

Please ensure **EVERYONE** in your setting has a chance to see this magazine: staff, committee members, and ALL parents and carers!



A word from our CEO

Recruitment and retention in the early years sector is becoming increasingly challenging and is not an isolated problem. Whether you are a small rural setting, a community charity run group or a large privately owned nursery, it is a sector wide and national problem where more practitioners are leaving than entering the profession. Recruitment, particularly of high level practitioners, is therefore problematic and retention of staff is becoming more and more vital due to their value.

An independent research project (conducted by NatCen) on early years recruitment is currently carrying out interviews with all levels of early years practitioners to explore recruitment and retention issues. This is part of a larger study: Understanding the early years workforce, funded by the Nuffield Foundation. The purpose of the study is to find out about hiring, retaining and training staff, views of the profession overall including working conditions, long term outlooks for practitioners and recommendations as to how the sector could be better supported. Ultimately, the research will provide recommendations on how to create better working conditions, stronger child outcomes and more effective support for the whole sector.

Unfortunately views are not being collected from Gloucestershire (they have chosen 7 local authorities) but here at PATA we welcome anything that contributes to better outcomes for our sector and hope that this will prove to be valuable in enabling the early years sector to begin to overcome the challenges of recruitment and retention. As ever we will keep you posted on the study's findings.

This PATA Chatter issue therefore has a recruitment and retention theme and we have a number of articles that you may find useful when considering your recruitment process and how to keep existing and new staff feeling motivated, engaged and valued. When considering recruitment we must not forget about the recruitment of committee members for charity run groups (see article over the page). Whilst we recognise the difficulty groups face by these issues we continue to support our members with resources, information, advice and guidance and we are planning on running a course in the Autumn looking at recruitment issues. So if you are struggling with anything relating to recruitment and retention please do not hesitate to contact our team for support. Here at PATA we have a great and growing team with a wealth of knowledge so you never know how we may be able to help!

What's inside ...

- * **Recruiting Committee Members** page 2
- * **Ask PATA: Recruitment Special** page 4
- * **Data Breach: Our Experience** page 6
- * **Feature: Planning in the Moment & Helicopter Stories** page 8
- * **Showcase Your Strengths** page 18
- * **Going the Extra Mile: The GEM Project 2 Years On** page 20
- * **Training Update** page 21
- * **Finance Update: Getting it Right for New Starters** page 22



Recruiting Committee Members

We know that recruiting committee members can be a significant challenge for settings - especially at this time of year when groups are having, or are due to have, their Annual General Meetings. Certainly we experience a growing number of calls at this time of year as conscientious Chairs or concerned staff begin to think about succession for their group. Here we give a couple of constitutional changes that can be easily made to help recruit members.

Your Group Constitution

Many, if not most, of our member settings hold the PATA 2006 constitution and we are currently seeking permission from the Charity Commission to update the 2006 version in order to ensure it remains fit for purpose. We feel the constitution is now outdated and therefore needs to be amended to reflect things such as: on-line banking, the need for paid staff members to be on the committee due to changes in Ofsted regulations around the nominated individual, and the difficulty for groups to find committee members with the time and skill set to form a quorate board of trustees.

Once we have received a response from the commission we will let members know. In advance of this here are two changes that may help and can be made quickly and easily to your constitution.

Clause 6.3 states that:

At least 60% of the Committee Members, including co-opted members, shall at the time of election or co-option, be parents or guardians of children in groups run by the Group.

This can be changed to allow 40% to be parents. This would mean a committee with the minimum of 5 members could be comprised of 3 people from the wider community and 2 parents. Therefore a bigger proportion of people on the committee can be sourced from outside the group. This may include school staff or other community figures who may be interested in supporting your group.

Clause 6.9 states that:

Paid employees are employed by the Committee and therefore cannot be Committee Members or vote at Committee meetings. They, or their representative, can be invited to attend any or all meetings in an advisory capacity and should normally be so invited, but need not attend the whole of the meeting. Paid employees, if members of the Group in accordance with clause 4(a), shall be entitled to attend and vote at all General Meetings of the Group.

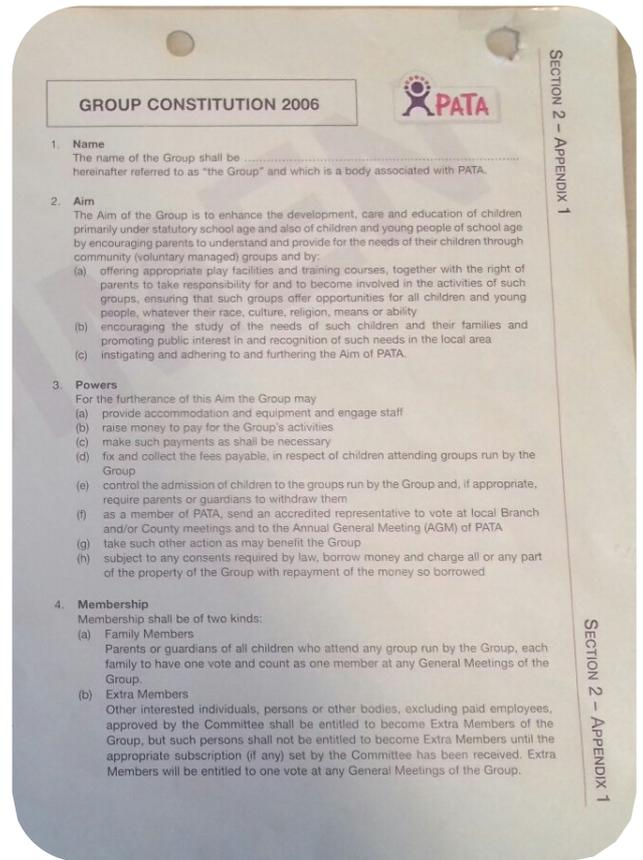
This clause can be changed to allow up to 2 paid staff members onto the committee. This amendment originally came about when Ofsted guidance was changed in January 2016 and meant the Nominated Individual (NI) had to be part of the governing body – which under the current constitution precludes paid staff. Many groups had historically named the Playleader NI and therefore changing this clause allowed that to continue.

