



Learner Support Service Childcare News e-bulletin, November 2009

Welcome to the LSC Learner Support Directorate's *Childcare News* November e-bulletin.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please fill in our new [registration form](#). If you have any feedback on this publication please email us at Childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk.

In this issue:

[Care to Learn](#)

1. Describing attendance on the Care to Learn application form
2. Early applications

[Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work](#)

1. Eligible courses for Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work
2. Daycare Trust conference
3. New resources on the Campaign Resource site

[General](#)

1. Backdating Payments
2. Learner Attendance Monitoring Forms

[Actions you may need to take](#)

[How to find out more](#)

Care to Learn

1. Describing attendance on the Care to Learn application form

As you may be aware, Learning Providers are required to state the number of hours a young parent is expected to attend for their course on the 2009/10 application form.

It is very important that the description of the young parent's required attendance at learning is correct; any discrepancy between the number of learning hours and childcare hours is checked when the application is assessed. This can cause delays in payment to Childcare Providers.

When completing the number of learning hours, the Provider must include the following: time spent on breaks, assemblies, study time on the Learning Provider's premises, any work placements linked to the learning, in addition to the guided learning hours and the hours and minutes a young parent is expected to use for home study.

There are guidance notes in each application pack to help learners and Providers to fill in the 2009/10 Care to Learn application form. Please share these with all parties required to fill in parts of the form. You can order 2009/10 application packs from the Learner Support Service by calling **0845 600 7979**.

Please continue to encourage young parents to apply for support from Care to Learn and assist them in completing their form.

2. Early applications

We are pleased to say that Care to Learn is currently supporting 4,676 young parents. However, it is important to remember that young parents apply for support as early as possible. Information on the limits in place for backdating payments for the young person are outlined in the [General](#) section of this bulletin.

Please continue to encourage young parents to apply as early as possible for Care to Learn.

Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work

1. Eligible courses for Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work

One of the benefits of the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme is that the parent has the choice about what course they study. This allows the learner more freedom to choose a course that is right for them and that will fit around their own day-to-day life, to help them to enter into sustainable employment.

Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work will support learners taking courses up to Level 3 (this does not have to be their first full Level 3), and there are **no minimum or maximum course length criteria** for support from the scheme.

Taster courses through to A Levels are eligible, providing that the course provides a clear learning outcome and is part of a progression route into sustainable employment (see [October's issue](#) for an explanation on progression routes).

Unwaged courses up to and including Level 3 are eligible for the scheme. The course can be delivered via a number of routes, for example in an FE college or delivered as adult safeguarded learning. Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work will also support learners on unaccredited courses, providing that the course is LSC-funded.

It is important to note that the Notice of Entitlement, which an eligible learner receives, is valid for the whole academic year in which they applied and not only for the course they outline on the application form. This means that a learner can undertake a number of short courses throughout an academic year, without having to re-apply for a new Notice of Entitlement each time.

Please encourage eligible parents wishing to undertake a short, unwaged or unaccredited course in the New Year to apply for support from Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work.

2. Daycare Trust conference

Members of the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work and Care to Learn teams attended the Daycare Trust annual conference on 17th November in London.

The conference was based around their recent report "Quality Costs: Paying for High Quality Education and Care". Speakers at the event included representatives from all three major parties, who outlined their priorities for the

future of UK childcare policy. If you would like more information on the report, please visit the [Daycare Trust website](#).

The teams spoke with a number of the attendees, giving them information on the Learner Support childcare schemes, and received a positive response from delegates.

3. New resources on the Campaign Resource Site

As you may be aware we have produced a promotional video for the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme, featuring Suzanne Shaw and a learner who has benefited from support from the scheme. We told you in last month's e-bulletin that this would be available on a number of websites.

We are pleased to tell you that you can now download a copy of this video from the Campaign Resources website (CRS). We have posted the video on the CRS in order that you can download a copy and post this video on your own organisation's website to help to promote Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work.

On the CRS you will also find some example text that you can post alongside the video to help to raise awareness of the scheme, as well as a web button and banner that you can use to link to the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work pages of the [Directgov website](#).

Please visit the CRS (www.lsc.gov.uk/campaignresources) and download these new resources; we would also like to know who is using this resource so please email us if you do with details and links to childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk.

General information

1. Backdating Payments

We are aware that some of you may not be clear about the backdating rules for payments to learners applying for Learner Support childcare schemes. In this issue we would therefore like to outline what the backdating rules are:

For **Care to Learn** and **Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work** we will only backdate childcare payments to the start of a parent's course if

we receive an application **within 28 days** of their course start date. If an application is received outside of these 28 days payments will usually be backdated to the beginning of the week in which the application is received by the Learner Support Service.

Applications for **Sixth Form College Childcare** will be backdated to the start of the parent's course where the application is received **before the end of term in which the course starts**. Application forms received outside of the first term of the course will be backdated to the beginning of the week in which the form is received by the Learner Support Service.

Parents should therefore make their applications for support in good time for the start of their course. Learning Providers should ensure that they complete their section of the application form and return this to the parent as soon as possible. We depend on the goodwill of Childcare Providers for the success of our schemes and providing the information we need to make prompt payments to them will help this to continue.

Please continue to support learners to complete their application form in good time and return this to the Learner Support Service. Included in each application pack are Application Form Guidance Notes, giving advice on how to complete each section of the form; please share the contents of these notes with learners, Learning Providers and Childcare Providers to ensure that they include all necessary information for assessment.

2. Learner Attendance Monitoring Forms

Every month the Learner Support Service issues Attendance Monitoring Forms to Learning Providers and Childcare Providers. These forms enable us to keep track of the learner's attendance on their learning programme and the child's attendance at the Childcare Provider.

Learning and Childcare Providers are strongly urged to return the completed Attendance Monitoring Forms as soon as possible each month to avoid any problems with the release of childcare payments and travel payments. For more information, you can call the helpline on **0845 600 7979**.

Actions you may need to take

A reminder of the actions to be taken over the next few weeks. Please:

- Take note of the information regarding recording the correct number of learning hours on the Care to Learn application form, and use this to complete the Learning Provider section of the application form.

- Encourage young parents to apply for Care to Learn as early as possible.
- Inform learners wishing to study a short, or unaccredited, course that they may be eligible to receive support from Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work.
- Download the promotional video for Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work to post on your own website to promote the scheme to learners; use the other resources for promoting the scheme available on the CRS.
- Ensure all Learning Provider and Childcare Provider sections of the application forms are completed and returned to learners in good time and are sent to the Learner Support Service within 28 days of the course start.
- Take note of the information on Learner Attendance Monitoring Forms; complete and return these as soon as possible to the Learner Support Service.
- Encourage any Providers or advisers not already signed up, to [register](#) to receive this e-bulletin.

How to find out more

Learning and Childcare Providers

Learning Providers and Childcare Providers can find out more information about each of these three childcare schemes on the websites:

- [Care to Learn](#)
- [Sixth Form College Childcare](#)
- [Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work](#)

You can also call us on **0845 600 7979**; please select option 3 for Care to Learn and option 4 for Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work and Sixth Form College Childcare.

Learners

Learners can find out more information about the schemes by visiting www.direct.gov.uk and searching for the relevant scheme.

They can also call the learner helpline on **0800 121 8989**. This is a freephone number, which can also be used to access advice about other Learner Support schemes managed by the LSC, including Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Adult Learning Grant (ALG).