](#), together with 7 minutes briefings and further guidance.

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

Free emotional support for children impacted by domestic abuse and crime

OSCP are pleased to share a range of free emotional support, counselling, and advocacy services available across the UK from embracevoc for children and families affected by domestic abuse and other serious crimes.



- Free, online emotional support and counselling for children affected by serious crimes, including sexual and domestic abuse. Available for children aged 11+.
- Children must not already be supported by CAMHS, including those on waiting lists.
- Due to the short term, online nature of support, they cannot work with young people presenting with suicidal thoughts or high risk of self-harm.
- Professionals, police, parents, or schools can make referrals. [You can refer a child using the online form](#)

Point of Contact: support@embracevoc.org.uk

Partnerships

Take Part - University of Cambridge - Early Years Library - Call for nurseries to participate

Interested in professional learning? As a room or setting, take part in our research trial!

Why does the project need you?

We have designed a non-manualised, flexible professional learning resource for staff. It is based on the [Early Years Library](#) (EYL), a collection of the most common strategies of successful evidence-based interventions for early literacy, numeracy and social-emotional development.

The EYL approach utilises the power of cooperation, professional dialogue, reflection and practice-awareness to facilitate professional growth. We need your help to test our new resources, and how they can be used to support good practice and practitioners' professional learning.

How can our nursery get involved?

We have created a series of very short videos to help you decide if the EYL is right for you. Each nursery will receive £400 compensation for their time.

Please follow this link for more information and to express your interest: [Exploration Page](#)

Thank you for your interest in our [research](#). Your support is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact us earlyyearslibrary@educ.cam.ac.uk

Point of Contact: earlyyearslibrary@educ.cam.ac.uk

Talk With Tales for Children (TWITCH)

TWITCH is designed to support early years practitioners to use story time more effectively to develop 3–4-year-olds' language skills. Sheffield Hallam University is partnering with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and Durham University to further evaluate the Talk with Tales for Children (TWITCH) programme.

TWITCH is currently recruiting settings in the North West for a funded trial. They have created an information sheet for settings to find out more: [TWITCH Efficacy Trial - Settings Information Sheet.pdf](#)

[Click here](#) to register

Point of contact: twitch@shu.ac.uk



Oldham Families First Partnership - March 2026 Newsletter

 [Oldham Families First Partnership Newsletter - March 2026](#)

Please see attached the Oldham Families First Partnership Newsletter for March 2026. Additionally, following our Family Activity Days in the February Half Term, we have produced some visuals from what children, young people and families in Oldham told us.

We thought these might interest you, so please see attached:

- Family Help Lead Practitioner Visual - An activity where children, young people and parents/carers told us what makes a supportive person.
- Worry Wall - An activity where children, young people and parents/carers told us what makes them worried.

If you have any questions or require further information about the Families First Partnership, please don't hesitate to contact us:

Email - familiesfirstpartnership@oldham.gov.uk

Short Feedback survey - [FFP Feedback Form – Fill in form](#)

Share Stories with Me

Download the Share stories with me booklet. It's full of simple and fun ways to enjoy books and stories with your 0- to 5-year-old. Please share with parents and carers.



Why is it important to share books and stories with babies?

Sharing books and stories helps to build babies and children's language and communication skills from the very start. You don't need special skills or lots of time. Your child will love hearing your voice. If you sing, play, or make things up with your child, you are already sharing stories. Find fun and simple ways to enjoy books and stories with your 0-5 year old in our Share stories with me booklet.

[Download the free booklet](#)

You can complete many of the activities anywhere, anytime! You know your child best, so choose the activity ideas that feel right for you and your child.

Point of Contact: contact@literacytrust.org.uk

Health and Wellbeing

Family Links – The Nurturing Programme



We're pleased to share details of the upcoming Family Links Nurturing Programme—a supportive 10-week course designed to help parents and carers build stronger relationships, boost confidence, and create a calmer, happier home environment.

Taking place at both Alt Academy, Alt Lane, OL8 2EL in Oldham from Tuesday 28 April 2026 (9:30am–12pm) and at Failsworth Town Hall, Oldham Road, M35 0FJ on Thursday 30 April 2026 (9:30am–12pm), this welcoming programme offers practical tools and strategies to better understand children's behaviour, manage emotions, and improve family communication.

Whether you're looking for new parenting approaches or simply a space to connect with others, this course provides a valuable opportunity for support and growth.

To find out more or register your interest, please get in touch via parentsupporthub@oldham.gov.uk

Point of Contact: parentsupporthub@oldham.gov.uk

CPD and Training

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership training programme: April – July 2026

We are pleased to share the OSCP quarterly training programme for April to July 2026. The OSCP multi agency training is designed to strengthen partnership working by building shared understanding, improving professional practice, and supporting better outcomes for children across Oldham.

You can view the OSCP training programme, and eLearning modules on [the OSCP website](#)

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

SEND and Inclusion

SEND Consultation

On Monday 23 February 2026, the Department for Education's Secretary of State published the Schools White Paper: [Every Child Achieving and Thriving](#) alongside a consultation on [SEND reform \(Putting Children and Young People First\)](#). There has also been a [series of guidance documents published](#).

