

Learner Support Programme

Care to Learn
Guidance
2009/10

June 2009

Of interest to stakeholders involved in delivering
Care to Learn

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Introduction

This document has been updated for the 2009/10 academic year (1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010). Do not use this document after August 2010. Please check the website to make sure that you are using the correct version.

This guidance is aimed at key stakeholders involved in the delivery of **Care to Learn (C2L)** including Learning Providers, Childcare Providers, teenage parent support workers, partners delivering information, advice and guidance (IAG) such as Connexions and targeted youth support, the Learner Support Service (LSS) that provides helpline, assessment and payment services for the scheme, and Learning and Skills Council (LSC) colleagues at an area, regional and national level. This guidance sets out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the delivery of C2L and how to get the best from it.

It is not intended to offer definitive advice on every possible situation but it does offer a framework within which Providers and stakeholders can make sensible decisions based on C2L policy and their own experience of dealing with young parents in learning.

There are also two telephone helplines to provide support to Providers and stakeholders, and to young people and their parents or carers. These are:

- Learner Support Service Provider helpline:
0845 600 7979
- Learner Support Service learner helpline:
0800 121 8989

Ian Pursglove
Young People's Learner Support Director

June 2009

Background and overview

C2L is a strand of the LSC's Learner Support programme which aims to remove finance as a barrier to participation in learning.

C2L enables young parents under the age of 20 to continue in or return to learning after the birth of a child by assisting with the costs of childcare and associated travel (up to £160 per week per child across England/£175 in London).

In 1999 the Government launched the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy which set out a national strategy for England to:

- halve the rate of conceptions among girls under 18 by 2010; and
- reduce the social exclusion experienced by teenage parents and increase the proportion in education, employment and training (EET).

C2L was rolled out nationally in 2003. It is an integral part of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and is a key contributor to the Government's target to get 60 per cent of mothers aged 16–19 into EET by 2010.

Summary of policy changes for 2009/10

The key policy changes for the 2009/10 academic year are:

- **Learner residency requirements**, page 6
- **Distance learning/e-learning courses**, pages 7 and 8
- **Eligibility of childcare provision and childcare review**, pages 8 and 9
- **Application forms and new guidance notes**, pages 10 and 11
- **Late applications and back-dated claims (28-day back-dating rule)**, page 11
- **No requirement for learner's signature**, page 12
- **Notifications to support workers**, pages 10 and 12

Eligibility criteria

Changes in eligibility criteria for 2009/10:

- learner residency requirements
- distance learning and e-learning courses not eligible for C2L
- eligibility of childcare provision and childcare review

Summary

The young parent must:

- be aged under 20 on the day that their course or learning programme starts;
- be the main carer of their child;
- meet the residency criteria;
- be living in England;
- be attending any form of publicly-funded learning in England other than distance and e-learning courses; and
- be using registered childcare (registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register and/or the compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

Eligibility of learner

Age

The young parent must be under 20 on the date their course or learning programme starts.

C2L funding will not cease when the young parent reaches their 20th birthday, but will continue to the end of the specific course or learning programme stated on the application form. A new application must be submitted each year.

Main carer of the child

The young parent must be responsible for the child for which they are claiming C2L.

If a young parent loses custody of their child, even temporarily, the LSS must be advised immediately.

Residency

The residency criteria for C2L have been updated for the 2009/10 academic year (for courses that start from 1 September 2009). The application form has a new residency section to enable applicants to confirm their residency status.

To be eligible for C2L a young parent must be:

- living in England; and
- a British citizen or a national of a country within the European Economic Area (EEA),* or the child of a Swiss national or Turkish migrant worker.

Where the young parent identifies that they are a migrant from a country that is outside the EEA, they will only be eligible for C2L if one of the following immigration statuses/conditions applies:

1. Asylum seeker.
 - Asylum seekers who are under 18 are eligible for C2L.
 - Asylum seekers who are 18 and over are not eligible for C2L, unless they are a care leaver aged up to 20.
 - Care leavers are young people aged 18–21 who have been looked after for 13 weeks or more since the age of 14 and who cease to be looked after/accommodated.
 - Care leavers must send (with their application) an original letter from their local authority that shows their address and confirms that they are a care leaver.
2. Refugee status.
3. Humanitarian protection.
4. Discretionary leave.
5. Indefinite leave to remain.
6. Indefinite leave to enter.
7. Limited leave to remain.
8. Limited leave to enter.
9. Leave outside the rules.

* See Glossary, page 23.

Young parents are not required to submit any evidence of their residency status with their application. Where they confirm that they are a migrant from outside the EEA, the LSC may carry out checks with the UK Border Agency (UKBA) to confirm their immigration status. Supporting evidence may be requested from the young parent if the any issues are identified.

How will a young parent know their immigration status?

From 25 November 2008, foreign nationals granted leave to remain in the UK as (a) a student, (b) on the basis of marriage/civil partnership/unmarried couples and (c) dependants of those in category (b) have been issued with an ID card for foreign nationals (ICFN). This replaced the vignette (or sticker) which would have previously been placed in the holder's passport. Foreign nationals granted leave to remain in any other category will continue to have a vignette in their passport.

