

Guide for Parents

If you are a member of staff or a student in Physics, or you are thinking of joining us, and you have children or are thinking about starting a family, this fact-sheet will provide useful information about the resources and support available to you.

Foreward

The Department of Physics welcomes and supports staff and students with children. We have applied for an Athena Swan Silver Award to recognise our ongoing efforts to create a supportive environment for all staff and students, including women and those with children. We hope you will find this fact-sheet helpful as a pointer towards the many resources available to you.



Oxford is a fantastic city in which to bring up children with outstanding schools and many activities for children in and around the city. The Department and University offer a number of resources to help support you as a parent.

Maternity leave

The University has a generous maternity leave scheme, available to all women who meet criteria. Further details are available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/maternity/.

No later than the 15th week before the week of childbirth, you should meet with your line manager or the Human Resources Manager (John Gillic; j.gillic1@physics.ox.ac.uk) to discuss and complete the maternity leave plan: this will provide the relevant information and notice to the department. The Human Resources Manager must be made aware of these arrangements on time to ensure statutory requirements are met.

For contract researchers, UK Research Councils will often cover the cost of maternity leave on your grant. You should discuss this with your line manager and the Human Resources Manager.

Paternity, birth and adoption support leave

An employee who is the partner of an expectant mother or adoptive parent is entitled to paternity or birth and adoption support leave if they meet the qualifying criteria. Further details are available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/. No later than the 15th week before childbirth, or within 7 days of the



The Department sponsors a number of subsidised nursery places and has committed to increase this number when the opportunity next arises. The University works in partnership with two playscheme providers to support families during school holidays.

notification of matching with a child for adoption, you should meet with your line manager or the Human Resources Manager (John Gillic; j.gillic1@physics.ox.ac.uk) to discuss and complete the paternity or birth and adoption support leave plan. The Human Resources Manager must be made aware of these arrangements by this time to ensure statutory requirements are met.

Parental leave

If you have been an employee continuously for at least a year and have a child under 5 years of age (or 18 years if your child is disabled), you have a right to up to 13 weeks unpaid leave for each child, no more than 4 weeks of which can be taken in any year. Further details are available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/parental/.

Flexible working

The Department tries to accommodate flexible working patterns wherever possible. We have moved some of our activities into core hours to facilitate attendance by those with family responsibilities. If you are interested in flexible working, you should discuss this with your line manager or the Human Resources Manager (John Gillic; j.gillic1@physics.ox.ac.uk).

Returning to work

Career breaks present unique challenges for scientists. The Department will be as supportive as possible. Early career scientists requiring flexible working patterns can apply for a Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Research Fellowship (royalsociety.org/Dorothy-Hodgkin-Fellowships), and those returning after a break of 2 years or more can apply for a Daphne Jackson Trust Fellowship (www.daphnejackson.org).

Childcare

Childcare places in Oxford can have long waiting lists and you should sign up as soon as you become pregnant or commit to moving to Oxford.

The Department sponsors a number of subsidised places in the University nurseries and we are committed to increasing this number at the next opportunity. If you are interested in one of these sponsored places, you should talk to the Human Resources Manager (John Gillic; j.gillic1@physics.ox.ac.uk) at the earliest opportunity.

Details of the University nurseries and schemes to reduce the cost of childcare,



The Natural History Museum: one of the many activities for children in Oxford.

such as Childcare Vouchers to save tax and national insurance, can be found at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare. Some Colleges also offer nurseries. Details of private nurseries can be found at www.oxonfis.org.uk.

The University works in partnership with playscheme providers to support families during the school holiday periods: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare/playscheme. All University parents are offered a 15% discount. Other clubs operate around Oxford including Supercamps (www.supercamps.co.uk) and Camp Energy (www.campenergy.com). Intensive swimming lessons are offered at the University swimming pool during the Easter and summer holidays (www.sport.ox.ac.uk/all-events).

Schools

Oxford has outstanding schools at both primary and secondary level. For information about applying for a school place see www.oxonfis.org.uk. Information about standards at your local school can be found on the OFSTED website: ofsted.gov.uk.

If you are interested in private schools, you need to contact them individually. There can be long waiting lists, so signing up early is imperative.

Living in Oxford

Oxford is a fantastic city in which to live and raise children. There are many cultural and outdoor activities for both parents and children within Oxford and its immediate surroundings: www.oxfordcityguide.com.

The Daily Info is an invaluable resource for accommodation, services, and events in Oxford: www.dailyinfo.co.uk.

The University's Living in Oxford website provides information about museums, festivals, parks and gardens, cinemas and theatres in town: www.ox.ac.uk/new_to_the_university/living_in_oxford.html. This website also contains links to a number of support groups including the Newcomers' Club and the Oxford Women's Network.



The Department wants to inspire the next generation of physicists. As a parent you have unique opportunities to get involved in the several hundred outreach events we run each year.

Outreach

Did you know the Department runs several hundred outreach events each year, described as "exemplary" by the most recent external review of the Department? Further details can be found at www2.physics.ox.ac.uk/about-us/outreach.

Having children provides unique opportunities to get involved in outreach, in local schools and nurseries, as well as within the Department. Contact the Outreach Officer (Sian Owen; s.owen1@physics.ox.ac.uk) for further details.

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The Department is applying for an Athena Swan Silver Award to recognise its initiatives to improve the working conditions and advance the careers of all staff and students. Good working practice benefits everyone, but overwhelmingly benefits women and those from disadvantaged minorities. The University holds an Athena Swan Bronze Institutional Award.