Thank you so much to everyone at PATA, I have contacted you for help on a number of occasions and you are fantastic! Thank you.
A Chair who recently struggled to recruit committee members.

Some groups who have struggled to form a functioning committee have also used this clause change to enable them to secure one (whilst also meaning the group has a consistent person on the committee year on year). Note this change of clause does not allow staff members to be officers, nor to vote in matters pertaining to their own employment.

Allowing paid staff members onto the committee does need to be carefully considered for all involved as staff need to be aware of their liabilities if they do join the committee.

Ultimately, whilst we appreciate how hard it is to find people with the time, interest and skill set to volunteer, it is still fairly rare for groups to close due to not having a functioning committee. Nine times out of ten, someone **will** step up rather than see the group close. We know this causes worry so please don't feel alone in this issue, sometimes just talking it through with us at PATA, who experience this issue regularly, can help ease your mind or help you through a difficult period.



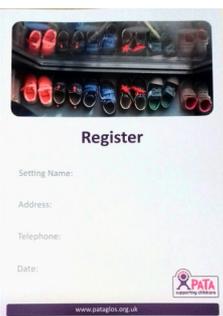
Accident Books

PATA's Accident Book and the PATA Register are very popular, with a reduced cost for PATA members. The Accident Book is an A4 sized book with a body map to make recording injuries easier.

Registers

Our new look Register is now available. It's flexible enough that you can use it in whatever way works best for your group. We canvassed opinions on it and no two groups were using it in the same way!

Either phone the office on 01452 541244 or order online under publications.



Accident Book PATA Members:
 £12.00 including packaging & postage, £9 collection from PATA

Registers PATA Members:
 £7.50 including packaging & postage, £5.50 collection from PATA



Ask PATA: Recruitment Special

Recruitment is rarely a simple process. Here we address some of the more common questions that our team get asked.

Do I have to advertise vacancies both externally and internally?

Vacancies can be advertised just to current employees if it is felt that there is the appropriate candidate on the payroll. Interviews still need to be carried out, to be able to evidence that the most appropriate candidate was successful. If you are uncertain whether you have the right person already within your employ, we would recommend advertising the role externally at the same time as internally – this will save time in the long run and will ensure that you choose from the strongest pool of candidates.

I know who I want to be promoted in my team. Do I still need to advertise the role?

This will depend on the quality of your performance management documentation. If you have thorough notes that detail an employee's progression /training/ performance and future expectations that they are ready for the next role, then you would be able to argue that you have a clear succession plan in your team and are therefore permitted to promote an employee when an appropriate vacancy arises.

If only one internal candidate applies for the job, do I still need to interview them?

Yes. It is important to interview candidates irrespective of the quantity of applicants. This is the ideal time to evidence that they are ready for the role, any support that they might require and for the interviewer to set clear expectations of what success will look like in this new position. However, the interview process should be appropriate – we would not make an internal candidate jump through multiple stages of a recruitment process.



Should new employees be recruited with a probation period?

Yes. This is an excellent opportunity to support, coach and closely monitor new employees. Ensure that reviews are regularly undertaken and documented. This will accelerate the employee's development into the new role/your team and you will be able to shape them into a positive member of your staff. A probation period also provides you with the opportunity to terminate the employment if the employee does not perform well against their job description and shared expectations.

ACAS have some useful information regarding the hiring of new staff: <https://beta.acas.org.uk/hiring-someone>

What questions should I ask in the interview?

Questions should be designed to ensure a fair and consistent process is always followed and:

- Be competency based – that is asking for examples of skills/behaviours
- NOT be discriminatory in any way
- Be linked to the job description and focus on necessary skills and behaviours sought
- Should be scored and each candidate should be ranked in order of these scores and
- Be asked to every candidate.

And finally – the questions and answers must be clearly documented



Our new employee is not as enthusiastic as they were in the interview – what can I do to improve my selection process?

The majority of candidates will attempt to portray their best possible characteristics/levels of enthusiasm in an interview – after all, they are often competing for a job. However, it would be unreasonable to expect that anyone could maintain these characteristics for long. This is where your recruitment process should be designed to observe a candidate in a more relaxed situation – for example ask candidates to deliver an activity in the setting, or have a Q & A panel with their potential colleagues where existing staff and a candidate can ask each other questions in a more conversational manner and without the decision-maker in the room – a more accurate impression of a candidate will occur when they are relaxed.



Getting your recruitment process right is the key to building your team. It's your opportunity to gain the skills, experience and behaviours that will help you achieve or maintain your Outstanding rating.

These questions touch on key concerns regarding the process; however, many factors affect the way we recruit. PATA will deliver a short course workshop in the Autumn to address these factors and explore competency-based interview techniques, alternative selection criteria, evidencing your decisions through scoring and all associated documentation.

Data Breach: Our Experience

Last year we spent a lot of time preparing resources for our member groups to support them with the introduction of GDPR which tightened up regulation around data protection. Hopefully you will have used some of these in your own settings and found them useful.

As part of our own preparation last year we also re-wrote our data protection policy and put in place measures should a data breach occur – obviously hoping it wouldn't, and implementing things to ensure it didn't. However, in April we had a situation where we discovered (thankfully quite quickly) that one of our email accounts had been hacked and fake invoices were being sent to work contacts of the staff member involved. Fortunately she also spotted quickly that a 'forward' had been put on her account so that responses to the invoice emails were being automatically re-routed to a completely unrelated email address. In conjunction with our IT provider we quickly shut down any access that the hacker might have had (removing the forward and changing all relevant passwords). We also contacted those that we could see had been involved and asked them to ignore the 'fake' emails.



Helen Ducker
Operations
Manager at PATA

We started to use our Data Breach reporting form (which is available in the members' area) which helped us to deal with the issues methodically and without missing anything. In the heat of the moment it's easy to forget a small step which might later prove important. This also helped us to record, and therefore remember, the actions we'd taken – it's easy to think at the time that you will remember something but then struggle to recall the detail.