Asylum seekers often do not have a passport. They are normally granted temporary admission (TA) and issued with a form IS96 which confirms the grant of TA. However, the bearer of a form IS96 may not be an asylum seeker, may have been issued with more than one IS96 at different times or may already have been refused leave to enter the UK and granted TA pending removal. For these reasons an IS96 is unsuitable for use as confirmation of a person's immigration status in the UK.

The UKBA issues an application registration card (ARC) and a standard acknowledgement letter (SAL) to people who claim asylum or a claim under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights in the UK. Each dependant of an asylum applicant will be given their own card. Where, owing to very exceptional circumstances, an ARC cannot be issued, the applicant will be issued with a SAL. The ARC is a credit-card-sized plastic card that is issued as acknowledgement of those types of application to the UKBA. The card contains details about the identity and immigration status of the holder. The card is used by the (asylum seeker) holder to access UKBA support (primarily subsistence support).

Residency: important note

Young parents who started their course prior to 1 September 2009, but who do not meet the new criteria, will be permitted to complete their current course and claim C2L to the end of that course.

Geography

The young parent must live in England, but the childcare and/or learning can take place over the border in Wales or Scotland. In these cases the Childcare Provider must be registered on the appropriate register with the equivalent of Ofsted.

For Wales this is the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

For Scotland this is the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (SCRC).

London weighting

A London weighting applies to C2L. Young parents who benefit will have their childcare, and any necessary related travel (between home and the Childcare Provider), paid up to the London-weighted maximum, which for the 2009/10 academic year is £175 per child per week (compared to £160 outside London).

Eligibility for London weighting is determined by the young parent's home address.

Learners living in the following London boroughs are eligible for the London weighting:

Barking and Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Camden, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney and City of London, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Kingston-upon-Thames, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond-upon-Thames, Southwark, Sutton, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth and Westminster.

Eligibility of course/learning programme

There are no requirements for course length, duration or level. Young parents who have been accepted on to a publicly-funded programme of learning that is not solely distance learning or e-learning are eligible for C2L as long as they meet the eligibility criteria listed above.

Table 1: Types of learning in/out of scope for Care to Learn

Pre-16 compulsory education.	Higher education courses in a higher education institution or further education institution – courses leading to a first degree, HND, HNC, Diploma in Higher Education, Foundation Degree or Initial Teacher Training (ITT). Higher education has its own form of support. Those studying at higher education institutions can apply for the childcare element of the student maintenance grant.
Tasters and short courses.	Work-based learning courses where the young person is on employed status, i.e. Apprenticeships.
Non-accredited courses within the community if they are publicly funded.	Privately-funded learning, e.g. in independent institutions.
Further education courses.	Voluntary work.
Further education courses in a higher education institution – this includes Access courses and diplomas.	Distance and e-learning courses.
Foundation higher education courses which are undertaken at a further education institution, e.g. BTEC Diploma.	
Work-based learning where the young parent is non-employed/trainee status, i.e. Entry to Employment (E2E), Programme-led Apprenticeship (PLA).	
Activity Agreements (AA) currently being piloted in eight areas by the Department for Children, Schools and Families – young people will normally be referred to an AA pilot by Connexions.	

Eligibility of childcare provision

Ofsted registration

Only registered Childcare Providers may be used. From September 2008, as a result of changes to Ofsted's childcare registers, only Childcare Providers registered on the following childcare registers may be used:

- the Early Years Register (EYR) – compulsory for those caring for children from birth to five years old and includes care and learning; and/or
- the Childcare Register, compulsory part – for those caring for children aged five to seven.

Those Childcare Providers registered only on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are not normally eligible to receive any funding through C2L.

Free nursery education places

If the young parent has a child aged two, three or four who attends a childminder, playgroup or nursery, they may be entitled to a free nursery education place. The local authority will pay the fees directly to the Childcare Provider on the young parent's behalf.

The child's allowance for a free nursery education place must be used first, and taken into account when completing the application form. For example, if the child has a free nursery education place at

a nursery for 12.5 hours per week, but childcare is needed for 28 hours to enable the young parent to attend the Learning Provider and complete their course, only 15.5 hours of childcare fees can be claimed from C2L.

If the child is allocated a free place after the course has started, please ensure that the LSC is advised as soon as possible by requesting a Change of Circumstance (CoC) form.

Free nursery education places are only available for two-year-olds in some areas. Young parents should contact the Family Information Service on **0800 234 6346** or visit **childcarelink.gov.uk** for more information.

Childcare provided by relatives

Where a Childcare Provider is related to the child, for example a grandmother or aunt, that childcare Provider must meet two conditions to be eligible for C2L:

- they must be registered with Ofsted on the EYR and/or the compulsory part of the Childcare Register; **and**
- they must be providing registered childcare services for other children.

Childcare review

The LSC is undertaking a review of the types of childcare provision that should be eligible for C2L. Changes may be implemented for the 2010/11 academic year.

If you are aware of any childcare provision that is no longer in scope for C2L as a result of the registration changes in September 2008, please write to us with the details at c2lsurvey@lsc.gov.uk.

The review aims to ensure that quality childcare provision that benefits teenage parents will be in scope for C2L.

