

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 24 February 2026 commencing at 3.00 pm and finishing at 3.30 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Sean Gaul– in the Chair

Officers: Jack Ahier (Senior Democratic Services Manager), Lisa Lyons (Director of Childrens Services), Jane Billington(Strategic Finance Business Partner),Carly Williams(Service Manager Education Directorate)

The Cabinet Member considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda No. 1)

There were none

21 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda No. 2)

There were none received

22 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 3)

There were no requests

23 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(Agenda No. 4)

The Cabinet Member approved the minutes of the meeting held on 03 February 2026, as an accurate record of proceedings.

24 ENHANCED PATHWAYS BUSINESS CASE

(Agenda No. 5)

The Cabinet Member considered the report which indicated that the latest Area SEND monitoring inspection from Ofsted and the CQC highlighted that as a result of Enhanced Pathways, many children's and young people's needs were being more effectively met in mainstream settings. The business case was also seeking to once again expand the project further to ensure more children and young people could

have their needs met successfully. The Cabinet Member highlighted that the Enhanced Pathways started with only 9, then grew to 40. It was further said that the plan was to grow it to 60.

Furthermore, in the academic year 2024 - 25 £1,194,718 had been spent on 20 Enhanced Pathways. This benefitted 292 children and young people, which could be compared to the same value potentially benefiting only 17 children placed at Independent Non-maintained Special School (INMSS) at an average cost of £70,000 or 96 pupils accessing alternative education provision packages at an average cost of £12,354.55.

Resolved to:

- a) Approve the Council to fund a further 20 Enhanced Pathways to triple the reach of the project to enable the Council to offer a more equitable offer across the county to meet the increasing numbers and complexities of children and young people with Special Educational Needs in mainstream schools and to realise probable savings through this spend to save model.
- b) Approve the Council's budgetary commitment for a period of 3 years for each Enhanced Pathway (barring significant changes to central government funding of SEND during that period).
- c) Commit to consider and review opportunities to upscale the Enhanced Pathways programme over the coming years in line with the impact evidence provided.

25 FORMAL APPROVAL OF EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA 2026/27 (Agenda No. 6)

The Cabinet Member considered the report which indicated that Early Years Providers and Schools Forum were consulted on the Early Years Funding Formula, and the overwhelming response was to pass on the increase in hourly rate in full to providers.

Resolved to:

- a) Pass the funding increase received by Oxfordshire onto providers (after allowing for centrally retained funding per Department of Education (DfE) criteria) and approve the 2026-27 Early Years funding formula for 3- and 4-year-old provision with an underlying hourly rate of £6.04 (excluding the supplements, SEN Inclusion Fund and Contingency).
- b) Pass the funding increase received by Oxfordshire onto providers (after allowing for centrally retained funding per Department of Education (DfE) criteria) and approve the 2026-27 Early Years funding Formula for 2-year-old working parent provision at an hourly rate of £8.29.
- c) Pass the funding increase received by Oxfordshire onto providers

(after allowing for centrally retained funding per Department of Education (DfE) criteria) and approve the 2026-27 Early Years funding formula for 2-year-olds of families receiving additional support at an hourly rate of £8.29.

- d) Pass the funding increase received by Oxfordshire onto providers (after allowing for centrally retained funding per Department of Education (DfE) criteria) and approve the 2026-27 Early Years funding formula for 9 Months to 2-year-old provision at an hourly rate of £11.33.

26 DETERMINATION OF 2027-28 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR OCC COMMUNITY AND VC SCHOOLS
(Agenda No. 7)

The Cabinet Member considered a report that outlined the proposed school admissions arrangements for Oxfordshire for the 2027–28 academic year following public consultation. North Kidlington Primary School and Ducklington Church of England Primary School had requested a reduction to its Published Admission Number (PAN) for 2027/28.

Resolved to:

- a) Approve Scheme of Co-ordination for Normal Points of Transfer
- b) Approve Admission Arrangements and Oversubscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools
- c) Approve Published Admission Numbers (PANs)
- d) Approve In-Year Admissions Scheme

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2026