We had to make a decision as to whether we reported the breach to the ICO. I rang their helpline to get advice and whilst they wouldn't give me a decisive answer (which would have been nice!) it did help me to think through whether it was severe enough to report. We concluded that it was and duly followed the steps on the ICO website (<https://ico.org.uk/>). The

ICO give a timeframe for replying and if you haven't heard within that time, they are happy with the report submitted and no further action is necessary. In this case we didn't hear back from them so are content that we dealt with the breach sufficiently. We don't believe that any personal data was accessed beyond email addresses and haven't heard from any of the recipients that they paid one of the fake invoices so thankfully no financial loss occurred.

Because hacking like this falls under cyber crime we also reported the incident to Action Fraud (<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>). A few weeks later the office was amused when I received a serious sounding call from Gloucester Constabulary! In fact I had a good talk with their Cyber Crime department and although we concluded that there was no further action to be taken in this case it was good to know that the crime had been recorded and there was a team there to support if necessary. The police officer that I spoke to did emphasise that it is important to report incidents such as this to help them to build a full picture of what is happening with Cyber Crime.



So, whilst I'd prefer that we hadn't had a data breach, as someone who was involved in preparing the support materials it was good to know that they did their job! We did a short review afterwards and it made me re-circulate the data protection policy which includes things like the Data Breach Protocol. Data protection is everyone's job but people can only do that job if they know what's expected of them. GDPR wasn't a one off event last year but should really be on your staff meeting agenda each time, and if you're the Data Protection Lead keep talking about it! Make sure your staff know that if any incident occurs they should always think of the data protection aspect. In our case it could have been dismissed as a small IT incident but it was much broader than that.

If you have a data related question there are lots of resources in the member's area of the website and we're only a phone call away.

A PATA Member's experience

At around the same time we also heard from a member group who had been scammed by someone emailing the treasurer, seemingly from a staff member's email account, asking them to change their bank details. The treasurer, with no reason to question this, did as requested and only realised when the staff member asked why they hadn't had their salary payment that she had been scammed. Thankfully the group had reserves and insurance, but it highlights the ease with which phishing and fake email scams happen.

In order to prevent this type of incident we use a form for employees to complete if their personal details change. We have recently added this to the Data Protection/GDPR resources section in the Member's area of our website so you may want to download it and implement a similar policy. It's also worth being extra wary of email requests such as this and always back them up with a phone call or a face-to-face conversation before acting on them. Finally, if you have an incident such as this we are happy to advise and support so please call us.



Advertise your jobs with PATA!

As a PATA Member you can advertise your jobs with us free of charge. Adverts go on our own website as well as appearing on GlosJobs and in a round-up on our Facebook page each Friday. Please send all job adverts to vacancies@pataglos.org.uk and we will put it on our website as soon as possible.

Feature: Planning in the Moment and Helicopter Stories

Why we're shouting so loudly about them

Every now and again a training course comes along that leaves you feeling energised, motivated and inspired. You totally buy in. This academic year we have seen two such courses come along in a short space of time (a bit like buses!) and felt we had to celebrate what they bring to our sector.

The two approaches complement one another and both make bold claims about improved outcomes – but these courses deliver.

This isn't just us at PATA doing a sales pitch, all of us feel strongly that these approaches bring value to early years and ultimately deliver on their aims. And it's not just us - the numbers speak for themselves:

- Over 270 practitioners have attended these courses since October 2018
- From 60 settings - schools, nurseries, playgroups
- From as far as Essex, Birmingham, Newbury, and Herefordshire

When we asked groups to contribute their views and experiences we were inundated with offers from practitioners whose time is scarce but who wanted to also shout about their positive experiences. So grab a cuppa, and settle in to read about these two fantastic approaches that we at PATA are so happy to endorse.

Planning in the Moment: So What?

You've written up a brilliant observation with a lovely photo. **So what?** Where does this go next and when? Will it still be relatable for your pre-schooler? How about completing the circle of teachable moments there and then? That's the premise of the Planning in the Moment approach. To banish those 'so what?' moments.

PATA has been delivering Anna Ephgrave In the Moment Planning training (ITMP) and settings had an opportunity to attend a follow up session to share their experiences. What had the groups noticed since attending the training and making changes?

- Some settings had introduced rolling snack to allow for uninterrupted free flow play and providing the children with more time to develop their interests. In doing this the children spent less wasted time seated waiting for others; the practitioner supporting the children during rolling snack noticed they had more quality interactions with children; staff also noticed a 'can do' attitude developing with their children.
- Some had adapted their indoor and outdoor spaces by introducing more natural materials; removing some of the excess toys; making resources and storage more accessible. It was felt there were more new opportunities for child initiated play using open ended materials. Practitioners discussed how their time was spent less on management of resources and tidying up and more with the children.
- With the above changes with the environment and routine in place all groups discussed how they had seen an improvement in their children's behaviour and a quieter atmosphere.

Case Study: Paganel Primary School Charlotte Hutt Reception Teacher

We started the approach in September after reading Anna’s book (Nursery, Reception and In the Moment Planning). After attending the PATA course in April, it confirmed/developed our practice and the follow up session helped us think long term about what we want to develop next and what we need to continue to work on. It was valuable hearing feedback from like-minded settings who all share a belief in how young children learn.



How have you found the experiences of using Planning in the Moment with your own children?

Brilliant! We have converted experienced practitioners (Teacher and TAs) into believing in this approach – they can see the progress and engagement happening right in front of their eyes. You can’t deny how powerful it is. We have also got the SLT on board, they have observed us in practise and were astounded by the progress the children make.

Benefits of the approach for:

- **Children and their outcomes?** Our GLD (Good Level of Development) figures are in the 70’s, considering that our school is in an area of deprivation and we historically get 50-60. The children have made rapid progress initially in the prime areas and CoEL, but once this is established and secure the reading, writing and maths quickly follow. Staff were worried about behaviour and letting the children have ‘free reign’, especially as we have 45 Reception and 26 Nursery children in one place. However, behaviour is not an issue because, for the majority of the time (except for those with other needs), they are engaged and focused. They have no need to not behave – they want to learn, not waste their own time! Boundaries are set immediately and are consistent and this gives the children security.
- **Staff and their own Continued Professional Development?** It has given practitioners the skills and knowledge specifically about child development and how children learn. It has empowered our staff to follow the children’s needs and not worry about rushing them through levels.