Eligibility: double-funding

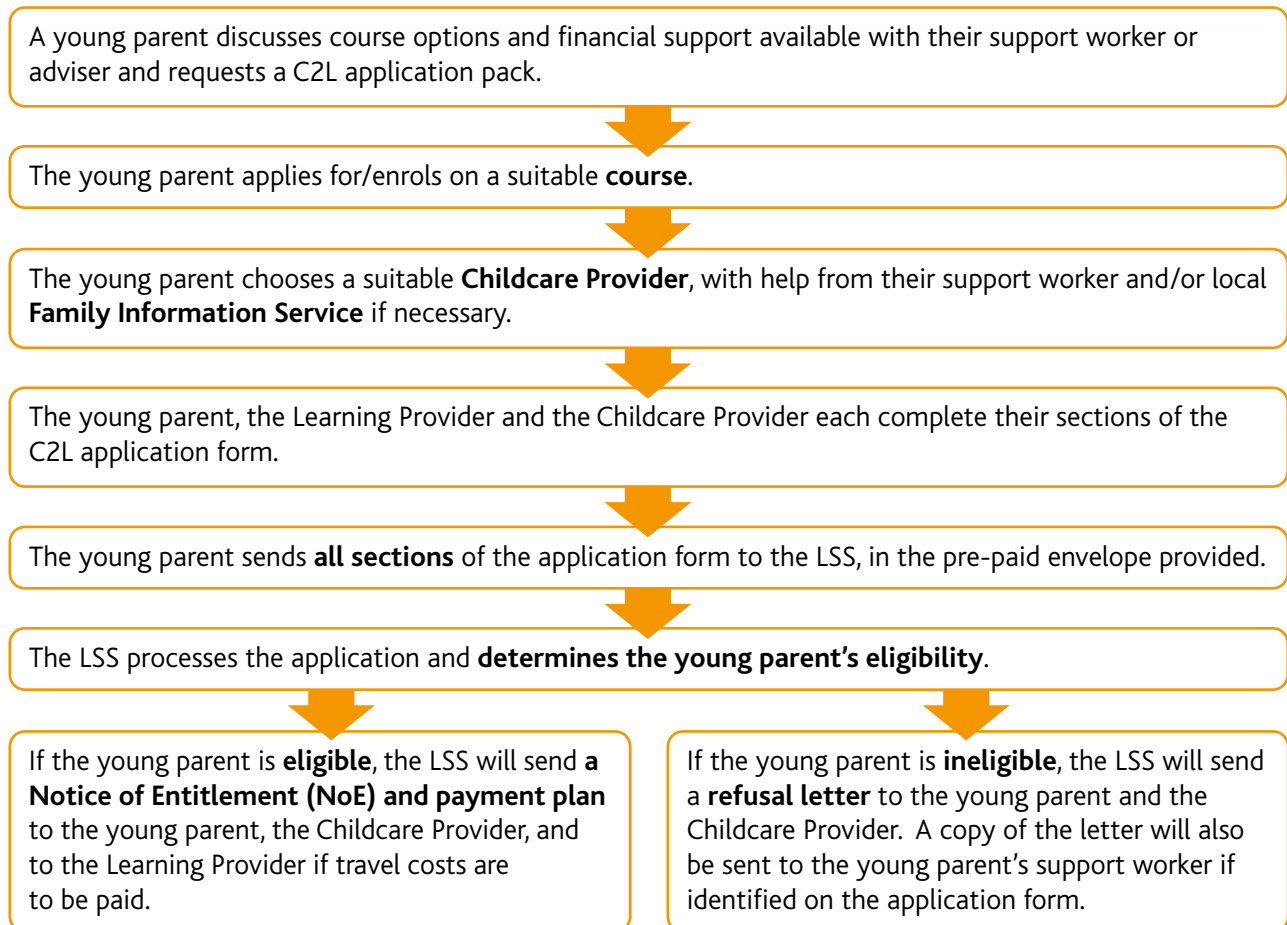
The young parent must not be in receipt of funding for childcare from another source such as the childcare element of Working Tax Credits and learning programmes funded by the European Social Fund (ESF).

How to apply

Changes for 2009/10:

- which application to use
- how to obtain application forms
- availability of Guidance Notes to help with completion of application forms
- late applications/back-dated claims (28-day rule)

Flowchart of application journey



Application forms

Where learning starts on or after 1 September 2009, the 2009/10 application form should be used. The 2008/09 application should be used for any learning that starts prior to 1 September 2009.

Application forms and pre-paid return envelopes are available to order in the following ways:

- by telephone from the LSS helplines:
Provider helpline: **0845 600 7979**
learner helpline: **0800 121 8989**
- by email from the LSS:
C2L@lsclearnersupport.co.uk

The 2009/10 forms are available as hard copies only. Due to the poor quality of some downloaded application forms in 2008/09, forms are no longer available to download from the website.

For 2009/10 we have developed Guidance Notes to assist young parents and their support workers, Learning Providers and Childcare Providers with completing the application form. These will be issued with the application form.

The application form must be fully completed by the young parent, the Learning Provider and the registered Childcare Provider. A signature is also required from the Learning Provider and Childcare Provider.

A copy of the Childcare Provider's Ofsted registration certificate must be sent with the application form.

The original completed form (not a photocopy) should be sent to the LSS at the following address:

Care to Learn
Freepost RSAX-RXKX-GZBZ
Learner Support Service
Manchester M3 3JZ

Renewal applications

A new application form must be completed for each academic year, including where the course recorded on the original application spans more than one academic year. In these cases, the young parent will be sent an application pack to prompt them to complete a new application form.

