

Green Templeton College Guide for students bringing children to Oxford



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Welcome

As you are probably already aware, Green Templeton College is a graduate college. This, together with our specialisations in medical research and management training, means that Green Templeton students are more likely to come to us later in life and to bring along their spouses, partners and children.

We aim to be a family-friendly college and we are working actively to improve our support for student parents. From October 2019 the College will be introducing a Green Templeton Associate Student Membership on a trial basis for all partners and/or spouses of Green Templeton students, in recognition of the contribution they make and the support they provide to the wider Green Templeton community. For a small annual administrative charge access to a selection of college facilities will be extended to all associate student members in their own right. Partners and Spouses will also be invited to a termly event in the Observatory Tower. For the younger members of the community we will be running Saturday Morning Club on the first Saturday of each month during term-time. Look out for further details on our website.

Families are welcome to use all of our common spaces at all times when not being used for dedicated College events, with the exception of the Library. We just ask that children/youngsters under 18 are accompanied by a responsible adult. Parents remain responsible for their safety.

All members of the College, Students, Fellows and Staff will show mutual respect. The college is committed to fostering a culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all members of the college community are respected. Whilst the College is predominantly a place of study, those studying here recognize that as a family-friendly College, children may well, at times, be both seen and heard.

UK legislation on health and safety, safeguarding and families and children apply here at Green Templeton. If you have any questions or concerns please do come and talk to the College Office/ Estates Manager.

We recognise that returning to study with your family can be challenging; our aim is to help where we can, and beyond this, to signpost you to appropriate external advice. Feedback from past student parents (*highlighted in the text*) about their experiences in Oxford shows that it will be important for you to be aware of much of the following information. Note that you may need to take action before you come to Oxford or soon after you arrive.

Dr Alison Stenton, Senior Tutor Alison Franklin, Academic Registrar



Photo: Guillermo Casasnovas

Accommodation and setting up home

Green Templeton owns a number of 2- and 3- bedroomed houses on Observatory Street bordering the main College site, which are let to student couples and families. They have small back gardens, most of which have access directly into the College grounds. The College also owns a block of flats, Rewley Abbey Court, close to the Saïd Business School, which includes a number of 2-bedroomed flats that may be suitable for couples with a baby or small child.

All students may have up to two years in College accommodation (subject to availability); On occasions it may be possible to extend this if you have young children living with you. All requests to extend beyond 2 years should be made to the <u>Accommodation Manager</u>. We cannot guarantee an extension but will help where possible, being fair to all students.

College accommodation is fully furnished but does not include items specific to babies and children (cots/cribs, bed rails, stools, high chairs, etc). The exception is safety gates, which can be provided on request (contact the Accommodation Manager).

Other items can be bought new from (for example):

- amazon.co.uk / smile.amazon.co.uk (items can be delivered to the Porters' Lodge)
- Argos (New Inn Hall St or Botley Road)
- John Lewis (The Westgate)
- large edge-of-town supermarkets such as Asda, Tesco and Sainsbury's.

For second-hand items, try:

- the National Childbirth Trust www.nct.org.uk/branches/events/nearly-new-sales
- Emmaus <u>www.emmaus.org.uk/find_shop/filter/Oxford</u> (mention that you are a student)
- Daily Info (Oxford-based advertiser) www.dailyinfo.co.uk
- Gumtree www.gumtree.com
- Freegle (previously Freecycle) www.ilovefreegle.org
- Streetbank www.streetbank.com.

Please do take the necessary precautions when buying second-hand baby items and check that they conform to current safety regulations

There are also many charity shops in the area; *previous students* have found shops in the areas of Summertown (Banbury Road) and Headington (London Avenue and Windmill Road) can be good for children's items.

Please contact the <u>Accommodation Manager</u> if you have any accommodation related queries. Green Templeton specific parental enquiries can be forwarded to the <u>College Office</u> team or posted on: https://en-gb.facebook.com/greentempletonoxford/.

Nurseries and daytime childcare (children aged 0-5)

University nursery places are in short supply in Oxford and tend to be very popular, so it is worth investigating what your options are well in advance and putting yourself on a waiting list as a first step, if you intend to bring your family with you.