Would you recommend the training/approach to other groups? Yes – you cannot deny the impact that it has. It can be daunting for practitioners to ‘let go’ and allow the children to lead their learning but once you do, it’s a wonderful place to work.

What teachable moments are taking place in your setting?

When settings provide enabling environments with child initiated play, opportunities will arise when a child shows an interest in an activity which can be built upon. These teachable moments are unplanned events during the day that practitioners can use as a learning opportunity for their children. The ways in which adults help young children learn are called teaching. Use these Ofsted (September 2015) words in your observations and assessment to demonstrate what teaching took place:

Modelling language	Showing	Explaining	Demonstrating
Exploring ideas	Encouraging	Questioning	Recalling
Facilitating	Setting challenges	Providing a narrative for what they are doing	

The Leuven Scale in practice

Our vision for every setting is that the children are happy and engaged. This engagement can be measured by using the Leuven scales of well-being (happiness) and involvement (focus). The best levels of involvement are seen when children initiate the play and these high levels allow children to experience deep learning. A child with low levels is far more likely to exhibit extreme behaviour and less likely to engage with activities. These scales can be used:

- * for gathering information about children you have concerns over.
- * as a settling in assessment, the scales are an objective measure of children’s well-being and involvement when they start your setting.
- * for staff appraisals and supervisions.
- * to encourage practitioners to reflect and rearrange the environment to best suit the children’s interests and learning.
- * to identify what quality interactions look like.

Staff have approximately 1000 interactions per day. If each interaction involves ‘teaching’ leading to a tiny step of progress, then progress over time will be outstanding. Staff need to understand and reflect on the impact that they have. Ask yourself “What would have happened if I hadn’t been here?”
Anna Ephgrave May 2019



Jackie Swankie Playleader at Calton Playgroup

We began our journey and never looked back. In The Moment Planning has been beneficial to the setting as it has meant less paperwork, is far more child led, follows children’s interests and teaching in the moment rather than teaching next steps after the event. The levels of children’s involvement and their behaviour have greatly improved since we started using the concept as the children are much more focused in their play.

It was also beneficial that all the staff were able to attend the training as an inset day which, in hindsight, enabled all staff to be on board from the start. To begin with, it was hard not to keep writing notes, but long term we feel we all know the children so well now. Parents have also been involved in the focus sheets which has enhanced our parent partnership.

We would definitely recommend Planning in the Moment to other settings – we have seen how everyone benefits - children thrive and staff well-being and work load has improved.

Top tip:
 When initiating changes within your setting September is not necessarily the best time. Trial new ideas over the summer term and give yourself at least 2 terms before you review the changes and see the benefits.

Case Study: Little Oaks & Little Apples Nurseries - Sarah Penston, Manager

Our setting has had an interesting journey. We received an Inadequate Ofsted rating in October 2017. This progressed to Requires Improvement in May 2018 and we have just received a Good judgement this year whilst using the Planning in the Moment approach.

The training has given me and my team so much more confidence and came at the perfect time. Two staff attended PATA's full day training and returned totally inspired. Following from this Anna came and did bespoke training for all our staff after which I wondered what we had done! Initially staff saw it as 'another change, another theory' but after visiting Anna's Bristol setting and changing one room the whole team got behind it and everything started to fall into place.

The follow up course gave us chance to network with other groups. We now feel proud of our setting. A year ago we were going into others. Now we're in the right place to share our story and invite people to come and see us.

Benefits of the approach for:

Children and their outcomes? Our setting feels much calmer overall, the children are more engaged which affects their behaviour in a very positive way. Behaviour incidents have reduced. The children now set their own challenges and the staff help them with next steps that are of their own making. It makes the teachable moments so much more valuable. The circle is completed there and then.

Staff and their own CPD? You have to be skilled to deliver ITMP and we are all still on a journey – our teaching practice is improving all the time but we recognise we have a way to go. We don't want to get complacent – Anna has given us the tools to observe and measure staff engagement and focus which is really valuable in enabling us to continually improve our practice and question our performance in a non-defensive way.

The setting as a whole? By having a child focus week and asking parents for feedback, we have seen parental engagement increase. Also, by having all these completed teachable moments the paperwork is so much less – we spend half the time on paperwork but are still meeting needs. You have to be confident and believe in the paperwork because it is fantastic.

Our Ofsted Journey

We had the same inspector and she said she could see the journey we have been on and the difference in our staff. We trialled the new paperwork in term 1 and in January introduced parents to it. By April staff were saying they know their children so much better and were completing summatives quicker as a result of knowing their children so well. The inspector said she felt they were on the right road to go into the new framework with their line of thought and observations.

Would you recommend the training/approach to other groups?

Yes absolutely! Bring your staff here, come and see our journey! Everyone has benefited – the children, the staff and the parents. My staff are citing better job satisfaction and the fact they have more time to play with the children. It's a lovely place to be.

We have training planned for 20th January. This will be delivered by Aliye Mpoko who works closely with and is endorsed by Anna Ephgrave to deliver ITMP training. Aliye will also host a follow up session in the evening for anyone who has already attended ITMP training and wants to discuss further and share their journey so far.

You can book on the course online at www.pataglos.org.uk/training

Helicopter Stories with Trisha Lee: Where adults also let their imaginations fly!

The approach: In its simplest form, Helicopter Stories lets children dictate their stories which are written down verbatim, exactly as they are told, by an EYFS or Key Stage 1 practitioner. The children then gather around a taped out stage and the stories are acted out.

Alongside the simplicity of this approach is an ethos that is child-centred, creating a culture of curiosity and wonder at the dexterity of children's imaginings during both the telling and the acting out of their stories.

This holistic approach uses the power of storytelling to develop key curriculum areas such as creativity, communication and language, personal, social and emotional skills in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 classroom, giving children's stories a voice in a safe space.