Late applications and back-dated claims

From 1 September 2009, successful C2L applications received before or within 28 days of the start of the learning programme will be eligible to receive back-dated payments to the start of the learning programme. C2L applications received in excess of 28 days from the learning programme start date will be eligible to receive back-dated payments to the Monday of the week of receipt at the LSS.

Back-dating payments for any longer periods will be at the discretion of the LSC.

Childcare Providers, Learning Providers and advisers working with teenage parents should encourage and support young parents to make their applications for C2L in good time.

Application process

Changes for 2009/10:

- the requirement for the learner to sign the application form has been removed
- notification to support workers

Validation of applications

Applications for C2L are made in the name of the young parent; payments for childcare are made to Childcare Providers on their behalf. The Childcare Provider and Learning Provider must also complete their part of the application form **before** it is submitted to the LSS.

Assessments and payments will only be made against application forms that have been fully completed by the young parent, Learning Provider and Childcare Provider. A signature is required from the Learning Provider and Childcare Provider – not providing these might delay processing of the application.

The requirement for the young parent to sign the form has been removed. However, by completing and submitting the application form, the young parent is agreeing to the statements and conditions detailed on the application form.

Where an incomplete application form is submitted, the LSS will write to the young parent and/or the Learning Provider/Childcare Provider as appropriate to request the outstanding information. A copy of any correspondence will also be sent to the young parent's support worker as identified on the application form, to enable the support worker to provide assistance to the young parent if necessary.

No payments will be released until all required information is received. Applications are normally turned around within three weeks.

Learning Provider evidence checks

In order to confirm the existence of the child for whom childcare is being provided, Learning Providers must check either the child's birth certificate or notification of benefit relating to the child, and keep a photocopy. The Learning Provider attests to this when they sign the application form.

Childcare Provider registration checks

A copy of the Ofsted registration certificate relating to the Childcare Provider must be included with the application to ensure that all Childcare Providers have current Ofsted registration conforming to the childcare eligibility criteria. Where Childcare Providers become de-registered, eligibility to C2L funding ceases.

Assessment of childcare hours

Assessment calculations will be made from the childcare start date to the end date of the childcare. We would not expect the childcare to start more than five days before the learning starts nor finish more than five days after the learning has ended.

C2L will support childcare hours in reasonable excess of learning hours to support the young parent with home study time. The 2009/10 application form requires the Learning Provider to enter the number of hours of home study that the young parent is expected to complete.

Notifications

Notice of Entitlement and payment plan

Once a young parent's application has been processed and accepted, the LSS issues an NoE and a payment plan (see Annex 1) to the young parent and the Childcare Provider. This confirms the amount to be paid each week for childcare.

If applicable, a separate letter is sent to the young parent and the Learning Provider to confirm the amount to be paid for travel. This does not include details of the amount payable for childcare.

Where there is more than one Childcare Provider, there will be more than one payment plan issued. The amounts on each plan combined must not exceed the weekly maximum.

Where there is more than one Learning Provider, the payment plan will take account of learning with all Providers when assessing reasonable childcare and travel. In this instance, travel payments will be calculated and paid to the Learning Provider providing the majority of the learning.

Refusal letters

In cases where an application is refused, the young parent will receive a letter from the LSS setting out the reasons why. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the young parent's support worker as identified on the application form.

Change of Circumstance forms

The LSS must be notified where the following circumstances change:

- childcare arrangements – for example, hours of childcare provided, fee rates, new or additional Childcare Provider;
- learning arrangements – for example, hours of learning, course, new or additional Learning Provider;
- travel costs between childcare and home – or young parent wishes to claim these for the first time;
- Childcare Provider/Learning Provider bank details; and/or
- young parent's personal details.

CoC forms are available to young parents, Learning Providers and Childcare Providers by request from the LSS.

The original completed form (not a photocopy) should be sent to the LSS at the following address:

Care to Learn
Freepost RSAX-RXKX-GZBZ
Learner Support Service
Manchester M3 3JZ

The assessment of a CoC form will follow the same process as outlined in the preceding sections.

If there are any changes to circumstances, a revised payment plan will be issued to the Childcare Provider and the young parent.

If the changes affect the amount to be paid for travel, this will be confirmed to the young parent and the Learning Provider.

Summer Retainer forms

Where learning lasts for more than one academic year, or where the young parent is progressing on to a further course or university, a summer retainer can be paid to enable the childcare place to be kept open over the summer holiday period.

The Summer Retainer form is included in the application pack that is sent to all returning young parents. It must be completed and returned to the LSS before the end of the summer holiday period for the retainer to be paid.

Completed original forms (not a photocopy) should be sent to the LSS at the following address:

Care to Learn
Freepost RSAX-RXKX-GZBZ
Learner Support Service
Manchester M3 3JZ

The amount payable to keep a childcare place open over the summer holidays is under review – changes may be implemented for the summer of 2010.

Administration

Attendance monitoring

Learning Provider's attendance returns

A monthly attendance monitoring form (see Annex 2) will be sent to Learning Providers on the last Friday of every month in respect of that month's attendance. The Learning Provider must complete and return the monitoring form immediately to confirm that the young parent is still in learning and to ensure that C2L support continues.