The <u>Childcare Services Team</u> has an overview of what places are available across the University and should be your first port of call. The University Childcare Services manages multisite nursery provision which comprises four University nurseries and a further eleven nurseries where dedicated nursery places are available for University staff and student parents. An overview of the university nursery options available can be found <u>here</u>.

The Childcare Service Team will always try to help and offer an alternative if they are not able to offer exactly what you need initially.

If you are **new** to the University of Oxford and will require childcare when you arrive, but have yet to be given an SSO (single sign-on) log in, do contact the childcare services team for a manual application form.

As a current **student**, you can apply as soon as you know you are pregnant/expecting a baby. You must have been offered and met all requirements for taking up a place at the University of Oxford.

You may also apply to nurseries run by other colleges – Balliol, St Anne's, Somerville, St John's and Wolfson – although their own students will be prioritized. You should do this directly through the relevant <u>college</u>.

There is a large financial commitment (subsidised full-time places will cost £1053 per month in 2019/20; private nursery places can be considerably more), and it is possible that even if you can afford to pay the fees, you might only be able to obtain part-time care.

Children aged 3-4 are entitled to the equivalent of 15 hours of free childcare through the Nursery Education Fund. See https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/free-early-education-3-4-year-olds-0 for more details.

For more information about University provision, see www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/why-oxford/families-and-childcare.

For more information about external nurseries, see www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/nurseries and www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/applying-nursery-place.

Previous student parents have suggested seeking childminders or nannies. These may have childcare qualifications of various levels and type. There are several websites for locating these, for example through the council at:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/home-childcarers-nannies-au-pairs-and-babysitters, or privately on sites such as www.childcare.co.uk. The University Childcare Services Team works with an out of hours childcare provider, Oxford Sitters.

Schools (children aged 5-18)

If your child or children is/are 5 years or older (or will turn 5 during the coming academic year), you will need to consider school places. We strongly recommend that you apply as early as possible (see keys dates below) and do not leave this until you are about to depart for Oxford, as school places (particularly for younger children) are in short supply. Because of this, you should be prepared for the fact that the school your child is allocated to will not necessarily be very close to your accommodation.

Oxford County Council's information for parents and carers of children due to start infant or primary school in September 2019 can be found here:

https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/childreneducation and families/starting-school.pdf

You can find details of the process, schedule, and online application form at: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place

Applications received after the 3rd June will be considered as <u>in-year transfers</u>. They will be processed as soon as possible but please be aware that those received from **5 July** onwards will be subject to delays until mid-October.

If you are moving from overseas and your child requires a visa in order to enter the UK, you will need to provide a copy of the visa with your application and your application will not be formally considered without this in place. As you are only able to apply for your visa three months before your course start date, realistically this means that your child will be unlikely to have a school place at the beginning of the school year (early September).

You may also wish to refer to the Frequently Asked Questions at https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/school-admissions-fags.

For information regarding general admissions enquiries and progress on applications, please refer to: Admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call 0345 241 2487.

Primary (aged 4-11 years), infant (4-7 years) and junior (7-11 years) schools

Council admissions pages:

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/admission-infant-and-primary-school/key-dates

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/infant-and-primary-school

And: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/junior-school-0

List of local primary schools (including comparison facility): www.oxfordmail.co.uk/li/primary schools.in.Oxford/

Secondary schools (aged 11-18 years)

Council admissions page:

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/secondary-school

List of local secondary schools (including comparison facility): www.oxfordmail.co.uk/li/all secondary schools.in.Oxford/.

This list includes a number of independent (fee-paying) schools. The closest secondary schools to central Oxford are Cherwell, Cheney, and Oxford Spires. Matthew Arnold is a little west of the city.

Standard qualifications obtainable at secondary school are the GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education) (usually studied between ages 14 and 16) and the A-level (General Certificate of Education Advanced Level)(usually ages 16 to 18). Be aware that if you are moving into the system in the middle of either of these periods it may be difficult for your child to catch up and this may restrict their choice of subjects. Entry to A-levels is generally dependent on achievement in GCSEs.

A current student writes: "Parents of sporty kids need to know that the season starts right at the beginning of the year [ie. September] – don't wait till the winter to start looking at winter sports."