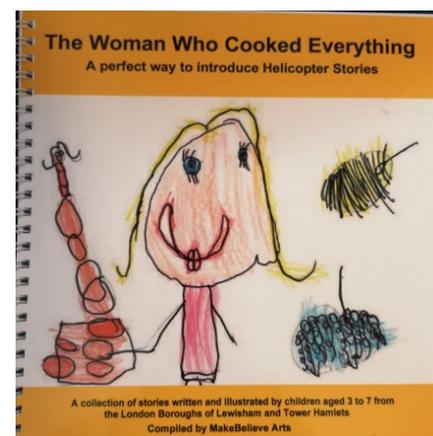
Over twenty of us gathered at St Phillip and St James church rooms on a beautiful day in May. A whole days training lay ahead of us and I have no doubt I wasn't the only one thinking of all the other things I needed to do! In the introduction Trisha said she hoped that by the end of the day we would all leave and head straight to the shops for masking tape. At this point we had no idea what she meant and laughed politely. By the end of the day the laughs were belly laughs and the feedback was about as good as it gets. And as I popped to the shops on my way home I did indeed see a learner buying masking tape!

This really is one of those training sessions where you feel impassioned and almost obligated to put it into practice. It is also one where you feel you do have the tools to leave and do it immediately (as long as you have masking tape!) which makes it infinitely worth the money.

So here are my thoughts on Helicopter Stories after a day of laughter, mesmerising moments and level 5 engagement on the Leuven Scale (see In the Moment Planning article)!

The approach gives children ownership, a truthfulness and creativity of their imaginations without grammatical corrections or interruptions. It allows children to play with language and Trisha gives charming and delightful examples of this that reminded me of the beauty of children's language that is often lost in formal teaching situations. This approach celebrates all that children say.

It starts with the scribing of a story. "This is your page and your story can be as short as you like but no longer than my page". The children sit side by side with the practitioner and watch as their words take shape on the page and then as they literally come to life on the stage. Their stories are celebrated. Every single time. Even if it is only one word – because that one word may have been that child's most important thought. By clever scribing and highlighting certain words to the children, they are able to understand writing from the earliest of ages without ever needing to put pen to paper. Or they can – if they want – it is their choice.



The approach works with both small groups, as well as a whole class full, and private sessions can be used to talk to, and scribe the stories of more reticent children. The approach never judges but is always inclusive - 'it's OK not to tell a story, you can be a story listener'. Every child has a front row seat and is equally important. If a child does nothing but stand still on the stage – this is OK. They receive praise in the hope (and by the end of the training, belief!) that next time, or the time after, you will see a much more willfull tree take shape!

Through the approach practitioners can build a detailed record of how children's early literacy is progressing in a beautifully simple way – with a booklet that evidences their stories over time. They provide a record of development and give a really strong record of what grammar and language they use. It provides an exact account of children's language for Ofsted.

It is also a great approach for SEND children who are included at every level. It allows a child's story to be whatever they want it to be – even if this is a single letter sound of the beginning of a word or animal for example. Many of us in the group asked how it can be used for, and with, SEND children and Trisha addresses this with clear examples and an insightful video.

Self-elected writing happens as part of Helicopter stories (although isn't the main premise of the approach). Children who take part identify the writing is happening for a purpose as well as the positive connections they have with it so even the tiniest children will 'write' placing perfectly spaced, left to right, scribbles on a page. And ask them what it says and most of them can even re-tell their story, pointing at each 'word' as they do.

So you can tell that I loved this course crammed full of learning and laughs! It gripped all the PATA staff that attended and we could give many examples of how we are using it, successfully, within our settings. But in order to present a balanced view we have spoken to other settings who attended so you know it's not just us who loved it!

Debs Adams PATA Membership & Project Support and also a SEND TA in a mixed reception year one class.



Jackie Swankie Playleader at Calton Playgroup

I had an amazing day listening and taking part in Trisha's training. I had heard a lot about Helicopter stories and was so pleased when PATA put on training. It opened my eyes to a whole new world to improve children's confidence, communication and language and creativity.

Next day, back at playgroup I put into action (stage 1 and 2) what I had learnt. I told a short story and introduced all the children onto the stage, encouraging them - "Can you show me how the spiders climbed?" I could not believe the high levels of engagement. Everyone, even the quiet not so confident child, preformed with their peers. They couldn't get enough of acting out the stories. The next step is to scribe for the child and I can't wait to see the reactions.



Hayley Stevens Rodborough Playgroup

I thoroughly enjoyed Trisha's Helicopter Stories, such a good course and I would highly recommend it to other settings. I loved the fact that the children from the setting next door were welcomed in and participated in 'live' training. It really showed the level of interaction you could achieve in such a small period of time and this was all with children that we (and Trisha) had not met before.

We started using Helicopter Stories as soon as we could and we had a really positive reaction to starting stages 1 & 2 at my setting. We used our Pupil Premium funds for this training and initially aimed the helicopter Stories at this group of children. It soon grew however with lots of our children wanting to take part and adding their own ideas like 'we need a bigger stage'. The children were accepting of the 'rules' such as - "can be as short as you like but no longer than the bottom of this page" and taking turns. We have already seen their confidence improve together with their writing and their story structures. They also listened to their peers right from the start. We have a very shy and quiet child and this child, with a little encouragement, made her story and spoke in front of everyone – a first!

Our staff have taken this in their stride, it helped that we purchased Trisha's book so staff who didn't attend the training could look through and get a better feel for the process of helicopter stories. The only thing we found a little tricky was not impulsively telling the children the actions they could do for parts of their story, but we think this will become more natural the more we do this activity! I am putting together an example of 'Do's and Don'ts' as a quick guide for staff.

Over all, the training was well laid out and thought through and I would highly recommend to other settings.

