

Children's Centres Newsletter

Issue 2:

May 2020

Hello and welcome to the Second Children's Centres Newsletter, following the first which focused on COVID-19, funding and government guidance which we hope was helpful to you.

As the situation continues to unfold, the newsletters will provide some updates about COVID-19. We hope you find this edition as informative and useful and look forward to hearing your feedback.

Helen Black, Commissioning Officer and Apprentice Amber Williams

Children's Centres Support Project

There are 28 De-Designated Children's Centres across Gloucestershire, that are been run by a variety of organisations across the county, including: Libraries, Schools, Charities and private businesses. The Children's Centres Support Project has been designed to support these organisations to review current operations and delivery and support the development of business plans and funding strategies to sustain services into the future.



support provided by the project can help your organisation respond to the current crisis, ensuring that you are able to access the Gov. support, that is available and other local support services.

She will then begin to work with you on your longer term plans and strategies, as the Country comes out of lock down, including how you can build on work already going on in your local community; engage with parents and families to develop new and accessible local services and funding to sustain these into the future.

Contact helen.black@gloucestershire.gov.uk

With the current COVID-19 crisis, the project will be delivered remotely and over the coming weeks, Helen will contact you to arrange a call. She will work with you to begin to explore how the

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COVID-19 update

Responding to COVID-19 Challenge:

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

NCVO have produced a dedicated advice page for the voluntary sector and their resources are now free to non members information can be found here <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/information/coronavirus>

One of NCVO Trusted Traders Croner are providing free HR advice <https://croner.co.uk/services/hr/24-hour-advice/>

COVID-19 update for Nurseries

This section will be relevant to early years providers that are employers, and that usually have a mix of public income (largely this will be funding for the free early education entitlements, also known as 'DSG funding') and private income (largely this will be the fees that parents pay for childcare beyond the free entitlements).

Childminders are less likely to be employers, and therefore are less likely to be eligible for support via the CJRS. Childminders may find the Self Employment Income Support Scheme more relevant. Maintained nursery schools should take account of the guidance in this section. For school-based nursery provision, please refer to the 'schools' section below.

On 17 March 2020, the Chancellor confirmed that the government will continue to pay local authorities for free early years entitlement places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds to support providers at this time. On 18 March 2020, the government also announced a business rates holiday for many nurseries in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year. Read the guidance.

Early years settings should remain open where they are needed to provide childcare for the children

of critical workers who cannot be cared for safely at home, and vulnerable children.

A private provider should only furlough employees, and therefore seek support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, if they meet the following conditions:

- ➔ the employee works in an area of business where services are temporarily not required and where their salary is not covered by public funding
- ➔ the employee would otherwise be made redundant or laid off
- ➔ the employee is not involved in delivering provision that has already been funded (free entitlement funding)
- ➔ (where appropriate) the employee is not required to deliver provision for a child of a critical worker and/or vulnerable child

➔ the grant from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme would not duplicate other public grants received, and would not lead to financial reserves being created

If it is difficult to distinguish whether staff are funded through free entitlement or private income for the purposes of meeting the first 3 conditions as listed above, then an early years provider can access the CJRS to cover up to the proportion of its paybill which could be considered to have been paid for from that provider's private income. This would typically be income received from 'parent-paid' hours, and excludes all income from the government's free entitlements (or 'DSG income') for all age groups. In line with the conditions of the scheme listed above, providers should initially use the month of February 2020 to represent their usual income in calculating the

proportion of its paybill eligible to be covered by the scheme. Providers should adjust these proportions in subsequent furloughing applications if their income from the government's free entitlements changes, but are not expected to make any adjustments in relation to changes in parent-paid income.

To illustrate:

If a provider's average monthly income is 40% from DSG and 60% from other income, the provider could claim CJRS support for up to 60% of their paybill.

This would be done by furloughing staff whose usual salary / combined salaries come to no greater than 60% of the provider's total paybill.

These proportions could change in subsequent furlough applications as a result of DSG income changing (but not where income from parents increased or decreased). For example, if this provider subsequently receives additional DSG income from a local authority as a result of providing additional hours of childcare, such that its new DSG income would represent 55% of its total income in February 2020, then its maximum use of the furlough scheme should, from that point, be reduced to 45% of its paybill.

Some early years settings may also be eligible for the Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF). The details and eligibility criteria for SBGF can be found in the guidance. For more information, and to find out how to apply for the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan scheme, please refer to the Financial support for businesses during coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance.

Further guidance for early years providers is available.

The DfE is considering appropriate measures to monitor the use of these schemes in order to detect any duplication of funding, and will be considering potential options to recover misused public funding as required.

Support for business that pay business rates

In addition to existing business rates reliefs, the government has outlined further support via the business rate system which may be relevant to the education, early years and children's social care sectors:

- an additional Small Business Grant Scheme to support small businesses that already pay little or no business rates because of small business rate relief (SBRR), rural rate relief (RRR) and tapered relief. This will provide a one-off grant of £10,000 to eligible properties
- a business rates holiday for many nurseries in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.

Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied by providers on Ofsted's Early Years Register, and wholly or mainly used for the provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Billing authorities may not grant the relief to themselves

Any enquiries on eligibility for, or provision of, the grants or holidays should be directed to the relevant billing authority.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Business Interruption Loan Scheme

- the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme will help to support long-term viable businesses which may need to respond to cash-flow pressures as a result of the virus by seeking additional finance
- the scheme supports SMEs with access to loans, overdrafts, invoice finance and asset finance of up to £5 million and for up to 6 years
- the scheme is administered by commercial lenders, designed for UK-based organisations not classified as public sector
- read more about the scheme and how to apply [here](#)



Support for Families

Due to the current coronavirus situation lots of things are becoming more of a struggle for families. We have put together some information below which we hope will be useful for your work with families. Please do send us through any resources you are using that you'd like us to include in a future newsletter and share with other colleagues.

Charity support available for families financially affected by Coronavirus



Financial grants for children of UK fashion and textile families

The Fashion & Textile Children's Trust (FTCT) provides grants for essential items, for children (0-18yrs) and wants families to get in touch at this time. If the parent or carer works/has previously worked in a high street fashion retailer, fashion clothing company, supermarket that sells clothing, carpet store, knitwear, footwear, bridalwear, dry cleaners and many other related roles, their grants can pay for essential items that children need. (Grants are considered regardless of whether the parent / carer has been furloughed)

Here's what the charity can help to pay for: The charity can cover the cost of essential items such as clothing, laptops or tablets for home schooling, bedding and other household essentials, including white goods. If a child has a disability or additional needs, their grants can also

help to support with mobility equipment, sensory toys, therapies and more. Their grants are not a loan and do not need to be re-paid

Please note: the charity is not able to support with grants for food/household bills, nappies etc, but they are definitely worth contacting to ask for support the parent may need now and in the coming months for other essential items for children, to help out at home, with additional costs families may now be facing.

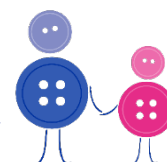
Barbara, one of the parents

supported with an FTCT grant said:

"You have nothing to lose but something to gain. It's more than just things you're applying for, getting that grant and knowing you have provided for your child is worth so much more."

For more information, please read the two documents attached or visit their website here:

<https://www.ftct.org.uk/support-for-families-affected-by-coronavirus>



Gloucestershire County Council – Advice and Support for Children and Families

Gloucestershire County Council has produced a dedicated webpage with lists of advice and support for Children and Families.

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/covid-19-information-and-advice/support-for-children-and-families-during-covid-19/>



Citizens Advice update



Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts

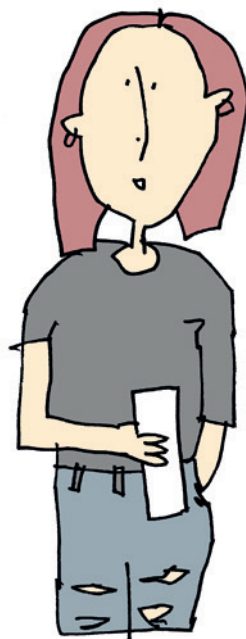
We are following official advice to minimise the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection to our clients, volunteers and staff. If you need our support, please contact us by telephone: **Stroud District** on **0808 800 0510** and **Cotswold District** on **0808 800 0511**. Also, you can contact us by email using the Email Advice page: <https://www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk/stroud-cab-email-advice.php>

If you are unable to contact us or need urgent advice out of our office hours, you can contact an adviser through our national phone service, Adviceline: **03444 111 444**. If you need further information about coronavirus, please visit <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/>

North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice – Help with welfare benefits and support for the employed and self employed

North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice continues to provide all advice services by telephone and email. All our face to face services across Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Forest of Dean and Cheltenham districts remain suspended until further notice. For information about our services visit www.gloscab.org.uk or see us on Twitter @gloscab

For telephone advice people should contact **01452 527202**.



For email advice visit our website www.gloscab.org.uk and complete the email enquiry form. Our website also provides online advice.

There are currently many people applying for Universal Credit. If people need help to claim they can contact our Help to Claim service on **0800 1448 444**.

Extensive advice regarding Coronavirus with details of relevant changes to welfare benefits and support available to those in employment and those who are self-employed can be found at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/>

We are now receiving over 5 times as many calls as we usually do, and people may have to be called back. Where that is necessary we are aiming to call people back within 1 working day. Where a person is calling about a food voucher, we will respond to that enquiry on the same day.

Keeping children safe during the Coronavirus

The Corona Virus has limited how we can make contact with some of the children we work with, and using the Mind of My Own app actively and creatively could be a great opportunity to ensure that contact and relationships are maintained. We will be sharing ways of doing this in the next few days so please look out for information and discuss together in your teams.

