



## Early Years & Childcare Provider Bulletin

BUSINESS & FUNDING FOCUS

### EY and Childcare Provider Bulletin; Business & Funding Focus 19 December 2025

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Dear provider,

We'd like to thank everyone for all their hard work this term. We hope everyone has the opportunity to take a well-earned break.

Merry Christmas!

**Early Years and Childcare Business and Funding colleagues**

If you have any questions please email [EY Business Support](mailto:EYbusinesssupport@gloucestershire.gov.uk), [EYfunding@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:EYfunding@gloucestershire.gov.uk) or [Wraparound Team](#)

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## Expansion Updates

The next Grant Panel for the Early Years Expansion Capital Grant and the Wraparound Revenue Grant is February 27<sup>th</sup> 2026. We are currently accepting applications and will be accepting them up until 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

For more information on the grants please visit:

[Early Years](#)

and

[Wraparound](#)

Please do be in touch if you have any questions:

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

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## Wraparound Updates

Firstly, we would like to thank you for all your efforts in completing your Autumn MI Data. We value the time this takes to collate and submit. We hope you have an enjoyable Christmas period and look forward to continuing to work with you in 2026.

Childcare Works has shared the below information with us about the Spring MI data key dates.

### Spring 2026 MI – Key Dates

As we look forward into the new year, we would like to take this opportunity to share the roadmap and milestones to the Spring MI. Below you will find the deadlines. We acknowledge these timescales have been brought forward, which is to allow sufficient time for all the activities prior to end March:

- **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January** MI survey, provider guidance and FAQs released to LAs.
- **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January** – Spring term 2026

reporting week.

· **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January** – Recommended provider reporting window.

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## Early Years Funded Entitlements Updates

### Cessation of Flexible Funding Claims

This is a reminder that from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026, you must **only claim for the free hours** that children attend your setting. If any child requires additional support to access their hours, please contact the EYS Advice Line to discuss a request for additional support/SENIF.

Funding claims are audited by the Early Years Funding Team on a rolling 4 year programme. Please consider the information in sections 12.11 and 13.1 of the Local Provider Agreement when submitting your claims.

### Headcount for Spring Term

Due to a software issue, you will notice that some of your children on your task may have 12 Weeks Attended for term pre-populated in the column instead of 11. Please note that the maximum number of funded weeks to claim in the spring term are 11 for this academic year. Confirmation of the number of funded weeks were shared with providers via a Provider Portal message on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

Please ensure that you do not claim more than 11 weeks for any of your children in the spring term. Can we also remind you that you must change start dates and/or leaving dates for new starters and leavers and you must also amend the number of funded weeks you are claiming to reflect these dates. Week 1 of the spring term is w/c 5<sup>th</sup> January and week 11 is w/e 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

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#### Key dates for the Spring term:

Funding pack issued	8 December 2025
Headcount actual task opens	15 December 2025
Term starts	5 January 2026
<b>Week 1</b> of funded period starts w/c	5 January 2026

<b>Headcount actual task closes</b>	<b>9 January 2026</b>
Headcount actual payment 1st instalment released from GCC	23 January 2026
Headcount actual payment breakdown lists issued	26 January 2026
Headcount actual payment 2nd instalment released from GCC	28 January 2026
Headcount actual payment 3rd instalment released from GCC	28 February 2026
Headcount amendment task opens	2 February 2026
<b>Headcount amendment task closes</b>	<b>6 March 2026</b>
Headcount actual payment 4th instalment released from GCC	28 March 2026
<b>Week 11</b> of funded period ends w/e	23 March 2026
Headcount amendment payment released from GCC	20 March 2026
Headcount amendment payment breakdown lists issued	23 March 2026
Term ends	27 March 2026

### **EYPP Calculations in Autumn term payment**

For children who became eligible for EYPP after the September actual payment was made, the rate applied in the amendment period was higher than the set standard rate. To meet the published payment date, we were unable to correct the affected children in time.

After reviewing the options, we have decided to process all the submitted claims. However, this resulted in an overpayment against the affected children. This overpayment will be recovered from affected providers either from the first spring term funding instalment payment or the autumn term deprivation payment, depending on which one is higher. We believe this approach minimises disruption to you all, particularly at this time of year.

We will notify all affected providers of the estimated amount to be deducted by Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December. We will also issue a reminder of the reclaim amount before the next Early Years payment due in the New Year.

We apologise for any inconvenience and assure you that all possible solutions have been considered.

# Charging Compliance

Common Charging Queries – Management Software/Learning Journals, Gloves and Medication.

Online Systems (eg, Tapestry)

Costs for observation and learning journey platforms are considered business expenses under HMRC rules. These should be logged in your accounts and claimed as allowable expenses, not passed on to parents. Gloves (PPE).

Gloves are not chargeable. Current HSE and EYFS guidance does not mandate glove use for nappy changing; effective handwashing between changes is sufficient. Gloves may be used as part of your hygiene policy, but they are not a statutory requirement and therefore cannot be included as a non-food consumable charge.