Learning Providers must immediately notify the LSS if the young parent has stopped attending the course. The Learning Provider should also notify Connexions (or the lead professional or other targeted support provided for the young parent) in order to ensure that the young parent is supported back into learning.

Childcare Provider's attendance returns

A Childcare Provider's attendance monitoring form (see Annex 3), including remittance advice, will be issued every month in respect of that month's attendance. The Childcare Provider must complete and return the monitoring form immediately to confirm that the child is still in attendance and to confirm that the young parent has not given notice to the Childcare Provider. This will provide the basis for continued payment or notice where applicable.

Childcare Providers must immediately notify the LSS if the young parent has removed their child from childcare.

Childcare payments will continue to be made until the young parent reaches the end of their course date, unless the young parent ceases to attend the course or to use the childcare before the stated end date.

Where the Childcare Provider's monitoring form, or another communication, indicates that the child has stopped attending, the young parent and their adviser will receive notification that C2L funding has stopped.

Payments

Childcare payments

Childcare payments will be made to the Childcare Provider monthly in advance, in respect of the four and five-week periods that fall on the first Monday of every month. All payments made to Childcare Providers will be made by BACS.

Deposits can be paid to the Childcare Provider, if required, up to £250. The amount of deposit will be recovered from the first month's childcare payment. In the unlikely event that the first month's childcare payment is insufficient to support the deduction of the full deposit, the balance will be recovered from the second month's childcare payment.

The Childcare Provider cannot have the deposit offset against the final weeks of the payment plan.

A registration fee of up to £80 may be payable to a Childcare Provider if they request it. This is not recoverable against future childcare payments.

Travel payments

If the costs of childcare are less than the C2L weekly maximum, then the travel costs associated with childcare, that is, between home and the Childcare Provider, may also be claimed, but the weekly maximum must not be exceeded. Travel costs can be claimed no matter how short or long the distance travelled.

Learning Providers are asked to confirm, by signing the application form, that the travel costs claimed by the young parent are reasonable, based on their local knowledge. If the amount of travel being claimed seems excessive, the LSS will request additional proof from the Learning Provider.

Travel costs will not normally be paid where the childcare takes place on the same site as the learning.

Travel payments are made termly in advance. They are paid to the Learning Provider and not directly to the young parent or to other third parties. The Learning Provider should reimburse the travel payment to the young parent as appropriate.

All travel payments to the Learning Provider will be made by BACS.

Learning Provider's travel payment remittance

A Learning Provider remittance will be issued every time a travel payment has been paid. The Learning Provider should sign and return this immediately to confirm that the young parent is attending and using part of their weekly C2L allowance for travel support.

Learning Provider administrative payments

A one-off payment of £80 will be made to Learning Providers in respect of each new start on C2L. Only one payment per young parent per academic year will be issued.

Payment will be made following receipt of the first Learning Provider's attendance monitoring form.

The policy around Learning Providers' administrative payments is currently under review. Changes may be implemented for the 2010/11 academic year.

Childminder network/broker payments

A one-off £100 childminder network/broker payment will be made for each application supported by a network/broker that results in a young parent starting their chosen course/training programme. This is dependent on that network/broker providing at least three of the five following services, and that broker being recognised by their local authority or Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, or Children's Information Service, or the National Childminding Association.

The five services are:

1. Brokerage, in terms of providing a list of available childminders. This would also involve using knowledge of the childminder and their arrangements to explain alternative provision to the young parent.
2. Matching, to help the young parent identify a suitable childminder who meets their needs and was convenient for travel etc. This may involve visits and discussions.
3. Agreeing terms and conditions for the childminding that meet the young parent's needs. These would go beyond price alone and include issues such as timing, drop off and collection, diet, routine and behavioural issues.

It may also extend to agreeing flexibilities for study, vacations, deposits, retainers etc. This will ideally be set out in a formal written agreement.

4. Using briefings, arranging training and working with Childcare Providers to meet the needs of young parents.
5. Retaining an ongoing interest in the young parent for the duration of the course and assisting where possible in any change of arrangements.

The Childcare Provider will be asked on the application form to make formal declarations about whether they have been supported by a childminding network/broker service.

On receipt of these declarations, the LSS will send a simple form to the network/broker, seeking information about the support given and payment details.

Payment will be issued once validation is complete – that is, the broker form has been issued, has been returned and validated against the above criteria.

The policy around the payment of childminder network/broker payments is currently under review. Changes may be implemented for the 2010/11 academic year.

Recovery of overpayments

Where C2L is paid in error following a young parent ceasing learning, recovery action will be taken.

If the LSS becomes aware that C2L payments have been made inaccurately – for example, because of failure to disclose information on the part of the young parent, a misrepresentation of data, or processing errors – they will take recovery action from the Childcare Provider. There is a responsibility on the young parent, the Learning Provider and the Childcare Provider to notify the LSS of any potential overpayments.

Recovery action will be taken where overpayments of childcare or travel monies are made because the Learning Provider, Childcare Provider or young parent has failed to notify the LSS promptly of any changes.