"The Mind of My Own One App can help children in care in the current situation as it's a way of getting in touch with their workers when visits aren't taking place. It may be that a child or young person wishes to use the 'My Worker is Visiting' scenario to plan for the next time they see their worker, so their normal stresses and anxieties aren't forgotten about.



I think the 'My Wellbeing' scenario is particularly important as a lot of children and young people may not be going to school. It's hard to be away from social contact and can really increase anxiety. I have already been told I am not able to see my mental health worker and for me it means I'm not getting that support.

*All children and young people need to be encouraged to use this as it can make them aware of how they are feeling and let their worker know they are struggling. **Please, please, now is the time to get children and young people signed up!!***



Launch of domestic abuse awareness campaign

The Home Office has launched a new national communications campaign that will signpost how to access help for victims of abuse and provide reassurance that police response & support services remain available during the coronavirus pandemic.



The message shared by the Home Office reaffirmed that the coronavirus household isolation instruction does not apply to anyone who needs to leave their home to escape domestic abuse.

The Rail Delivery Group also announced those fleeing domestic abuse during the coronavirus lockdown can apply for free train travel to refuge accommodation. Tickets can be accessed through the member services of Women's Aid Federation of England, Welsh Women's Aid, Scottish Women's Aid and Imkaan.

Government guidance on how to get help:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>

Read the Home Secretary's statement: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-outlines-support-for-domestic-abuse-victims>

Announcement on train tickets: <https://media.raildeliverygroup.com/news/train-companies-to-offer-free-travel-to-those-fleeing-domestic-abuse-during-coronavirus-lockdown>

Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Service Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) is a county-wide service designed to reduce the level of domestic abuse and improve the safety of victims and their families. There is an online referral form on their website.

<https://www.gdass.org.uk/>

Gloucestershire Community Help hub

Gloucestershire's councils and partners have created a community help hub to connect local people who need help, with others who can provide the support they need.

As further measures are put in place to delay the spread of Covid-19, local people have already started to pull together to arrange help in their area for those who need it, but not everyone has existing connections.

In response, the council's across the county have come together with the police and health partners to create the hub to connect local people who need help, with individuals, groups and businesses who can provide the support they need.

The hub includes four forms:

→ **'I can offer help'** – is for

those who are able to support neighbours with tasks such as picking up prescriptions, shopping, dog walking and more



→ **'I need help'** – can be used by individuals to ask for support

→ **'My neighbour needs help'** – may be used by people to request help on behalf of a neighbour, relative or friend who cannot access the internet themselves

→ **'My business can help'** – will allow local businesses who may have skills and resources others could benefit from, to offer their help

The information collected will be shared with the relevant local council who will connect people who can help each other, or if appropriate refer individuals to an existing service.

Residents are encouraged to share details of the community help hub on social media using the hashtag #GlosCommunity

Mark Hawthorne, leader of Gloucestershire County Council, said:

"At times like these our communities really come together to help others and it's clear that there are many people who are keen to offer help where they can. Working together with our partners, we want to ensure that everyone is able to access the support they need and I'm confident that the community help hub will make this possible."

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/helphub>



Youth Activities

Young Gloucestershire and Infobuzz

Stay up-to-date about changes to our services on the website. Contact us if you know of a vulnerable family or young person who could benefit from a Coronavirus isolation support pack full of essentials.

www.youngglos.org.uk/coronavirus

Tel: **01452 501008**

→ **Link chat** – our link drop in converted to chat, providing young people 16-25 a key worker who will phone them at regular agreed intervals to provide support, guidance, activities, practical and mental health support during this time. The contact can be through phone or online services



→ **Online counselling** for 18-25 young people who are in care or leaving care. This is an opportunity for young people to have a counsellor and youth worker to work with to address their mental health challenges

→ **Online counselling** for young people 16-25 who are struggling with mental health

→ **Detached youth work** – educating young people about why they shouldn't be on the street, understanding that there is support if the need it and dispersing young people to stop hanging out working in partnership with the police

→ **Care packages** – delivery of essentials to young people and families who are social distancing or in isolation and need help and support

→ **Mindfulness** – online mindfulness sessions through zoom

→ **Active Links** – online physical activity programmes for 16-25 instructor led twice a week



For more info or help call **01452 501008** or email getinvolved@youngglos.org.uk

For parents

Childnet have produced useful guidance for keeping Children Safe on line

We know that parents and carers are having to manage their child's use of technology and help them learn remotely. This can feel overwhelming but we are here to help!

Here are lots of useful resources and tools that you as a parent or carer can use to help ensure your child is safe and happy online.

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19>

Children's Commissioner has produced a guide to corona virus for Children

There have been big changes in our lives because of coronavirus, so we've created a children's guide to coronavirus to help explain the situation. The guide aims to answer children's questions about coronavirus, tell children how to stay safe and protect other people and how to help them make the best of their time at home. <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/childrens-guide-to-coronavirus/>