The changes announced aim to create an inclusive system where support is embedded from the very start of a child's life. The Department for Education is committed to developing a locally integrated system, bringing education, health and care together so children's needs are identified early and families receive effective, evidence-based support from the outset. We encourage your networks to get involved by accessing the consultation at: [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#) and to take part with events that will be taking place throughout the consultation period.

On 25 February 2026 we announced [Sir Kevan Collins has been appointed as Delivery Advisor to the Secretary of State](#), Sir Kevan will support the Schools White Paper delivery, focussing on SEND reform and local authority engagement.

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

Community

 **Easter Half Term - Kids Eat Free**

Kids Eat Free (or for £1) - Easter Half Term

Money Saving Central have once again collated a list of places offering food discounts during Easter Half Term. This is a useful resource for families when planning their half term activities to help keep the cost down!

Easter Half Term Activities at Oldham Library and Gallery Oldham

Looking for family fun this Easter half term? Oldham Library has a fantastic line-up of events to keep children of all ages entertained. Kick things off on the **Wednesday 1 April 2026** with **Live @ the Library: So Unfair!** an energetic interactive science show where young engineers aged **7+** can take on fun engineering challenges to help save the day (**£5**).

On **Wednesday 8 & Thursday 9th April**, creative young people are invited to **Collab Lab**, a vibrant and inspiring art workshop at Gallery Oldham where they can explore materials, techniques, and ideas alongside professional artists—**free to attend** for 10–16-year-olds.

For your littlest library-goers, don't miss **Bedtime Stories** on **Wednesday 1 April at 5:30pm**—a cosy, gentle storytelling session designed especially for **under-5s**, perfect for winding down in PJs with rhymes and soothing tales (**free**)

To book follow the links below:

[Live@TheLibrary: So Unfair! Tickets - Eventbrite](#)

[Bedtime Stories Tickets, Wednesday -Eventbrite](#)

[Collab Lab Tickets - Eventbrite](#)

Easter Fun Family Play Sessions

Get ready for a fun-filled Easter with exciting Family Play Sessions at Greenacres Community Centre, running on selected dates with themed sessions including world play, Easter crafts, creative colourful play, and science & environment—all designed to spark imagination and keep children engaged. These free sessions are perfect for families with children aged 5–11, with no booking required—just drop in and play!

Please see the details below:

- Tuesday 31 March 2026 – The World at 11am – 1pm
- Wednesday 01 April 2026 – Easter Crafts at 11am – 1pm
- Tuesday 07 April 2026 – Creative Colourful Play at 11am – 1pm
- Wednesday 08 April 2026 – Science and Environment 11am – 1pm



Easter Fun family Play sessions
With Oldham Play Action Group
Greenacres Community Centre
Free car park OL4 3HS

TUE 31 MARCH	THE WORLD 11AM - 1PM	
WED 01 APRIL	EASTER CRAFTS 11AM - 1PM	
TUE 07 APRIL	CREATIVE COLOURFUL PLAY 11AM - 1PM	
WED 08 APRIL	SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT 11AM - 1PM	

FREE fun for all the family!
Aimed at 5-11 years @ younger/older siblings welcome

All children need to be accompanied by an adult.
No booking required.

PLAY Funded by 

Oldham Digital Festival

It's the ten-year anniversary of Oldham Digital Festival on **Saturday 28 March 2026**. Join us to celebrate all things digital with free activities for all ages.

You can get involved in creative workshops delivered by our partners Peshkar, explore lots of interactive digital art, browse the library and check out exhibitions from Peshkar's [Young Digitals Festival \(YDF26\)](#).

📍 **Venue:** Oldham Library

🕒 **Time:** 11am – 3pm

👉 [Click here](#) to see the full list of activities, we'd love you to join us.



Big Market Opening



The opening will also mark the wider reopening of **Parliament Square**, which has been refreshed to support future town centre events.

📅 **Saturday 28 March 2026**

🕒 Doors open at 9am and there's lots of entertainment right up until 3pm!

We have performances from K-Pop Universe and Totally Taylor (a Swiftie tribute act), as well as rides, arcades and lots of crafts for the kids!

📍 Find the market inside Spindles, with entrances opposite **Molino Lounge** off Yorkshire Street.

👉 [Click here](#) to see what entertainment is on throughout the day

Oldham parks to get £150k play area makeover

Families across Oldham will benefit from new and improved play equipment thanks to a £150,000 investment in our parks and play areas

The funding is being used to upgrade equipment, improve safety surfacing and add new features to play areas across the borough.

Improvements include new basket swings at George Street, Arundel Street and Holts Play Village, along with new play panels at Limeside Park and pitch enhancements at Westwood MUGA. Children can also enjoy a new roundabout at High Crompton Park, while resurfacing works have taken place at a number of sites.



👉 [Click here](#) to read more.

Reminders

What's On Oldham



Discover everything happening across the borough for families all in one place.

Find out the latest and greatest events, from family-friendly activities to cultural day, and all the Family Hubs activities plus more.

👉 Visit [What's On Oldham](#) and add the link to your websites and newsletters.

Point of contact: communications@oldham.gov.uk

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.



Keep up to date by [signing up](#) to the council's regular newsletter and by following local social media accounts at www.oldham.gov.uk

