



Annual Report Summary 2022-2023

PATA is the largest voluntary sector provider of support to early years childcare and education in Gloucestershire.

PATA, originally Playgroup and Toddler Association, started many years ago when community playgroups first began to form. We evolved along with the sector, working collaboratively with many other early years and childcare charities.

Today, PATA (UK) remains one of only two of these original organisations and is now a charitable company run by, and for its members. The Board of Trustees is drawn from people with a variety of skills and knowledge from all parts of Gloucestershire.



Over the years baby and toddler groups were welcomed into PATA's membership and later the out of school sector as well as a number of private groups, children's centres and schools. With 169 current members, we are by far the largest voluntary sector organisation supporting early years and childcare settings in and around the county.

PATA now provides training, support and information to this range of settings, both within and outside of our membership, enabling them to offer high quality childcare, education and play opportunities.



Our Aims

To enhance the development, care and education of children primarily under statutory school age and also of children and young people of school age by encouraging parents to understand and provide for the needs of their children through community groups;

To encourage the formation of groups offering appropriate play, education and care facilities, together with the opportunity for parents to take responsibility for and to become involved in the activities of these groups, ensuring that such groups offer opportunities for all children and young people whatever their race, culture, religion, means or ability and offering continuing support, encouragement and help to these groups;

To encourage the study of the needs of such children and their families and promote public interest in the recognition of these needs.

PATA's Vision

Our main objectives for 2022-23 were:

- **To offer a range of accessible, responsive, information advice and guidance (IAG) services** to member settings, their staff, and volunteers by offering online resources and newsletters.
- **To deliver specialist support services and projects** that respond to the needs of settings working with children and young people which include specific services to PATA members and a payroll service.
- **To develop the PATA Managed Groups' (PMG) infrastructure, administration, and team skillset** to ensure their sustainability and provide the foundation for potential future acquisitions. PMGs are PATA's own Early Years settings/Preschools.
- **To provide high quality training and development opportunities** for those working or intending to work in the Children and Young People's sector, by running non accredited short courses and workshops.
- **To participate in partnerships and initiatives** that focus on enhancing support for early years providers and/or giving them a voice on issues and shared concerns. We will continue to work in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and other relevant Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations and take part in and encourage others to respond to research and consultations.
- **To undertake planned programmes of work that focus on PATA's own development and continuous improvement.** We will seek to develop our quality improvement programme and monitoring and evaluation framework.



The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the organisation should undertake.



Supporting the Development of Early Years and Childcare Settings

Support for Settings remains at the core of what PATA is and does. Support can be accessed by our members, via a phone call, an email, or a message on Facebook.

Our members know that they can trust our advice and that if we don't know straight away we'll find someone who does.



Our Support for Settings team is available by phone or email daily, with most enquiries being dealt with either immediately or in 24 hours.

25% related to Human Resources

23% Governance and Financial Concerns

17% Legislation

35% Finance & Other Concerns

We offered immediate support or signposting in all of these areas.

Thank you so much - it was really useful to talk it through. Don't know what I would do without PATA!!

169 members received:

- info & guidance
- job advertising
- training subsidies
- a groups in need specialist support scheme &
- access to payroll service

PATA created:

14 briefings,

5 blogs &

351 Facebook posts to ensure settings were kept informed and up to date, but not overwhelmed.

Our Fees & Wages Survey Report provided up to date information to allow settings to benchmark their fees, wages and other costs against similar local settings.

It's extremely useful for settings when considering wage or fee rises and as a sense check for their costs such as rent and utilities. Rolling in anonymised data from our Payroll team means that the wages information is based on a huge sample of Gloucestershire Early Years employees.

We use our resources where we know they will make most impact.

This year, we rebranded the Groups in Need Fund to our new Group Support and Development Fund (GSDF). The rebrand came as a result of feedback from settings who felt the 'in need' wording discouraged them from applying.

We look for projects that will strengthen and challenge groups.



With funding from the GSDF, we were able to reconnect with our members, sharing ideas and offering face to face support visits from a qualified and experienced Early Years Professional. Focusing on those

settings who were due an OFSTED inspection we were able to help at least 6 achieve a Good or Outstanding outcome.



We seek out ways to make groups more robust and sustainable for the future.

We are confident that our updated (2019) Group Constitution, is sufficient to meet the needs of most groups, without the need for costly structural changes.

In the last year our Vacancies Service has advertised **163** jobs for **67** settings

We had an average of **18,000** page views on the PATA website per quarter.

Over **13,000** views on the job page alone!



Over the summer we again posted daily activities which settings could share with families to keep children occupied. **Organic reach of over 20,000!**



Training & Development

PATA delivered training to individuals and Early Years Settings / Schools throughout the UK and also to many British International Schools who wanted to access high quality relevant training.