Roles and responsibilities

The **Learning Provider** must:

- verify the young parent's eligibility to receive C2L by checking the child's birth certificate or proof of child benefit – a copy of either should be retained for audit purposes;
- verify the age of the young parent;
- complete and sign the Learning Provider section on the application form to confirm the Provider and course details;
- ensure that any costs claimed for travel between home and the Childcare Provider are reasonable, based on their local knowledge;
- ensure that the young parent is not double-claiming for travel costs to their childcare if they are in receipt of any other travel support for learning, such as a free travel pass, weekly bus pass etc., particularly in areas like London where travel to education or learning is free for under-18s;
- reimburse all due travel payments to the young parent in a timely fashion that does not prohibit the young parent from travelling to their Childcare Provider;
- complete and return monthly attendance monitoring forms to the LSS;
- notify the LSS immediately if the young parent ceases to attend;
- notify the LSS immediately if they discover that the young parent's Childcare Provider has been de-registered; and
- notify Connexions if the young parent drops out of learning or is at risk of dropping out to ensure that the young parent is supported appropriately.

If the Learning Provider is an FE or sixth form college they must not use their funding for discretionary Learner Support (20+ childcare) or Hardship Funds to support or 'top up' young parent learners who are eligible for C2L (see the LSC's *Discretionary Funding Guidance and Requirements 2009/10*).

Childcare Provider

The **Childcare Provider** must:

- complete their Ofsted registration details and sign the Childcare Provider section on the application form;
- complete and return monthly monitoring forms to the LSS to confirm that the child is still in receipt of childcare from them;
- notify the LSS immediately if the provision of childcare ceases;
- notify the LSS immediately if they become de-registered;
- confirm that the young parent is not receiving funding for this childcare from any other source such as free nursery education places, the childcare element of Working Tax Credit, ESF-funded programmes of learning;
- ensure that they are charging the young parent not more than the fees charged to other parents; and
- read and agree to abide by the C2L Code of Practice (2009) (a copy of this will be sent to each Childcare Provider who supports young parents on the C2L programme).

The **Learner Support Service** must:

- assess the application for C2L and verify the validity of the Childcare Provider;
- issue a payment plan to the young parent, the Childcare Provider and the Learning Provider to confirm the amounts to be paid each week for childcare and the amount to be paid for travel if applicable;
- make payments to the Childcare Provider direct in advance by BACS payment;
- pay the young parent's travel costs to the Learning Provider who will reimburse the young parent appropriately;
- pay an administration fee to the Learning Provider of £80 per young parent per year for all successful starts on C2L; and
- provide a telephone helpline service to young parents, Learning Providers, Childcare Providers and all other stakeholders.

Complaints and appeals

All complaints and appeals must be made in writing to the LSS.

If the complaint/appeal concerns operational processes or a complaint about customer service, it will be dealt with by the LSS in the first instance. In the event that you are dissatisfied with the way in which your appeal has been dealt with you may complain to the LSC's Learner Support Directorate.

If the complaint/appeal is about C2L policy, the LSS will refer it to the LSC's Learner Support Directorate for a decision. In the event that you are dissatisfied with the way in which your appeal has been dealt with you may refer to the LSC's Complaints Procedure.

For more information please see the LSC website at lsc.gov.uk/ComplaintsProcedure.htm.

Links with other support

- Where a young parent starts a course aged under 20, but turns 20 during their course, they will continue to receive C2L support until the end of **that particular course**. If they plan to go on to a further level or course they then need to seek financial support for childcare from other sources – for example, if they plan to study at a college they should seek discretionary Learner Support (20+ childcare) from their college, or if at a school sixth form or sixth form college they should seek help from the Sixth Form College Childcare Scheme. The LSC's new childcare scheme for adults, Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work, was launched in April 2009. More information on these schemes is available to Providers from **lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn** or from the LSS Provider helpline **0845 600 7979**, and to individual young parents from the LSS learner helpline **0800 121 8989** or the Careers Advice Service on **0800 100 900** or **careersadvice.direct.gov.uk/**.
- Young parents aged 16 to 18 and receiving C2L may also be eligible for the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) where they could receive up to £30 per week. More information on EMA is available to Providers from **lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn** or from the LSS Provider helpline **0845 600 7979**, and to individual learners from the LSS learner helpline on **0800 121 8989** or **direct.gov.uk/ema**.
- Young parents who are 19 at the start of their learning may also be eligible for the Adult Learning Grant (ALG). More information ALG is available to Providers from **lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn** or from the LSS Provider helpline **0845 600 7979**, and to individual young parents from the LSS learner helpline **0800 121 8989** or Careers Advice Service on **0800 100 900** or **careersadvice.direct.gov.uk/**.
- Benefits such as Income Support are not affected by the receipt of C2L.
- Young parents on a low income may also be eligible for a Sure Start Maternity Grant and NHS Healthy Start vouchers.
- Healthy Start vouchers towards purchasing fresh fruit and vegetables are received automatically by under-18s when they are pregnant.
- The other parent must **not** be claiming Childcare Tax Credit for help with their childcare costs.
- Young parents on an employed status work-based learning programme (such as an Apprenticeship) are not eligible for C2L as they can claim the childcare element of Working Tax Credits.

Marketing and support materials

The following marketing and support materials are available for C2L in 2009/10. The marketing and support materials change each year and we ask Providers to remove old stock and replace with new stock as soon as possible. In order to ensure you have the most recent materials, please check the website lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn.

