



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

Early Years
Business News Tuesday

Business News Tuesday - 16 September 2025





Welcome

We hope you have settled back into the new term.

Already there have been several new things to deal with. Changes to the EYFS, safeguarding updates, new inspection protocols, making sure you are compliant with the voluntary charges and getting your data into us to ensure you receive your correct amount of funding for 9mth, 2,3, and 4YO, to name a few.

This bulletin is focusing on some of these and then we are going to do a series of issues dedicated to single topics.

Please get in touch with us if you have any questions or need our help.

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

Funding and Grants

School Based Nurseries (SBN) Grant Phase 2 (and 3)

As you may have seen the government has announced the next phase of the SBN roll out.

There are going to be 2 more phases for roll out, but those wanting to be part of Phase 3 have to register their interest in the Phase 2 window.

Phase 3 funding can be applied for by schools that had funding in Phase 1.

Any school wanting to apply must be approved by the LA. We have created an Expression of Interest form for schools/providers to complete to help with targeting support for this funding.

Key dates:

- Applications open 22 September 2025 and close on 11 December 2025 (5pm)

- Decisions announced April 2026
- Funding released June 2026
- Projects need to look to be operational by September 2026
- Final deadline for spend September 2027

Schools must confirm the following:

- They did not receive funding in phase 1
- The project will deliver a net increase in childcare places
- The nursery will be operational before September 2027
- Local Authority approval has been formally obtained and the approval form has been submitted.

Some important differences to the criteria from Phase 1:

- the use of surplus space is not a requirement
- consider the use of other funding sources alongside the SBN grant to complete the project (106/ NWCP*)
- Age range for children is 2,3 and 4YO (could be under 2's if PVI registered with Ofsted independently)
- look to offer extended provision covering wraparound hours 8am to 6pm and school holidays.

The guidance asks LAs to take into account when schools could offer the new spaces and to consider whether this would fit better with the phase 2 or phase 3 application rounds.

Expression of Interest for School Based Nurseries (EOI for SBN)

Armed Forces Family Fund

Round 2 is open now until 8 October 2025.

Projects must benefit forces families with a child under 5 years.

The Armed Forces Families Fund: Early Years programme 2025- 26 is a programme that will award grants of between £5,000 and £80,000 on behalf of the MOD's Armed Forces Families Fund Early Years

Programme for projects which help enhance early childhood education and childcare settings of young children from armed forces families.

Eligibility:

We invite applications from:

- Early childhood education and childcare providers operating where armed forces families live or work and must offer group-based childcare and have at least 50% of service children on roll (unless under a cluster, see below).
- Local authorities who wish to supply specific training to early childhood education and childcare providers supporting service children aged 0-5 years and provide a shared resource working across multiple settings.
- If your setting has less than 50% service children on roll, you could still apply as a cluster. This means submitting a group bid on behalf of two or more setting with smaller numbers of service children.

If you choose to apply as a cluster, you can apply for:

- Staff training with an armed forces focus.
- Funding for a shared resource, such as a roving Armed Forces Early Years Support Worker.

There is more detailed information about eligibility in the programme guidelines available below. **It is important that you read the programme guidance carefully before you apply.**

Armed Forces Families Fund: Early Years Programme 2025-2026

Expressions of Interest (EOI)

We are asking for EOI for providers looking to expand or open new provision at Treetops Children Centre, Dursley. This would be to start up January 2026.

The closing date for this is Friday 10 October 2025.

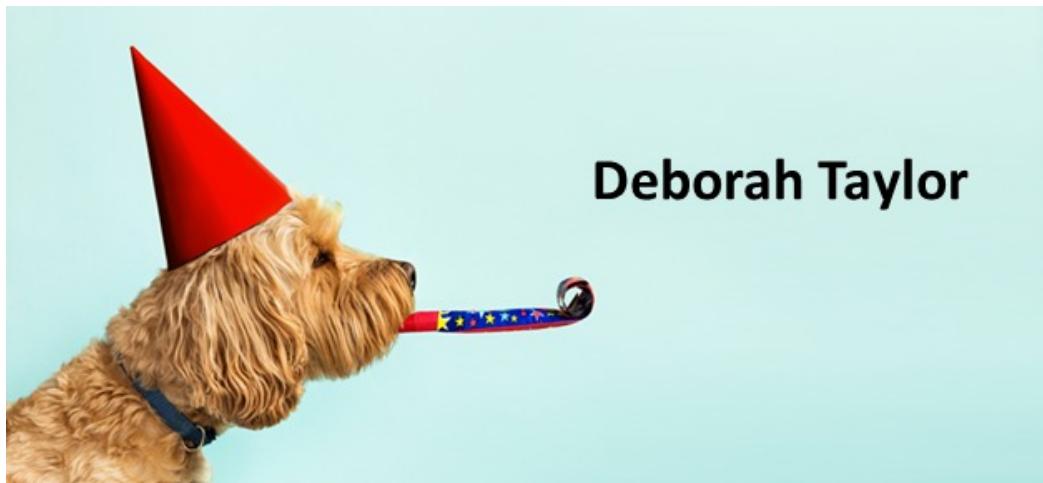
We will arrange site visits week commencing 22 September and 6 October.