School uniform

School uniform and equipment can be bought at Marks & Spencer, H&M, Primark and often at the Sainsbury's or Tesco superstores (see p.4), as well as the more expensive specialist shops.

A former student advises: "Make sure you get the list for your particular school before you buy: some styles will not be appropriate."

After-hours childcare/baby-sitting

Depending on your course, you may be required to attend sessions in the late afternoon and evening. Additionally, many College activities take place in the evenings (to avoid clashes with course requirements). You may need to find babysitters, after-schools clubs or other childcare in order to maintain your commitments as a student. We recommend that you look into this before you need it as it may not be easy to find in an emergency. See www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/out-school-clubs-and-holiday-playschemes for a directory of before and after school clubs.

If your children are at school, you should also be aware of and make provision for the weeklong half-term breaks which will fall in the middle of each of the Oxford terms; see https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/school-term-dates-and-holidays. Student parents continuing from a previous year may be able to help you find out what sort of care may be available. Depending on the age of your child(ren), there are several holiday activity clubs running in and around Oxford, for example www.oxfordactive.co.uk, https://funtech.co.uk/ and www.oxfordmontessori.co.uk/forest-farm-create/. More options can be found at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/out-school-clubs-and-holiday-playschemes. Do look out for discounted student rates at the following link: https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/additional-childcare

Green Templeton is unfortunately not able to provide any childcare or baby-sitting facilities. College staff do not routinely undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS; formerly Criminal Records Bureau or CRB checks). Please do not ask staff members to supervise children, as they are not permitted to do so.

There are several websites for locating childcare or baby-sitters, for example through the council at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/home-childcarers-nannies-au-pairs-and-babysitters, or privately on sites such as www.childcare.co.uk and https://oxfordsitters.co.uk

Extra-curricular activities

Several student parents have noted the benefits of a family membership at local leisure/sports centres. For example:

- Local leisure centres
 (www.oxford.gov.uk/homepage/173/leisure centres and swimming pools) offer
 student and under-16 concessionary rates and memberships. There are also free
 swim sessions for under-16s with proof of residency in Oxford
 (www.oxford.gov.uk/freeswim).
- The University's Iffley Road Sports Centre offers children's swimming lessons in the vacations (http://www.sport.ox.ac.uk/swimming/swimming-lessons/).
- Nuffield Health: The Oxfordshire Health and Racquets Club (Woodstock Road, <u>www.nuffieldhealth.com/gyms/oxfordshire/services/childrens-creche-and-junior-programme</u>) offers a crèche and a range of junior activities.

For music tuition, **students have recommended** https://www.firsttutors.com/uk/music/ and www.musicteachers.co.uk. Oxfordshire County Music Service also provides a range of lessons for young people in schools, usually during school hours: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/music-lessons.

Medical care

All resident members of your family are entitled to free NHS medical care. Unless you are already settled in Oxford and happy with your current GP, please register with the College Doctor at the 19 Beaumont Street practice (https://www.19beaumontstreet.com/). Each member of your family is welcome to register with the surgery, please complete a separate registration form for each individual.

A link to the online registration form can be found on the Offer Holders webpage https://www.gtc.ox.ac.uk/students/academic-support/offerholders/ and the form can be completed before you come to Oxford. You can also go to the surgery in person to register once you are in Oxford, although this is likely to be time-consuming at a time when you will be particularly busy.

International students should note that you will have to take each family member's passport in to the surgery to complete registration.

If you have children under the age of 5, ask to make an appointment with a health visitor to talk about scheduled routine check-ups and vaccinations. If your child does not have a Personal Child Health Record or 'Red Book' you can obtain one through the health visitor. It is helpful to bring a copy of your children's vaccination records with you to your first visit with the health visitor as vaccination schedules vary across countries.

See also the general information on 'Registering with the College Doctor' in the Student College Handbook (on the <u>Offer Holders</u> webpage above), and the Medical Care webpage on the College website (https://www.gtc.ox.ac.uk/students/health-welfare/medical-appointments/).

Transportation

Bicycle

Cycling is very popular in Oxford and many locals transport their children on bikes either in child seats or trailers. There are many cycle shops in Oxford; the closest to the college are Walton Street Cycles (www.spoke.co.uk) and Summertown Cycles (www.bike-zone.co.uk/).