- **Leaflet** aimed at the young parents and their parents to give basic messages about C2L and where they can find out if they are eligible for support (ref. LSC-P-NAT-090005).
- **Poster** for Learning Providers and Childcare Providers to use to inform young parents about C2L. The poster gives contact details for young parents to find out if they are eligible for support (ref. LSC-P-NAT- 080007).
- **Code of Practice for Childcare Providers.** Childcare Providers may be turned to by young parents for advice and support about childcare under C2L. This Code of Practice sets out the ways in which they may be able to help (ref. LSC-P-NAT-090052).

The leaflet and poster can be viewed and downloaded from the LSC website at caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk/resources/.

Printed copies of all materials can be ordered by contacting LSC Publications as follows. Please quote the relevant publication reference number when ordering.

LSC Publications
PO Box 5050
Sherwood Park
Annesley
Nottingham NG15 0DJ

Phone: **0845 602 2260**
Fax: **0845 603 3360**
Minicom: **0845 605 5560**
Email: lsc@prolog.uk.com

Audit requirements

Background

The following provides guidance to Childcare Providers and Learning Providers on the LSC audit arrangements for C2L.

Methodology

In recognition of the need to minimise the administrative burden on Learning Providers, it is proposed that LSC audits of C2L will typically be conducted as an integral part of the existing Provider Financial Assurance (PFA) audits of Learning Providers.

A short C2L audit programme has been developed which will be applied consistently at all Learning Providers and Childcare Providers that have young parents/children attracting C2L funding. The audit programme involves an overview of the key controls over the administration of C2L and testing of a random sample of young parents' payments across a selected period of time (usually a month).

Controls review

Through discussions with appropriate members of staff at Learning Providers and Childcare Providers, LSC auditors will identify and evaluate controls over the management and administration of C2L payments and complete a short questionnaire. This will help the auditors to establish what controls are in place and how effectively they are working. The controls review will cover:

- general management and administration arrangements for C2L including details of any off-site provision such as sub-contracting or childminding networks and the recording, input, storage and security of data relating to C2L payment submission and authorisation;
- controls for ensuring that only eligible young parents are enrolled by the Learning Provider (see 'Eligibility criteria', page 6); and
- controls for advising and reporting to the LSS of any factors that may influence C2L payments or corrective actions (see 'Roles and responsibilities', page 16, and 'Attendance monitoring', page 14).

Applicable to Childcare Providers

- Controls over the submission of completed monthly monitoring forms to the LSS confirming each child is still in receipt of childcare (see the Childcare Provider section under 'Roles and responsibilities', page 16, and 'Attendance monitoring', page 14).
- Childcare Providers should have documented policies and procedures for deposits, retainer fees and/or registration charges to ensure that these rates have been applied consistently throughout the enrolment process for all children (see the Childcare Provider section under 'Roles and responsibilities', page 16).

Applicable to Learning Providers

- Controls over the submission of completed monthly monitoring forms to the LSS confirming that each young parent is still attending the learning programme (see the Learning Provider section under 'Roles and responsibilities', page 16, and 'Attendance monitoring', page 14).
- Controls over the reimbursement of young parents' travel expenses to and from their Childcare Provider (where applicable) such as carrying out regular checks to ensure that each young parent is not in receipt of any other travel support (for example, free travel pass, weekly bus pass) and to ensure that the travel expenses claimed by each young parent are reasonable (see the Learning Provider section under 'Roles and responsibilities', page 16).

Substantive testing

A random sample of audit tests will be carried out and these will cover the same generic areas as the controls work detailed above. The substantive testing will involve reviewing supporting evidence.

The **Childcare Provider** must have evidence to confirm:

- the existence of child/children;
- attendance recording and submission to the LSS;
- consistency of deposit, retainer fees, registration and weekly fee charges per child;

- requests for adjustments/recoveries (where applicable); and
- accuracy and reliability of data.

The **Learning Provider** must have evidence to confirm:

- the existence of the learner;
- the eligibility of the learner;
- attendance recording and submission to the LSS;
- remittance evidence to demonstrate reimbursement of travel (where applicable);
- requests for adjustments/recoveries (where applicable); and
- accuracy and reliability of data.

Evidence requirements

The following are examples of the evidence that LSC auditors will expect to see during audits at Childcare Providers and Learning Providers. These are not intended to be exhaustive lists.

Applicable to Childcare Providers

- Original Ofsted registration certificate.
- Monthly attendance monitoring forms submitted to the LSS confirming that the child/children is still in receipt of childcare.
- Recent invoices and childcare rates to ensure that the young parent is charged the same rate of fees as those charged to other parents.
- Signed declaration statements, where applicable, confirming that the young parent is not receiving funding from any other source – for example, free nursery education places, the childcare element of Working Tax Credits, employed work-based learning status.

Applicable to Learning Providers

- Copies of child/children's birth certificate or proof of Child Benefit to verify each young parent's eligibility to receive C2L funding.
- Monthly attendance monitoring forms submitted to the LSS.
- Documented checks to ensure that the young parent is not double-claiming for travel costs to their childcare if they are in receipt of any other travel support for learning, for example, free travel pass or weekly bus pass.

- Remittance notices or statements demonstrating that all due travel payments to the young parent are reimbursed in a timely fashion that does not prohibit the young parent from travelling to their Childcare Provider.

Feedback and reporting

LSC auditors aim to discuss audit findings with the auditee as the work progresses and usually hold a formal meeting at the end of the fieldwork. As well as detailing any findings, auditors will endeavour to support Providers by giving recommendations for improvement to processes controls where required.