Most of our courses continued to be delivered via **zoom** which has allowed us to both deliver training globally but also to use trainers from around the UK without the necessity for factoring in high travel and accommodation costs. This has enabled us to keep our training course prices as competitive as possible.



53 scheduled training courses run

1009 delegates attending

(38% decrease in delegate numbers on last year)

179 places on CPD training courses taken by PMG staff

and an additional
**11 bespoke courses with
197 delegates attending**

Average feedback score of
8.87 out of 10 across all courses

Online network meetings now offered free to managers & senior staff from PATA member settings.

Coffee Evening Clinics, HR Clinics and Parent Support Sessions also offered.

Fantastic opportunities to 'network' and talk through issues with peers and experienced PATA staff.



Very, very interesting, - One of the best delivered courses I've been on in a while!

Great variety and very informative training courses

Feedback from survey steers training offer

Responses highlighted that reduced delegate numbers were sadly a direct result of economic factors affecting the sector.

'We designed PATA Pocket-Sized'

Shorter and more affordable bitesize courses due to launch next year.



Continued partnership with 2nd Chance First Aid for Paediatric First Aid training and Facts4Life for health and wellbeing education.



Partnership continues with NoodleNow, enabling us to offer discounted access to all of our members and our own staff.



NOODLE NOW!™
use your noodle, train your mind

We continue to look to secure funding for further learning opportunities aiming to help learners to take the next step into volunteering or work in the Early Years & Playwork sector.

PATA Managed Groups (PMGs)

Low child numbers due to the change in working culture post-Covid, combined with inadequate funding, the cost of living crisis and increased staffing costs led to huge pressure on our PMG budgets.

Despite expecting to see a return to pre-Covid levels of attendance at our settings, we continued to see disruptions from Covid-related staff illness. Head Office staff including the Early Years Lead and PMG Support Officer were required to spend a lot of time in settings to help keep them open by working within ratios meaning their roles were necessarily deprioritised.



Ongoing challenge with large numbers of children presenting with additional needs, some of which is attributable to their very early formative years being spent during the Pandemic.

Negative effects on children's speech, language, personal independence, social & emotional skills thus impacting their whole early years development resulted in more children requiring lower ratio support and in some cases 1:1 support which was not funded for the vast majority of children.

PATA staff continue to provide the majority of the administrative support for the settings, working with the managers to standardise policies, procedures, documents and forms making the provision sustainable for the future. This work continues to enable the PATA office team to provide key support to all groups in our membership through working directly with staff to identify and share best practice across the county and to lead by example. All PMG policies were reviewed over the summer period with updates made as required.

OFSTED Inspections

at Winchcombe & Tiny Tots

We were delighted to finish the academic year receiving strong Good outcomes for both settings.



All PMGs are Ofsted Good Providers.

Due to a combination of low child numbers and a difficulty in recruiting an Early Years Manager we had to take the difficult decision to close PATA @ Siddington &



Kemble at the end of the Summer Term. It had been part of the PATA family for 5 years, having joined us as Kemble Playgroup when the committee were all leaving. It was a rocky road right from the start, as Kemble School, where the setting was originally based, decided they needed their premises back. We found new premises at Siddington Village Hall and established the new setting.

PATA @ Siddington and Kemble continued to offer provision in the area for the benefit of local children and families for a further 5 years,

We can't thank you enough for your hard work, patience and dedication to keeping the children happy and safe!

We continue to develop each of the PATA Managed Group's individual websites.

These are linked to the main PATA website and their open and closed Facebook pages.



Strategic decisions are made in conjunction with PATA Trustees for the purpose of ensuring community playgroups remain viable and that foundations are put in place to ensure we are able to save other settings at risk if necessary.

Staffing

We value our staff teams highly and whilst having limited funds as a charity, we recognise the importance of providing staff benefits in order to improve their personal circumstances, improve professional practice and help with staff retention.

The staff teams enjoy many benefits including:

- Enhanced holiday for long service
- Christmas shopping afternoon
- Mid-year & Christmas party payments

We continued our staff recognition programme with our Outstanding Achievement award, extending it to include annual awards in key categories to recognise the hard work and dedication of members of our PATA team.



As a further benefit PATA staff are also able to readily access PATA training courses and all have an online account with NoodleNow and Flick for self-directed learning.



Our Continuing Professional Development Training Bursary Fund continues to support training and development needs for all staff.

Created to support staff training and development over and above the individual training budget, this year the bursary fund gave opportunities for PMG staff to attend:

- Wonder of Woodwork
- Developing Number Sense
- Is it Me? Impact on Child Behaviours

...it also allowed PMG Managers to attend:

- Outstanding Leadership in Early Years

PMG staff attendees accounted for 179 places on PATA training courses, contributing to their personal development and enhanced practice/ Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

This is in addition to the mandatory training (First Aid, Safeguarding etc.) & other online self-directed short courses.