Sustrans, a charity enabling people to make sustainable travel choices, provides good information about cycling with children (http://www.sustrans.org.uk/change-your-travel/children-and-families/cycling-kids).

The Broken Spoke Bike Co-op offers cycle training for both adults and children – see http://bsbcoop.org/what-we-do/cycle-training/ and the cycle training FAQs. The University can help with the costs of training – see http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/estates/ourservices/travel/bike/ for more info.

Bus

Buses in Oxford are clean and safe and offer marked areas for prams and pushchairs. Individual tickets or day passes can be purchased on the bus in cash. Weekly, monthly or yearly passes can be purchased online at www.oxfordbus.co.uk/key/, or at an Oxford Bus Company Travel Shop (3rd floor of Debenhams on Magdalen Street, or 44-45 High Street). Children under 5 ride free, and children 5-15 are half-fare.

Oxford Pickmeup is a new service for Oxford. This is a cheaper option than a taxi and is family friendly. You can download the app and check the location/progress of the minibus.

Car

We do not recommend that you bring a car to Oxford or purchase one here. If you need to hire a car while you are here, there are a number of car hire companies in the city including Zipcar. It is possible to park at some of the College's annexes for a small daily charge (subject to availability, booking essential). If you live on Observatory Street you will need to obtain street parking permits from the local council at the online Parking Shop (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/parking-permits).

Where to get help and advice

In college surveys, some student parents have reported a lack of understanding of their situation within the formal University system. Students who feel that they have not received fair consideration from their department or faculty, division, supervisor, etc should always feel able to come to the College for assistance and advice about how to proceed. The main points of contact are: Alison Franklin (Academic Registrar), James McBain (Academic Administrator), Dr Alison Stenton (Senior Tutor) and Professor Richard McManus (Welfare Dean). In addition, your College Adviser may be able to help.

For informal help and peer support, the College's GCR (<u>Graduate Common Room</u>) usually appoints at least one 'Couples and Families Rep'. Other GCR Committee members such as the Welfare Officers or the International Officer may also provide help or signpost you to the right person or organization.

Oxford University Student Union (Oxford SU) provides advice and support for students with families at advice@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk. A drop-in session is also available in term time from 10.00-16.00. The VP for Women (vpwomen@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk) and VP for Graduate Students (vpgraduates@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk) Officers at the Oxford University Student Union (OUSU) can be contacted with any questions. Oxford SU also have a Facebook group at facebook.com/groups/oxfordstudentparents. Further information can be found at: https://www.oxfordsu.org/wellbeing/student-advice/wellbeing-parents/.

Financial support

The College is a registered charity whose purpose is to help all its students be successful academically. This means that we are limited in the direct support we can provide for the benefit of non-members, including students' families. Our support tends to be provided indirectly through facilities, for example family-sized accommodation, and the ability to bring family members to many college events.

At present the College's scholarships (as with the majority of University awards) are based on a stipend appropriate to a single student. Even if you are notionally fully funded by one of these awards, you will undoubtedly have extra expenses to budget for. The University provides a guide to some of these, available at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts/livingcosts-for-dependents.

You may be entitled to Government benefits. You will find a directory of official information about these at www.gov.uk/browse/benefits. You may also find information provided by the Low Incomes Tax Reform Group at www.taxguideforstudents.org.uk/ helpful.

If you think you are eligible for benefits but are struggling to apply because you do not yet have a National Insurance number, you can apply for one at www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number.

Social and community

Mailing-list

There is a mailing list for student parents at Green Templeton (gtc-families@maillist.ox.ac.uk). To join, please send a request to the GCR Couples and Families reps: couples-families@gtcgcr.org.

Family-friendly events

There is a Student Parents welcome event on the weekend at the end of First Week with current students and other College members bringing up children in Oxford. Partly to help you settle in, partly to answer your questions about family issues which can be confusing at times. Spouses/partners and children welcome!

During the year a number of events are organized by the College and the GCR which are specifically targeted at families or open to all.