Additional Hygiene Guidance

Government advice states soiled nappies should be wrapped in a plastic bag before disposal. Gloves are optional for nappy changing and recommended for potty cleaning, but their use is not a statutory requirement under EYFS and therefore cannot be charged as a consumable.

Medication

- All medication on the premises must be stored securely and out of children's reach at all times, including during drop-off and pick-up.
- Providers may ask parents to supply over-the-counter medication (eg, Calpol) for emergency use, but you must ensure safe storage and consider alternatives such as sachets to reduce waste and contamination.
- If you choose to hold emergency medication on-site, you may apply a one-off charge if administered, provided this is clearly listed under your published non-food consumables policy and parents are informed in advance.

Grace Periods and EY Entitlements

We had a few issues recently with settings attempting to claim for children who have moved to their setting whilst their eligibility code has

been in its Grace Period. It's important to note that funding for the extended entitlement cannot be claimed for the first time when an eligibility code is in its Grace Period. This also applies if a child moves settings during the term and wants to claim the Extended Entitlement for the first time at that setting and the code is in its Grace Period.

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## Any Other Items

Did you know..... parents on Universal Credit might be able to get help with their childcare costs, **upfront**, if one of the following applies:

- they're starting work
- they're increasing the hours they work, for example they've moved from part-time work to full-time work.

If they're starting a new job, they may be able to get all their childcare costs paid for the first month.

If they're increasing the hours they work, they may be able to get all their additional childcare costs paid for one month.

They may also be able to get help if they have to pay a deposit or a retainer to their childcare provider.

**These upfront payments are not repayable.**

To apply, parents should ask their Universal Credit Work Coach, or via a request on their UC account.

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## Training & Meetings - Book now!

**Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT) – Play to Ignite Development** - 15/01/2026 - 4:00 -6:00pm - Kingsway Primary School, Valley Gardens, Gloucester, GL2 2AR [Book here](#)

**Childminder Network Meeting** - 19/01/2026 - 7:00 - 8:00pm - Online via TEAMS [Book here](#)

**Childminder Play Session** - 20/01/2026 - 9:30am - 12:00noon - The

Beacon Children's Centre, Valley Gardens, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL2 2AR [Book here](#)

**Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT Level 1) –**  
22/01/2026 - 4:00 - 6:00pm - Longford Park Primary Academy, Clock  
Tower Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL2 9FP [Book here](#)

**SENCO in the Early Years** - 22/01/2026 & 29/01/2025 (2 day course) -  
9:15am - 3:00pm - Shire Hall, Westgate St, Gloucester, GL1 2TG  
[Book here](#)

**Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT Level 1) –**  
29/01/2026 - 4:00 - 6:00pm | Scheduled | WIN26SIOTL1-04 | Early  
Years | Severnbanks Primary School (Naas Lane, Lydney,  
Gloucestershire, GL15 5A [Book here](#)

**Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT Level 2) –**  
**Practical strategies: sensory processing in the Early Years**  
02/02/2026 - 4:00 - 6:00pm - Kingsway Primary School, Valley Gardens,  
Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL2 2AR. [Book here](#)

**Every Child a Talker (ECAT)** 'how to use the ECAT monitoring tool'  
training - online - 03/02/2026 - 4:00 - 5:30pm - [Book here](#)

**Leaders and Managers Network meeting** - 04/02/2026 - 1:00 - 3:30pm  
- Gloucester Farmers Club, Agriculture House, Greville Cl, Sandhurst Rd,  
Gloucester GL2 9RG [Book here](#)

**Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT Level 1) –**  
05/02/2026 - 4:00 - 6:00pm - Kingsway Primary School (Valley Gardens,  
Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL2 2AR [Book here](#)

**Total Communication Training in the Early Years** - This training is  
provided in house at your setting.

You can now book Total Communication in the Early Years through  
GCC+. To do this you will need to log into your setting's GCC+  
account. Go to the **search bar** on the **home page**, and type in Total  
Communications and **press the search key**.

You will then see the link for the Total Communications for you to book.

***(Please note – if you search in the 'training section' or the 'services'***

***section, you won't find it. It must be searched for in the home page search and the search key pressed). NB - If you just press enter, it won't find it.***

Once you have booked and checked out your training, you will be contacted by an EY Inclusion Advisor to arrange the date and time for the delivery of your course. If you have not heard from us within 2 weeks, please contact the EY Admin Team: [eyservice@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:eyservice@gloucestershire.gov.uk).

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**Please note:** Most training and all events (excluding some meetings) are subject to a charge. Please check the price when you make your booking. If you are in any doubt, please email [eyservice@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:eyservice@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

*Please refer to the cancellation policy for your event, as charges may apply.*

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

- 2 weeks before the training course is due to take place – 100% refund
- Less than 2 weeks before the training course is due to take place – 0% refund
- If GCC cancels a training course, we will issue a refund automatically. If you paid by credit card, the refund will be paid back to the same card. If you paid by invoice, you will receive a credit note.
- If you need to cancel your place on a training course within two weeks of the course and there are special circumstances, please contact [eyservice@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:eyservice@gloucestershire.gov.uk) and we will consider your request on a case-by-case basis.



Gloucestershire County Council, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester



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