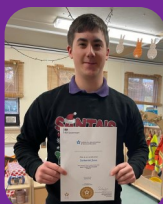
We support all staff with CPD training through our own training programme & by supporting them to access other relevant training.

This year at PMG settings...

- Two staff members attained Level 2 qualifications
- One member attained Level 3 Early Years Educator, another L3 SENDCo
- Two further staff are enrolled on L3 Early Years Educator programmes (one as an apprentice) and another on L3 Forest School Training which they will complete in the coming year.

Members of staff at Head Office...

- One member completed Level 2 Certificate in Information Advice & Guidance and also Level 2 in Digital Marketing
- Two staff members successfully completed their Payroll Diplomas



Two members of Head Office Staff have now successfully completed **Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Advocacy in the Workplace** in order to further support our teams.



We continue to offer a free helpline to staff members and their families and continue to seek ways to further support our team.



A free 24/7 counselling helpline is available to all PATA employees (& their family members living with them) who need help and advice.

PATA's qualified counsellors are able to provide telephone support on any matter that is causing upset or anxiety - from personal problems to bereavement.

0333 000 2082

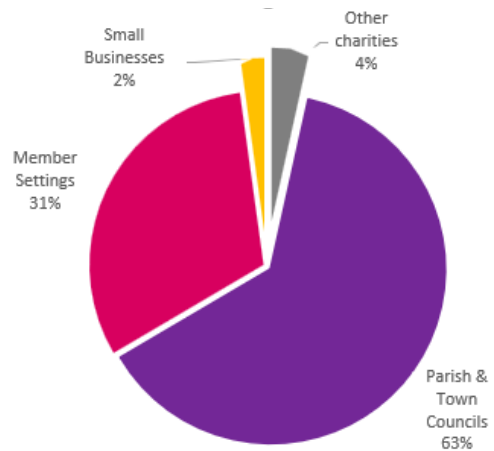


PATA Payroll Service

 **229 clients**
(net increase of 14 clients)

We now process on average 848 employees per month, a 4% increase on last year.

Over 40% now benefit from a move to Sage Cloud allowing employees to independently access their payslips and P60s.



As well as our member clients receiving the PATA Support for Settings briefings, we produce supplementary payroll related briefings for all our clients.

For many member settings where a sole administrator, treasurer or manager oversees the payroll side of their business, the support of the PATA Payroll team is vital.

A great service at a very reasonable cost.
Very efficient and helpful staff.

A thorough and good
all round service.

Gives confidence and
peace of mind when
dealing with payroll
matters.

Keep doing the amazing job you do.
Thank you for everything.
You have always been there to help when
things happen like covid, the changes to
holiday pay etc. you never make me feel
like I am asking 'stupid questions'.

Payroll services are excellent,
all correspondence has been fab and any
questions or queries answered.
A great service



Forging links and providing a voice for PATA members

PATA has worked with organisations and external partners to achieve the best for all our members.



NUS Green Impact

GOLD AWARD

Delivered by Students Organising for Sustainability - UK

We continued to employ a GEM Navigator/Developer to support participants to move into work, education or training until the programme ended in December 2022.

A Gold Award in the Green Impact Scheme was awarded to us for our efforts in encouraging environmentally friendly behaviours amongst our staff and settings.

We use our knowledge and influence at County level to ensure the voice of the sector is heard and help member groups to feel less alone and more supported.

PATA has regular contact with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), as well as other relevant VCS organisations across the county to provide information exchange on behalf of our members.

This was particularly relevant this year when championing the need for prompt payment to all Early Years settings in the county of the underspend in the early years budget, together with pushing for a full increase on the headline rate for NEF funding, to be confirmed as quickly as possible to enable settings to budget for future terms.



We reach out to local MPs to discuss the difficulties faced in the Early Years Sector and will continue to campaign with them for the good of our Members.

- Following a meeting with us, Siobhan Baillie (MP for Stroud) went on to reference PATA in her speech to a Select Committee.
- In the summer term we met with the local MP for Gloucester (Richard Graham) taking the opportunity to explain the budgeting issues settings have when in July there was still no confirmation of funding rates for September.



We continued to express concerns over the debate about the relaxation of ratios which may be seen as a cost saving measure but increases pressure on staff, reduces the quality of education and care that can be given to the children and creates a false expectation from parents that fees will be reduced.

Members of **Best Start in Life Group** sharing the reality of life in Early Years settings

We were invited to attend both Early Years Conferences organised by GCC where we had a stand and advertised PATA's support and services available.