Consider using your Pupil Premium payments to fund this training

Early Years Pupil Premium has now been in place since April 2015 when it was introduced by the government to help early years providers improve outcomes for the most disadvantaged children and close the attainment gap between them and their peers. The EYPP is for practitioners to put targeted strategies in place to progress these children but funding can impact other children also. No set ways have been specified to spend the money. Practitioners are expected to use their knowledge and other tools such as resources, parent consultation and partnerships to help inform their decisions as to how the money will be spent.

Guidance suggests three broad themes (of which training is one) to consider when allocating funding to ensure long lasting impact. Ofsted will look at the impact of the funding on your children and their outcomes. You will therefore need to be accountable in how you have allocated the funding and clearly show the impact it is having through robust monitoring procedures.

We feel the hugely measurable benefits of Helicopter Stories is a perfect use of your EYPP.

Guidance, funded by the Department for Education, has been published giving Practical Tips on Allocating Early Years Pupil Premium www.early-education.org.uk/practical-tips-allocating-early-years-pupil-premiumfunding . This is a very concise and useful document and we would recommend you reading it if your setting is in receipt of EYPP.

PATA's own CEO Paula Hayball fully entering into the spirit of the training in her role as 'slain dragon'!



Jo Wright Little Smarties Nursery**Do you feel the course covered and delivered its aims?**

Absolutely in every area. Massively, by allowing each and every child to explore their thoughts in a safe place.

Were you inspired to use Helicopter Stories in your setting and how have you found it?

Totally inspired. The approach allows children to be heard in a positive and unique way. I enjoyed it on a personal level too and could see the benefits of acting stories out. I realised that for children who couldn't maybe communicate something in words they could do it via acting. Thinking of the children in our own setting I could see the benefits to both our articulate children, who could be given the opportunity to showcase their stories as well as the shy children for whom this could act as a doorway to allow safe expression.

Using Helicopter Stories has been amazing. All of our children have engaged in some way. They got it immediately and we have scribed many private stories. Confident children have acted their own, and others, stories in vibrant and subtle ways. Less confident children who started the process as watchers or listeners progressed to standing on the stage and now act as comfortable as they feel. This has been in the space of a month so we have seen massive progression in a short space of time.

The children know when the tape comes out it's Helicopter Stories time!

Continued...



Helicopter Stories in action at one of our PATA Managed Groups. The practitioners who attended went straight back to the setting and had a go!

Benefits of the approach for:

Children and their outcomes? Children are very calm, especially at circle time. They are much more engaged in their learning and especially the older ones bring their stories into their own play. To see a child who is reticent to do something because of lack of confidence and shyness then progress so intensely and happily is beautiful and precious.

Helicopter Stories has overtaken our story making (a story of the month which we learn through repetition sometimes using props and rhymes). This is helping extend the children’s learning far more – particularly with self-confidence and literacy. It allows them individual creativity.

Staff and their own CPD? We sent two members of staff on the training and loved it. We are sending two more staff members on the next course so they can use it confidently too. You sometimes go on a course and come away with amazing ideas but don’t have the tools to implement them whereas with Helicopter Stories you come away with the confidence and tools to try it.

Would you recommend the training/approach to other settings?

Yes – I share it on twitter all the time and offered my services to Trisha if she ever needed them!

Helicopter Stories is so simple but is hands down **the** most inspiring, exciting and fun course I have ever been on. And I’ve been on a lot!

We have a new date for Helicopter Stories. Space is limited so book now!

When: 23rd October 2019 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Where: The Church Centre, Larkhay Road, Hucclecote, Gloucester, GL3 3NS

You can book directly on <https://www.pataglos.org.uk/event-3439598>

We are also holding a networking meeting on 3rd October from 4.30 - 6.00pm which will be an opportunity for settings who attended the previous training to feed back and discuss how they found taking the training back to their own setting. It will also be a great opportunity for other settings to hear a bit more about Helicopter Stories and perhaps give it a go themselves!

The session will also include time for general discussion and networking and will be held at the PATA Centre in Gloucester. The cost will be £10 per person and you can book online. These sessions will only be open to PATA Members and places will be limited.

PATA Community

Please keep us up to date with any changes to your committee. Almost all PATA communication is by email so we need up to date email addresses for your committee members and senior staff members.

If you aren’t able to log in to the members area of the website you can contact us at membership@pataglos.org.uk

PATA Community

"I would like to personally thank you. When I had worries you were there on the end of the phone, or by rapid response on email, and it was greatly appreciated". PATA member.

The PATA Community is a growing one.

At its heart are our members who are drawn from all childcare sectors - toddler groups, community playgroups, private nurseries, out of school clubs and children's centres. We support our members through information, advice and guidance that is as unique and personal as our member groups.

Being part of the PATA community is about having access to support and resources that enables our members to be the best they can be.

The wider PATA community encompasses our funding partners who enable us to further support children and families in a more targeted way through project work. We also forge strong links with other community groups to help enhance and extend the support we can offer.



Our Members

Get access to the fantastic benefits of being a PATA Member



Projects and Partnerships

See how this valuable part of our community further supports our members



Parents

Parents are a vital part of our community and we have a wealth of information to support new and growing families

Showcase your Strengths and Celebrate your Success

Identifying and acknowledging our own strengths is something we often struggle to do and we can be so quick to shy away from highlighting and celebrating them. But this kind of celebration can contribute to our health, happiness and wellbeing, so is really important when thinking about your setting and what you do as a team to acknowledge them.

When thinking about, not only recruitment, but general sustainability, there are so many things that you will do on a daily basis as a setting and a team that you may not even think about when writing marketing leaflets or recruitment adverts. But these should be the things you celebrate and showcase, so don't be afraid to use them.

So it's time to get comfortable with your success! When showcasing it - stick to the facts, emphasise the efforts that have gone with your successes, and give credit where it's due!

Here is a quick list of things groups will do every day. Use them to showcase what you do best and build a reputable, friendly name within your local community as a quality group with children's outcomes at it's heart.



