

# Families Matter

Issue 38 November - December 2016

**Hello...** Welcome to our last newsletter of the year! The beginning of this month saw the launch of both our upgraded website and the new Graduated Pathway of Early Help and Support for Gloucestershire. You can read more about this in this edition, as well as how to have your say on school admissions, what to do if the norovirus strikes and a selection of fun activities going on around the county. As always, we hope you have a very happy and safe festive time but if you do need any support over the holidays, you can contact us, using the details below.

## School Admissions

If you have a child who is due to start primary school in September 2017, you should have received application information through the post already. The deadline for applications is January 15th 2017. Please contact the Admissions Team on 01452 425407 if you haven't received your letter yet. Gloucestershire County Council are currently asking for your views on how school places are allocated, so if you want to have your say, find the survey here: [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/admissionconsultation](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/admissionconsultation)

## glofamilies directory

You can use the upgraded version of our website on a PC, tablet or mobile to find childcare, support services, advice and things to do around the county. As part of Gloucestershire's Local Offer, it is also a 'one stop shop' for information specific to families and young people with SEND. Whether you are a parent, young person or practitioner, you will find lots of information on the new Graduated Pathway of Early Help and Support, which is Gloucestershire's way of ensuring Early Help is available to all children, young people and their families with additional needs, whether these are educational, social or emotional needs or a disability. Visit the new website at [www.glofamiliesdirectory.org.uk](http://www.glofamiliesdirectory.org.uk)

## Norovirus Season

Norovirus is a sudden onset of vomiting and/or diarrhoea which spreads rapidly. It can be passed on in contaminated food or water, or by touching surfaces and objects. If you have the bug, the advice is to stay away from public places especially school or childcare, and avoid preparing food for others until you have been free of symptoms for 48 hours. Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after visiting the toilet and before eating or handling food - alcohol gel does not work on the norovirus! Disinfect surfaces with a product that's active against viruses e.g. Milton, and wash dirty clothes or bedding on the hottest setting. If symptoms persist, call 111 for advice.



## Safety Advice - Plug Sockets

The Department of Health has issued a safety alert to highlight the dangers of using socket covers. The concern is that they override built in safety features of the socket. The sale of socket covers is not regulated so they can be made in all shapes and sizes and therefore rarely fit exactly. This can lead to the socket overheating and the risk of it catching fire. They may also be keeping the shutters open that are built in to the socket and are part of the initial design to protect children from the live electrical contacts behind.



## Family Information Service



If you would like to receive your copy of this newsletter automatically or have any suggestions, email us at [familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk).

0800 542 02 02 or 01452 427362

[www.glofamiliesdirectory.org.uk](http://www.glofamiliesdirectory.org.uk)



**Gloucestershire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

## Wallet Watch...

### Benefit cap information for families who have a child with a disability.

From November this year, the government are planning to lower the benefit cap to £384.62 per week for lone parents and couples with children. This means that any income from benefits received over this amount will be taken back out of your housing benefit or universal credit payment.

This cap does not apply if you have a dependent child who receives either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or a Personal Independence Payment (PIP), so if you are caring for a child with chronic illness or disability and haven't yet applied for either of these benefits, apply now to avoid the cap affecting you. If you would like help to complete the DLA or PIP applications, you can find tips on the Contact A Family website [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk) or contact Carers Gloucestershire on **01452 386283** or **0300 111 9000**. If you are unsure how the benefit cap will affect your family finances, try using the calculator at: [www.gov.uk/benefit-cap-calculator](http://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap-calculator)

## Rockin' Robins!

Make your own robin to rock around the Christmas tree with! You could even use this as a Christmas card and write your greetings to friends and family on the back.

### You will need:

- ★ 2 paper plates
- ★ Scissors
- ★ Glue
- ★ Googly eyes
- ★ Brown paint, felt tips or crayons
- ★ Red and yellow tissue paper



Start by painting or colouring the paper plates and leave them to dry if needed. Cut one plate in half and glue each piece face up to the back of the remaining plate to make the wings. Next, stick on the googly eyes. To make the red feathers and yellow beak, scrunch up small pieces of tissue paper and stick them on. If you want to make your robin even more festive, try using scraps of red and gold wrapping paper instead of the tissue paper for extra special touch! Why not share some pictures of your finished feathery friends on our Facebook page?

From [www.activityvillage.co.uk](http://www.activityvillage.co.uk)

## What's On?

All these festive events and activities, plus many more can be found on our website [www.glofamiliedirectory.org.uk/whatson](http://www.glofamiliedirectory.org.uk/whatson)

Daily until Christmas Eve - **Evie's Airplane** - Clearwell Caves. See Father Christmas in his underground grotto then walk through the light and colour displays. £10 entry for adults or children including a gift for 2-14 year olds, under 2s free entrance and optional £5 for a gift. Book online at [www.clearwellcaves.com](http://www.clearwellcaves.com).

Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th December, 11am-5pm - **Museum in the Park Christmas Weekend** - Stratford Park, Stroud. **FREE** Christmas robin trail, drop in Christmas card and decoration making (£1) and lantern making (£1—bring a clean jam jar!) workshops. Join in for some carol singing at 4.30pm on Sunday.

Monday 19th December, 11am-12.30pm for 6-9 year olds and 1.30-3.00pm for 10-14 year olds - **Glow Sports** - Leisure @ Cheltenham. Experience table tennis, badminton, dodgeball, short-tennis and much more in the dark! Using special glow equipment and face paints under UV lamps your favourite sports will test your skills more than ever! £8. Call 01242 528764 or email [katie.graham-whitehouse@cheltenhamtrust.org.uk](mailto:katie.graham-whitehouse@cheltenhamtrust.org.uk) to book a place.



Wednesday 21st December, 11.15am and 12pm - **Stories with Santa** - Corinium Museum, Cirencester. Santa will be reading special stories written in the North Pole and giving each child a present to take home. £2 per adult, £3per child. Call 01285 655611 to book a place.

Saturday 31st December, drop in sessions 10am-1pm and 2-5pm - **Festive Tudor Birds of Prey** - John Moore Museum, Tewkesbury. Meet a kestrel, buzzard, falcon and owls and find out how important they were to the Tudors and have your questions answered. Normal admission charges apply.