These include the Summer Garden Party, Halloween party, an Easter Egg hunt, and regular Sunday Brunches including specific Family Friendly brunches with arts and crafts activities for children. Further information on Saturday Breakfast Club will be circulated in due course. Other events may also welcome children but it is best to check with the organizers first, particularly if they take place in the evening.

Meals at Green Templeton

Children are welcome to attend lunch; however please note that children under 12 years old are not permitted in the servery itself because of limited space and hot surfaces. A children's portion is available for 50% of the full price. High chairs are available on request.

Formal dinners are not recommended for small children or babies in arms, but older children may attend dinners.

The College gardens

Children are welcome to play in the College gardens, but they must be supervised by a parent or carer at all times. Please note that some of the College buildings are historical in nature and were not designed with children in mind. There are a number of hazards (such as steep staircases and stone steps), which may have uneven surfaces because of their age, as well as horticultural machinery, glass at low level (greenhouse and associated cold frames), and open access to both Woodstock Road and the College car park. There is also a border containing 'medicinal plants', most of which are poisonous, which is located behind the squash court; please ask the gardener, Michael Pirie, or another member of staff to point this out to you if you are concerned.

Baby changing facilities can be found in the bathroom by the <u>Kawasaki Room</u> and in the Radcliffe Observatory and breast feeding is fine anywhere in College. Please ask at the Lodge if you would like a space with more privacy and they will do their best to find an appropriate room.

The College Gym

Children under the age of 16 are not permitted in the Gym for insurance reasons. Children of 16 or over who wish to use the gym equipment will be required to complete an induction session and follow the user guidelines.

Oxford University Newcomers' Club

This is an organization run by volunteers to welcome newly-arrived spouses and partners of University members; it holds a weekly 'Newcomers with children' social group (www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk).

We understand that being a student and a parent at the same time can present significant challenges. We welcome constructive feedback at any time about how Green Templeton can better support its student parents. If you would prefer to provide this anonymously, we run a Student Feedback Questionnaire each year in February where you can offer comments about all aspects of the College's provision.

Summary of useful contacts and links

In College

Academic Registrar	Alison Franklin	academic.registrar@gtc.ox.ac.uk
Academic Administrator	James McBain	academic.admin@gtc.ox.ac.uk
Senior Tutor	Alison Stenton	alison.stenton@gtc.ox.ac.uk
Welfare Dean	Richard McManus	richard.mcmanus@phc.ox.ac.uk
Accommodation Manager	Nick Martin	accommodation@gtc.ox.ac.uk
Your College Adviser	See information on arrival at Green Templeton or contact James McBain for reminder.	
GCR Couples and Families Reps (2018/19)	Rebecca Peters	rebecca.peters@gtc.ox.ac.uk
	Jianrong He	jianrong.he@gtc.ox.ac.uk
	Minh-Anh Le	minh-anh.le@gtc.ox.ac.uk

New Students webpage: https://www.gtc.ox.ac.uk/students/academic-support/offerholders/

Facebook Page: https://en-gb.facebook.com/greentempletonoxford/

In the University

Families and childcare (collection of useful links):

www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/why-oxford/living-oxford/families-and-childcare

Living costs for dependants:

www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts/living-costs-for-dependants

https://www.oxfordsu.org/wellbeing/student-advice/wellbeing-parents/

<u>https://www.facebook.com/groups/oxfordstudentparents/</u> - good for informal advice, meetups, sales/giveaways.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/gtcgcr/ - GCR Facebook page

Oxford University Newcomers' Club (for spouses/partners of University members; they hold a weekly 'Newcomers with children' social group): www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk

Externally

19 Beaumont Street Medical Practice (the College Doctor): www.19beaumontstreet.com

Oxfordshire County Council:

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/transferring-or-moving-different-school

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/applying-nursery-place

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/school-term-dates-and-holidays

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-family-information-service-oxonfis - Family Services Directory - provides information about childcare, family support and activities

Daily Info is the single best guide to Oxford, including What's On, second-hand sales, services, restaurants, etc: www.dailyinfo.co.uk

Oxford offers a huge range of activities, events and festivals for families with children of all ages. The resources below will help you find out the latest information on what's happening and where.

https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/family-activities

If you have (or are expecting) a baby, start here: www.dailyinfo.co.uk/oxford/guide/babybase



Photo: Andrew Fennig

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