Please complete the attached EOI and return to us by emailing it to eybusinesssupport@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Expression of Interest (EOI)

Survey News

We are pleased to announce the winner of the £200 voucher for updating the SUPP is:



We will be sending the voucher over to the lucky winner this week.
Next opportunity to win is NOW!

Please complete our Business planning for SEND survey (please complete by 3 Oct 2025) – Any provider completing the survey will be entered into the competition.

We have **20 vouchers worth £30** for providers to use to pay towards our SEND/Inclusion training courses – Total Communication, Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy Training (SIOT), SENDCO in the Early Years, Getting it Right for Boys and **5 sensory packs worth £200** available to win.

We look forward to receiving your responses.

Business planning for SEND | Have Your Say
Gloucestershire

Charging

As some of you will be aware we are working our way through providers to ensure they are compliant and that they will be able to produce itemised invoices and upload their voluntary charging information onto websites and/or Glosfamilies.

We are working with our legal department to produce a more comprehensive set of guidance about how settings can ensure that they are compliant. Ahead of this though we would like to share some common issues and how you can make sure you are compliant.

The EYFS – please remember that the EYFS also states that providers need to follow the other relevant legislation such as

H&S

Fire Safety

Hygiene requirements

This is as well as Data Protection Legislation (Freedom of Information Act 2000), Employment Laws, Anti-discriminatory legislation, Duty of care

What does this mean in relation to voluntary charges?

So when you are looking at what you need to provide you must take into account **all this legislation** as well as the EYFS specific requirements.

It means that where we have been questioned about being able to charge for items such as tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, soap, or cleaning products and sanitising of bathrooms and play areas – these are part of your business expenses to meet the legal requirements and are what you are expected to provide so they cannot be charged to parents.

PFAC (Paediatric First Aid), training and staff ratios

The EYFS states that at least one person who has a current PFA must be on the premises and available at all times and that all staff who obtained level 2 and/or level 3 since June 2016 must obtain a PFAC within 3 months of starting work to be included in the required staff: child ratios as a minimum.

Other changes to the food and drink requirements (3.63) now state that while children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric first aid certificate, and children **must** be in sight and hearing of a member of staff.

Training – the EYFS clearly sets out that providers are expected to

complete mandatory training such as food hygiene, safeguarding, paediatric first aid. In addition staff should undertake training and professional development to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for children that continually improves (3.33) SEND- providers are expected to identify a SENCO (3.76) and have regard for the 0-25 SEND code of Practice. The Code of Practice sets out that providers must make reasonable adjustments to include children with SEND.

What does this mean in regard to voluntary charges?

There can be no charges for parents in relation to PFAC, staff training or ratios. If a provider has all staff PFAC qualified, encourages staff to attend training to enhance skills and decides to work at different ratios to that set out in the EYFS this is a business expense related to ensuring high quality care and education. Similarly if a provider needs to make adjustments for children with SEND this should also be included in their business planning to ensure they can make reasonable adjustments to include all children. There are also other funding sources that providers can access should adjustments be needed for children with more complex needs. This should not be charged to parents.

Can parents opt out of different categories and items?

Yes they can.

Providers cannot have a fully opt in or out policy for their voluntary charges. Parents have a right to receive free places, but they also have the right to be able to opt out of charges that they do not want to pay. This can be a category such as food, non-food consumables or additional activities. This can also be opt out of specific items and or activities within categories.

The court case that triggered the updated guidance was about this exact issue. The parent challenged why they had to pay for non-food consumables and some of the activities as his child did not take part in them, but he was happy to pay for the food charges. The ruling was that the parent should have been able to opt not to pay for those things he did not want or his child did not use. This is further supported in the guidance [Early education and childcare - GOV.UK](#) in point A1.37.

A1.37 Parents must be able to opt out of paying for chargeable extras and the associated consumable or activity for their child. For activities and extra services, providers should be made aware that participation in

any optional extra activity should be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. In these circumstances, local authorities should ensure that children who do not participate in optional activities continue to receive provision that complies with the EYFS.

This quite clearly states in the first line the ability of parents to opt out of paying for the chargeable extras. It goes onto to say that for activities and extra services participation is on the basis of parental choice. This means that a single opt in or opt out charge would not be compliant as parents could not exercise choice over what they wanted to pay for.

Itemised invoices and voluntary charges

The guidance came into effect in April 2025. The requirement to have itemised invoices has always been in place. All voluntary charges and itemised invoices must be in place by January 2026 – this is the final deadline so providers should already be making sure that they can provide parents with the breakdown of charges.

- the free entitlement hours
- additional private paid hours
- food charges
- non-food consumables charges
- activities charges

Parents can opt out of paying for any or all of the voluntary charges.

Contact details for the team:

EYExpansionCapitalFundingApplications@gloucestershire.gov.uk
wraparound2@gloucestershire.gov.uk
eybusinesssupport@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Eyfunding@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Funding Team phone number – 01452 328668

Other News

The DfE's Big September Switch

This September, we're launching **The Big September Switch**, part of the Do Something Big campaign, to engage career changers – especially parents – to consider rewarding roles in early years.