Unique selling points

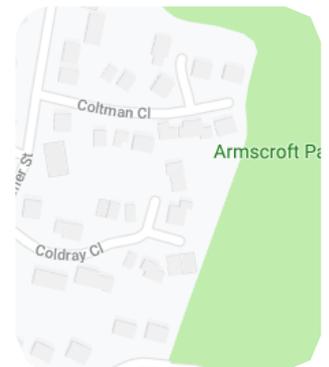
- **Ethical** – do you recycle or have activities around recycling? Do you celebrate the environment you live in and promote how your group helps sustain that?
- **Inclusive** – is your setting one that uses total communication? Do you have activities that allow all children, however different, to take part?



- **Forest school** – if you run forest school shout about it! The benefits are clearly evidenced. Children talk more, socialise more and engage more in the outdoors. Use it to your advantage.
- **Outdoor registration** – this is similar to the above and builds on how children thrive outdoors. It may seem a small thing but shows how you put your children at the heart of everything you do.
- **Training and staff CPD** – show that you consider this important. It will convey that you are a setting with up to date practices and staff who are trained to high standards.
- **In the moment planning / Helicopter Stories** – if you use a particular approach that you and your team are energised and motivated by then tell people about it. The fact you use In the Moment Planning may be the thing that makes someone apply to work with you. Using Helicopter Stories and showcasing it's use may make a parent choose your group.

- **Location** – are you by the common, by a community park or simply have great bright spaces? Tell people this. They may not know unless you tell them!

- **PATA Member** – showcase that you have access to advice and guidance for best practice working. That both your staff and committee are supported in their roles by a representative body who advocates for the sector.



- **Quality marks** - Bristol Standards / Ofsted judgement. Pull out any positive quotes for your marketing. Display your quality marks with pride.
- **Staff** – last but not least always, always celebrate your staff. For their kindness, experience, longevity. They will all contribute something vital to your team – celebrate whatever that might be.

PATA is here to help!

Our small and friendly staff team have a wealth of knowledge that enables us to offer personal support to our members. Our knowledge of the sector, and specifically community groups, means we understand the specific and unique challenges faced by you and your team. We pride ourselves on offering a unique service to your unique group and we are only a phone call away.

Going the Extra Mile: The GEM Project 2 Years On

For the last two years PATA have been working with GEM. Mary Jennings, a Navigator Developer is based in our office. Mary has been able to support a number of people into volunteering and even paid roles within the childcare sector (including in PATA Managed Groups) and has arranged training for many others. Here is an update on the GEM project.

The GEM Project is committed to supporting individuals within Gloucestershire who are currently dealing with circumstances that are potentially causing barriers to work and move them closer towards or into work. It is jointly funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and European Social Fund.



Launched in September 2016, this project has engaged with over 1,100 people in order to help them build on existing or even develop new skills and support them with their GEM journey to achieve their desired career-based goals.

Of these people, GEM has helped over 420 individuals move into further education or training, nearly 330 people move into employment or self-employment, and over 377 to gain volunteering or work experience.

These results have been made possible by the support of various partner organisations in Gloucestershire including PATA, alongside GEM's network of Navigator Developers who provide 1:1 tailored support to each participant.

The project has not only helped participants, but also supported a large number of organisations across the county, filling job roles and providing a number of opportunities to support local businesses.

Although the GEM Project was only initially designed to be a three-year project, due to the programme's current success and access to additional funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and European Social Fund, it has now been extended until the end of 2021.

If you feel that you may benefit from the support provided by the GEM Project to move closer towards employment, please get in touch with the GEM team on 01452 699741, email gem@ggtrust.org or visit www.gloggem.org

Similarly if you feel you can offer someone volunteering opportunities within your setting for a GEM participant, please get in touch.

(Stats based on figures collated in May 2019.)

Don't forget - You are a PATA member if you have a child at a PATA member setting, or you work or volunteer at a PATA member setting, or if you are an individual PATA member.

Training Update

Ofsted's New Education Inspection Framework: Everything you need to know!

Delivered by Pennie Akehurst, Early Years Fundamentals Ltd.

In preparation for the new Education Inspection Framework we are running a course designed to confidently set you on the right path to be inspected under it. Pennie is a very experienced consultant and is delivering this course around the country. **The July course is now fully booked but we will be running the course again in September for those settings unable to attend in July. Please register your interest in this by emailing training@pataglos.org.uk**

Course Information:

During this 3 hour session, we will:

- Explain the key differences between the two frameworks (new and old).
- Examine what has changed, what has stayed the same and identify the things that have become less important.
- Consider the implications for practice.
- Unpick what the changes mean for systems, practice and for staff teams.
- Provide an understanding of issues that currently appear with frequency within Requires Improvement and inadequate inspection reports.

The new inspection framework builds on what already exists, therefore, we need to ensure that what we do is already effective. Using our inspection trends data, we will be able to highlight questions that can be used to interrogate your current systems and practice.

We're working on the training Programme for September and as well as more dates for the new Inspection Framework course and Planning in the Moment, we are looking at introducing two new exciting courses looking at mental health and wellbeing. One of these will be 'The Anxious Child' and will look at both the factors causing children to be anxious as well as strategies for dealing with this. The second course will be 'Supporting the health and wellbeing of your team' and will look at how those in managerial roles can best support their team's mental health and wellbeing. Watch out for the training programme and book your place!

Networking Events

One of the most frequent requests on our course feedback forms are for networking events to give you a chance to meet your fellow Early Years professionals and share ideas and practice.

In response to this we have planned a series of six events over the next academic year where PATA Members are welcome to attend to listen to key speakers and share ideas and feedback. There will also be an opportunity for you to feed back to us on what you would like PATA to offer moving forwards. The first one will be on 3rd October at the PATA Centre in Gloucester and will be on the topic of Helicopter Stories. It will be a chance for those who have done the training to discuss how implementation has gone with others who attended, and for those new to the idea to hear about it and maybe be inspired!

If you would like to attend you can book on the PATA website at www.pataglos.org.uk. These sessions will be from 4.30pm to 6pm (1.5 hours) and the cost will be £10 per person including refreshments.

Dates and topics for future meetings will be on the website nearer the time. If you have a particular topic that you would like to see covered please let us know.

