

8 April 2025



Gloucestershire  
COUNTY COUNCIL

Early Years  
Business News Tuesday



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# Business News Tuesday

## Welcome

A couple of things to note this week:

- We are moving to a fortnightly newsletter from this week, for a trial period, so we can focus on key messages and not bombard you with too much information. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any comments or feedback about this change.

And

- Just a heads up for all providers - we are going to be asking you to

confirm vacancies for each age group within your setting from the start of the new school year, September 2025. This will help us gain a more accurate picture of our childcare sufficiency in the county to support various data and financial needs. Please look out for this survey.

If you have any questions please email [EY Business Support](#) the or [Wraparound Team](#).

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## Charging Guidance

DfE have issued further clarification regarding the Statutory Guidance that came into place on 1 April 2005:

They recognise that the increased clarity on charging following the recent High Court judgment and subsequent updated guidance may necessitate an adjustment in business models for some providers. It is important to stress that there has been no change to the underlying law and DfE's position has always been that charges must not be mandatory or a condition of accessing an entitlement place. They encourage LAs to take a supportive and pragmatic approach to supporting providers during any transition to compliance.

The Department is not encouraging parents to opt out (as long as reasonable alternatives are offered for parents who do opt out, and the impact on disadvantaged parents is considered) and where providers are anxious about communicating with parents they may wish to use or align with the Childcare Choices FAQs:

[15 and 30 hours - frequently asked questions | Childcare Choices](#)

## Food Safety

Providers remain able to charge parents for a meal provided to a child. DfE is not encouraging parents to opt out, and they know that many parents prefer to purchase things like meals from their provider. However, in line with the legislation and court judgment, any charges must not be mandatory, and alternatives must be available.

There is a requirement within the EYFS that states: 'Before a child is admitted to the setting the providers must obtain information about any special dietary requirement, preferences, and food allergies that the child has'. From September 2025 DfE intend to strengthen the requirements around safer eating and in addition, require that all settings must have ongoing discussion with parents regularly and where appropriate, health professionals, to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. Providers will also be required to ensure that all staff are aware of symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis. The Department for Education encourages settings to refer to the NHS advice on food allergies to support these arrangements.

There is already a requirement in the EYFS that children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. From September 2025 this requirement will be strengthened so that where possible, a member of staff should sit facing children whilst they eat so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.

These requirements do not and should not prevent settings from allowing parents to bring in their own packed lunches or snacks. However, settings may choose to produce a 'packed lunch policy' regarding what food is permitted. Providers are free to set their own packed lunch policy, but this must comply with equality legislation. A packed lunch policy is to ensure all children are being offered healthy and nutritious food, to reduce choking risks, and to help prevent allergic reactions for children who may have airborne food allergies.

The DfE recognises the challenges settings can face in providing safe and nutritious food and managing the associated risks. Where settings are currently not compliant with the statutory guidance with regard to mandatory charges for food, but are moving towards compliance, local authorities should take a supportive and pragmatic approach, prioritising food safety and the requirements of the EYFS during any transition. Providers remain able to promote any benefits of their food offer and have pragmatic conversations with parents about what it is and isn't safe, practicable and appropriate to bring into a setting.

## **Workplace Recycling**

From 31 March 2025 new regulations will require businesses to separate

the following recyclable materials from your general waste before it is collected:

- Glass, metal and plastic
- Cardboard and paper
- Food waste

Small businesses, with fewer than 10 employees, will have until 31 March 2027 to introduce these changes.

Please visit the following website for further details:

[Simpler recycling: workplace recycling in England - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/recycling-in-the-workplace)

### **Early Years Funding Team - new email address**

From 1 April 2025, the funding team now have a new email address that we hope everyone will find easier to use. It is:

[EYfunding@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:EYfunding@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

If you are sending us emails containing children's details, please ensure you are using a secure link or encryption.

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## **Funding timetable for summer term:**

Funding pack issued	31 March 2025
Headcount actual task opens	07 April 2025
Term starts	28 April 2025
<b>Week 1</b> of funded period starts w/c	28 April 2025
<b>Headcount actual task closes</b>	<b>02 May 2025</b>
Headcount actual payment 1 <sup>st</sup> instalment released from GCC	16 May 2025
Headcount actual payment breakdown lists issued	19 May 2025
Headcount actual payment 2 <sup>nd</sup> instalment released from GCC	30 May 2025
Headcount actual payment 3 <sup>rd</sup> instalment released from GCC	30 June 2025
Headcount amendment task opens	02 June 2025
<b>Headcount amendment task closes</b>	<b>27 June 2025</b>
Headcount actual payment 4 <sup>th</sup> instalment released from GCC	30 July 2025
<b>Week 12</b> of funded period ends w/e	<b>25 July 2025</b>
Headcount amendment payment released from GCC	11 July 2025
Headcount amendment payment breakdown lists issued	14 July 2025
Term ends	21 July 2025

For all the details regarding your Summer term funding claims, please see the information provided in the paperwork pack, shared with providers in the funding Portal on 4 April 2025.

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## Additional information that you may find useful

For information about the National Childcare Wraparound Programme please use the following link to access the GCC webpage  
<https://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/wraparound-childcare/>

### Useful links

We have been talking with PATA recently and they have provided us with information about services and support they can offer. Their website can be accessed via the following link – [PATA \(UK\) - Join Us](#)

**General resources** – Accident book and register: [PATA \(UK\) - General Resources](#)

This page also has a link to the Annual Salary Calculator sheet which they can purchase. This might be helpful for TTO only providers. ([PATA \(UK\) - Online store product](#)) Members can purchase time with the Payroll team to sit alongside this to help them out. Payroll clients get the calculator free of charge.

PATA are experts on part time/TTO contracts which might be useful for wraparound providers who may have complex payroll situations!

**Mandatory Policies:** [PATA \(UK\) - Mandatory Policies](#) The bundle with all of them is £150 for non members and £75 for members. They can be purchased individually as well, prices are based on length/complexity.

**Non-Mandatory Policies:** [PATA \(UK\) - Non-Mandatory Policies](#) £130 for members, £260 for non members. This is 22 policies. Also available separately.

**Document bundles:** [PATA \(UK\) - Document Bundles](#) Currently we have Recruitment (£30/£60) and then 3 Management bundles each (£10/£20).

Childcareworks 'Wraparound toolkit' -[Wraparound Childcare Toolkit | from Childcare Works](#)

As always if you would like personalised support either by phone call or visit, please use this email: [wraparound2@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:wraparound2@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

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