You can download and share the Early Years Careers Guide from our website, which is full of information to help people understand pathways into the sector.

The Big September Switch

We'd appreciate your support in helping to raise awareness of The Big September Switch by:

- Sharing the guide with your networks.
- Re-sharing DfE social posts and Instagram activity throughout September to amplify campaign messages.
- Promoting the new campaign webpage.
- Keeping an eye on our socials – Parent-facing influencers will be sharing their own 'switch' stories and shining a light on the rewards of early years careers.

Thank you for helping us encourage more people to join the early years workforce and give every child the best start in life.

If you have any questions, please get in touch at earlyyears.careers@education.gov.uk.

Training

As part of the DfE Wraparound Care Pilot Project, **all grant recipients are eligible for FREE places on our two-day 'Inclusion Needs You' training**. This is taking place on:

Tuesday 4 November and Tuesday 18 November 2025

9:30am - 2:15pm

Northway Community Hub

[Inclusion Needs You - 4th and 18th November Tickets, Tue 4 Nov 2025 at 09:30 | Eventbrite](#)

This practical course is designed to boost your confidence and equip you with the skills to welcome and include disabled children in your Wraparound Care setting – including those with physical, sensory, or cognitive conditions, neurodiversity, SEN, and additional needs.

Delivered across two days by a team of two experienced trainers with

lived experience, including disabled and neurodivergent professionals and parent carers, this course offers real insight and practical tips.

All participating settings will receive a fantastic sensory resource kit worth £200, including a blackout tent, sensory toys, and foam mats.

Limited spaces are reserved for providers in the GCC DfE-funded pilot – once these are filled, you can still access general tickets.

Important Information:

Each participant must book individually so they receive all the advance information to their inbox. If booking on behalf of your team, please make separate bookings using each attendee's email address so they receive the course information directly.

Each Inclusion Needs You is a two day course. Please ensure you can attend both days listed before booking a place.

Training & meetings up until the end of October - Book now!

Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy Training (SIOT) - Play to Ignite Development - 18/09/2025 4:00 - 6:00pm - Longford Park Primary Academy, Clock Tower Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL2 9FP - [Book here](#)

Ofsted updates and changes to the EYFS - 2025 (via TEAMS) - 23/09/2025 10.00 - 11.30am | Online via TEAMS.
Champa Miah, a senior Ofsted inspector will delivering a webinar on Tuesday 23rd September to discuss the **EYFS changes** - [Book here](#)

Ofsted updates and changes to the EYFS - 2025 (via TEAMS) - 23/09/2025 7.00 - 8.30pm | Online via TEAMS.
Champa Miah, a senior Ofsted inspector will delivering a webinar on Tuesday 23rd September to discuss the **EYFS changes** - [Book here](#)

Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT Level 1) - 25/09/2025 4:00 - 6:00pm - Alderman Knight School, 46 Ashchurch Road, Tewkesbury, England, GL20 8JJ - [Book here](#)

Childminder Play Session - 25/09/2025 - 9:30 - 11:30am - The Beacon Children's Centre (Valley Gardens, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL2 2AR - [Book here](#)

Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT Level 1) - 02/10/2025 4:00 - 6:00pm - Oakwood Primary School, Cotswold Road, Cheltenham, GL52 5HD - [Book here](#)

SENDCO in the Early Years - (2 days) **Day 1** - 02/10/2025 9:15 - 3:00pm - **Day 2** 09/10/2025 - 9:15 - 3:00pm - Shire Hall, Westgate St, Gloucester, GL1 2TG - [Book here](#)

Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT Level 1) - 09/10/2025 4:00 - 6:00pm - Kingsway Primary School (Valley Gardens, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL2 2AR - [Book here](#)

Welcome to the Early Years - 10/10/2025 - 9:30am - 12:30pm - Shire Hall, Westgate St, Gloucester, GL1 2TG - [Book here](#)

Childminder Network Meeting - 14/10/2025 - 7:00 - 8:00pm - Online via TEAMS - [Book here](#)

Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy training (SIOT Level 1) - 16/10/2025 - 4:00 - 6:00pm - Great Oldbury Primary Academy, Great Oldbury Primary Academy Veterans Way, Stonehouse, England, GL10 3WH - [Book here](#)

Creating Your Early Years Curriculum - 17/10/2025 - 10:00am - 12:00pm - Shire Hall, Westgate St, Gloucester, GL1 2TG - [Book here](#)

Getting it Right for Boys - 21/10/2025 - 1:00 - 3:00pm - Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road, Churchdown, Gloucestershire GL3 2JH - [Book here](#)

Getting It Right for Boys - 21/10/2025 - 4:00 - 6:00pm - Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road, Churchdown, Gloucestershire GL3 2JH - [Book here](#)

Baby Room Network meeting - 27/10/2025 - 6:15 - 7:45pm- All My Friends Childcare (Barnwood), 87 Barnwood Nursery, Barnwood Road, Gloucester GL2 0SF - [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@goucestershire.gov.uk.

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@goucestershire.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@goucestershire.gov.uk and we will consider your request on a case-by-case basis.



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