Recruitment and Employing Staff: Top Tips from our Finance Team

Hiring Staff:

Gov.UK Have a very useful step by step guide to assist you with deciding when and how to hire new staff: <https://www.gov.uk/employ-someone>

- Check your business is ready to employ staff
- Recruit someone
- Check they have the right to work in the UK
- Do they need a DBS Check?
- Check their entitlement to be in a Workplace Pension
- Agree a Employment Contract and Salary/ Pay
- Tell HM Revenue & Customs about your new employee

Right To Work

All employers in the UK have a responsibility to prevent illegal working. You do this by conducting simple right to work checks before you employ someone, to make sure the individual is not disqualified from carrying out the work in question by reason of their immigration status. This guidance provides information on how and when to conduct a right to work check.

Go to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide>

New Starter

It is important that you gather the correct information about a new employee. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pay-starter-checklist> for a starter checklist of mandatory information required by HM Revenue & Customs.

In addition to this mandatory information, you may also wish to record other information such as their bank details (for payroll), working hours, job role, rates of pay, email address, next of kin. It is important that under GDPR regulations that the major part of this information would be regarded as confidential and should only be accessed by personnel as appropriate and should also be stored in a secure place, for a timely period.

<https://www.gov.uk/new-employee> will guide you through informing HM Revenue & Customs about your new employee.

Workplace Pensions

Under the Pensions Act 2008, every employer in the UK, including charities, must put certain employees into a workplace pension scheme and contribute towards it. This is called “automatic enrolment”.

Automatic enrolment will apply to all employees who aren't already in a pension scheme and who:

- earn over £10,000 a year **OR** £833 in any one month
- and are aged 22 years or over; and are under State Pension age.

Employees who earn between £6144 and £10000 a year (£512 and £833 per month) **can opt-in** to the pension scheme and receive employer contributions.

Employees who earn less than £6144 a year **can opt-in** to the pension scheme and but there is no obligation for the employer to make contributions.

Even if no employee qualifies for automatic enrolment, employers will still need to think about pension provision for any employees who choose to opt-in to the pension scheme or future employees who may qualify for automatic enrolment.

Employees will need to be assessed every month to check to see if they should be automatically enrolled, as the assessment is on the qualifying pay in each month. This means that a pay increase or extra hours could trigger an automatic enrolment for an employee.

Employed or Self-Employed?

A worker's employment status, that is whether they are employed or self-employed, is not a matter of choice. Whether someone is employed or self-employed depends upon the terms and conditions of the relevant engagement.

As an Employer, it is your responsibility to correctly determine the employment status of your workers. A worker's employment status will determine the way that the income from that employment or self-employment is taxed. It will also determine the class of NICs, which are to be paid.

As a general guide as to whether a worker is an employee or self-employed; if the answer is 'Yes' to all of the following questions, then the worker is probably an employee:

- Do they have to do the work themselves?
- Can someone tell them at any time what to do, where to carry out the work or when and how to do it?
- Can they work a set amount of hours?
- Can someone move them from task to task?
- Are they paid by the hour, week, or month?
- Can they get overtime pay or bonus payment?

If the answer is 'Yes' to all of the following questions, it will usually mean that the worker is self-employed:

- Can they hire someone to do the work or engage helpers at their own expense?
- Do they risk their own money?
- Do they provide the main items of equipment they need to do their job, not just the small tools that many employees provide for themselves?
- Do they agree to do a job for a fixed price regardless of how long the job may take?
- Can they decide what work to do, how and when to do the work and where to provide the services?
- Do they regularly work for a number of different people?
- Do they have to correct unsatisfactory work in their own time and at their own expense?

If in doubt, you can contact HM Revenue & Customs:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax>

Employment Contracts

By law, an employer must provide anyone who's classed as an employee with a written document.

This document must contain a summary of the main terms of employment, such as pay and working hours.

ACAS have some useful information regarding employment contracts: <https://beta.acas.org.uk/employment-contracts>

PATA Payroll

We offer a fast, friendly and accurate service provided by a team who care about and understand your setting.

Why PATA Payroll?

- particularly experienced in processing payroll for groups working term-time only, with part-time and casual staff, and dealing with voluntary committees
- a personal service ensuring the needs of each customer are met
- assistance and advice regarding Workplace Pensions Auto Enrolment, statutory sick or maternity pay, holiday calculations, together with processing starters and leavers.

Contact us on 01452 541244 or payroll@pataglos.org.uk

These notes are for guidance only and reflect the position at the time of writing.

How to contact PATA

Chequers Bridge Centre, Painswick Road, Gloucester, GL4 6PR

Tel: 01452 541244

Website: www.pataglos.org.uk

PATA (UK) is a charitable company. Company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, company number 6541176. Registered charity number 1124222.

Registered office: PATA, Chequers Bridge Centre, Painswick Road, Gloucester, GL4 6PR

Depending on your query email as follows:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE	chiefexec@pataglos.org.uk
FINANCE other than Payroll	finance@pataglos.org.uk
PAYROLL	payroll@pataglos.org.uk
SUPPORT FOR SETTINGS	info@pataglos.org.uk
SHORT/CPD COURSES	training@pataglos.org.uk
RECEPTION	reception@pataglos.org.uk
MEMBERSHIP	membership@pataglos.org.uk
VACANCIES	vacancies@pataglos.org.uk
UNSURE WHERE TO GO	info@pataglos.org.uk

Information and advice from PATA

Available for all members - baby and toddler groups, playgroups, preschools, out of school clubs and nurseries.

By telephone You can telephone PATA on 01452 541244 between 9.00am and 4.00pm weekdays. This is also the number to order accident books and registers. There is an answer machine to leave messages if the phones are busy or out of office hours.

By email See the above table to help you to direct your query or you can email helpline@pataglos.org.uk and your query will be forwarded to an appropriate member of the team.

The PATA website gives you information on current news, events and training and being a PATA member also enables you to access lots of useful information, online tools and resources to help support the running of your group. These online resources complement the advice our experienced team can give by telephone or email.

Don't forget, if you are a parent whose child attends a PATA member setting then you automatically receive many member benefits yourself.

Forgotten login details? Please email membership@pataglos.org.uk.