



early years



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

In April 2014, The Virtual School signed up to the Imagination Library Scheme created by Dolly Parton. She recognised that reading and sharing books with children of all ages benefits them with listening, attention, social interaction, emotional wellbeing, comprehension, speech and language to name but a few! This means, every month all of the Children in Care in Gloucestershire from birth to 5 years old receive a book from America as part of the Imagination Library scheme. In April 2023 this offer was extended to all children in need and children on child protection plans within the same age range.



Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

These are written for all children from the age of 3 years old as they are a legal part of their care plans. All Children in Care (CiC) have a minimum of 3 PEP meetings per academic year.

Early Years Pupil Premium

EYPP is devolved directly from the Government for children the term after their 3rd birthday and until they start school. EYPP is paid directly to the child's setting 3 times per year and is based on attendance. If the child is attending for 15 hours per week the funding is calculated in the following way: **15 hours x number of weeks in the whole term x amount of EYPP per hour.**

If for any reason the child does not attend for the full 15 hours or stretch the funding to equate to the total of 570 hours per year the amount of EYPP will be reduced to reflect those hours.

Early Years Funding

Early Years children in foster care who are aged from 9 months and above are eligible for 15 hours free childcare at most nurseries, childminders, playgroups and Children's Centres.

The funding is over 38 weeks per academic year but can be stretched over more weeks if your provider is open all year round, please discuss this with your provider.

What isn't covered?

Other fees may apply at your chosen provider. The funding is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables (for example: nappies or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). Providers may charge a fee for these additions. If you choose to pay for these it is an arrangement between you and the childcare provider. However, you must not be required to pay any fee as a condition of taking up a place and must be offered alternative options; for example to take a packed lunch and provide your own sun cream and nappies.

30 hours free childcare: local authority and early years provider guide - GOV.UK

What's happening in September 2026?

Children under 3 can have their hours increased to 30 hours, meaning eligible foster carers will be able to claim 30 hours of childcare from the term after their child turns 9 months. You can apply for 30 hours for each term, even if you have not started to use your entitlements.

Children who are living or attending a setting outside of Gloucestershire

Any child who is living or attending a setting outside of the County will apply for their early years funding within the County where the setting is.



The  virtual School