We continued to work closely with **Facts4Life**, promoting delivery of their health and wellbeing courses specifically for Early Years through our PMGs and member settings.



We explored delivering adult numeracy programmes with Multiply, but whilst funding was granted, the take up was low and it was difficult to engage the cohort it was aimed for. We'd consider re-offering a similar programme should the need arise in the future.

PATA involves volunteers in administration, building maintenance, HR, marketing and parent fundraising to support the PATA Managed Groups.

We have been able to offer some placements for students registered on Early Years qualifications & look forward to welcoming more.

Initial talks held with **Morton Michel** about ongoing sponsorship for PATA and the possibility of joining their Passive Introducer scheme to provide discounts for our members.



Financial Headlines

£865,245 income

79.3%	PMG funding and fees
8.9%	Payroll
7.4%	Training Income
2.8%	Support for Settings
1.2%	GEM Project
0.4%	Other income

£963,901 expenditure

77.8%	Staff Costs
10.4%	Support Costs
7.5%	Project Costs
3%	Governance and Depreciation
1.3%	Designated & Restricted Fund & Grant Activity

In the financial period 2022-23 PATA had a deficit of £98,656. (Financial year 2021-22: surplus of £74,629). At the end of the year the total fund was £356,163. Of this £213,301 was held as general unrestricted funds, £104,658 held as designated funds, and £38,204 held as restricted funds.



PATA continues to source and apply for funding for specialist projects that support the development of early years and childcare settings.

Local PMG fundraising reached a total of £6,355 for own settings, including Sponsored Events, Raffles, Commission from Photo Shoots.

We were really proud to be partner of the Gloucestershire Going the Extra Mile (GEM) project which we continued to receive funding for until the programme ended in December 2023.

We were grateful to Gloucestershire County Council Early Years Team for providing a sufficiency grant to enable us to trial extended opening hours from 8am to 4pm above our core hours of 9am to 3pm at PATA @ Penguins.

Attracting new children and families allowing flexible working without the need for full daycare. We hope to extend this to other settings next year.

PATA @ Winchcombe Early Years, with the help of a parent, were successfully granted £5,003 from HSBC Bank to purchase indoor, outdoor & forest school learning resources.

This has been well received by all and our thanks go to the parent and HSBC for making this possible.



PATA Main Income Sources for 2022-23:

- PATA Managed Groups - Nursery Education Funding (NEF) and Parent Fees
- PATA Payroll Service
- Membership Fees
- Individual & bespoke training course fees

Other funding sources for 2022-23:

- GEM Project
- Morton Michel Donation
- HSBC Community Grant
- GCC Early Years Sufficiency Grant

Grants and contracts awarded as above have enabled PATA to succeed this year in its key objectives. PATA has employed staff, purchased consumables, occupied an office base and PATA Managed Group setting buildings to carry out its aims and objectives.

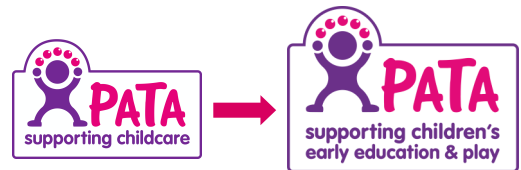
What next...?

New logo incoming!

As a sector we feel that the word 'childcare' is unhelpful as it conjures images of babysitting and devalues the professional work that is involved in caring for and educating children.

PATA represents both Early Years settings and Out of School providers (e.g. stand-alone breakfast/after school and holiday clubs).

We hope that you will agree that the new version better captures the spirit of PATA and all of our members.



Enhancing our membership

We continue to look for ways to enhance our membership offer.

Strategic Review

A review will be held between Trustees and Senior staff in the Autumn Term

Updating our Support Tools

This year we have started work on updating the original PATA Business Pack, this work is ongoing and we hope it will be available shortly for settings to purchase.

A strong voice for the sector

In an increasingly turbulent time for the sector, we will continue to build relationships (where possible) and to agitate (where necessary) to get the best for our members both on a local and national level.

Preferred Suppliers

As our members face ever increasing costs, we'll be inviting our suppliers to take part in our Preferred Supplier Listings. We hope to help signpost our members to known suppliers whilst negotiating exclusive discounts for them at the same time.

Developing Social Media Strategy

We recognise the ever increasing importance of social media as a means of communication and marketing. We hope to undertake staff training, provide in house guidance and offer support to our members with this.

Supporting our Staff

Signing up to the MITEY (Men In The Early Years) Charter

Recruiting, encouraging and supporting men in the Early Years including our current male staff.

Healthy Workplaces accreditation

Recognising the need to support our staff team to establish and maintain healthy lifestyles. This accreditation will give staff confidence that PATA take a broad approach to health and wellbeing.





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