Part of the rationale for the controls work is to enable auditors to gain an understanding of how effectively Learning Providers and Childcare Providers monitor and reimburse (where applicable) young parents claiming C2L funding. Where errors are found, auditors will try to identify where controls have broken down or failed to operate as intended, so that meaningful and value-added recommendations can be made.

A formal audit report will be issued that covers all the audit work carried out, including C2L payments.

Summary of common pitfalls

A number of recurring issues have been identified at previous Learner Support audits, and are summarised below.

- Eligibility checks: Providers do not check that each young parent meets the C2L eligibility requirements as set out in the Learning Provider's declaration on the application form prior to enrolling young parents, and/or do not hold documentation to confirm that these eligibility checks have taken place.
- The attendance evidence which should be held by Learning Providers and Childcare Providers is either incomplete or missing.

Sources of further information

- C2L website for learners: [direct.gov.uk/caretolearn](https://www.direct.gov.uk/caretolearn)
- C2L website for stakeholders: [caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk/](https://www.caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk/)
- LSS Provider helpline: **0845 600 7979**
- LSS learner helpline: **0800 121 8989**
- LSS email: C2L@lsclearnersupport.co.uk
- Ofsted website: [ofsted.gov.uk](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Glossary

Academic year: for the purposes of administering C2L, the academic year is defined as 1 September through to 31 August. Academic years are written as 2009/10 and financial years as 2009–10.

Activity Agreements (AAs): for 16- and 17-year-old children who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). They are offered a weekly allowance in return for committing themselves to a plan and completing agreed activities.

Change of Circumstance (CoC) form: a smaller version of the application form which young parents on C2L can use to tell the LSS about any changes to their learning or childcare arrangements.

Childcare provider: a provider of childcare – for example, childminder, nursery, playgroup.

Childcare Register (compulsory part): the Ofsted register for Childcare Providers providing care for children aged over five but under eight.

Childcare Register (voluntary part): the Ofsted register for Childcare Providers who are not required to register on either the EYR or the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

Early Years Register (EYR): the Ofsted register for Childcare Providers providing care for children aged up to five years.

European Economic Area (EEA): consisting of the states of the EU (see below) plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

European Social Fund (ESF): set up to improve employment opportunities in the European Union and so help to raise standards of living. It aims to help people fulfil their potential by giving them better skills and better job prospects.

European Union (EU): the member states of which are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom (including Gibraltar).

Learner Support Directorate: the part of the LSC responsible for managing all Learner Support schemes, including C2L and EMA.

Learner Support Service (LSS): the body responsible for assessing applications, paying appropriate funds to interested parties and providing a telephone helpline service to young parents and stakeholders.

Learning Provider: an organisation providing courses and/or training such as a school or college.

Notice of Entitlement (NoE): the letter issued to a young parent informing them that they are eligible for support. It is issued with a payment plan.

Ofsted: the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. It inspects and regulates care for children and young people, and inspects education and training for learners of all ages.

Payment plan: this is issued to the young parent and the Childcare Provider and confirms the amounts to be paid each week for childcare.

Stakeholder: any organisation or individual with an interest in Learner Support, including learners, Learning Providers, partners and government departments.

Summer Retainer form: a smaller version of the application form that young parents on C2L who are following a course that spans two academic years can use to apply for payments to keep a childcare place open over the summer holiday break.

Annex 1: Example of payment plan

Personal



Payment Schedule

5/21/09

Print Date:

Schedule of payments for:

Care to Learn
Freepost RSAX-RXKX-GZBZ
Learner Support Service
Manchester
M3 3JZ

Learners please call: 0800 121 8989
Providers please call: 0845 600 7979
Fax: 0161 834 7428

Parents name:
Course: Hairdressing NVQ2

Childcare Provider: Little Ducklings College Nursery

Child Name:

<u>Payment Due Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Payment Type</u>	<u>Status</u>
8, September, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
15, September, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
22, September, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
29, September, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
6, October, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
13, October, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
20, October, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
3, November, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
10, November, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
17, November, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
24, November, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
1, December, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
8, December, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
15, December, 2008	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
5, January, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
12, January, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
19, January, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
26, January, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
2, February, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
9, February, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
23, February, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
2, March, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
9, March, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
16, March, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
23, March, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
30, March, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
20, April, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
27, April, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
4, May, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
11, May, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
18, May, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PAID
1, June, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PLANNED
8, June, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PLANNED
15, June, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PLANNED
22, June, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PLANNED
29, June, 2009	£ 89.00	Childcare	PLANNED

Personal

Personal



Payment Schedule

Print Date: 5/21/09

Care to Learn
Freepost RSAX-RXKX-GZBZ
Learner Support Service
Manchester
M3 3JZ

Schedule of payments for:

Learners please call: 0800 121 8989
Providers please call: 0845 600 7979
Fax: 0161 834 7428

Parents name:


Course: Hairdressing NVQ2

Grand Total: £3,204.00

Personal

Annex 2: Learning Provider monthly attendance monitoring form

Learner Attendance Monitoring 2009/2010
Care to Learn



Personal

Student Support Services

You will recall that as a learning provider supporting young parents on the Care to Learn scheme you agreed to confirm monthly attendance returns. This return is seeking confirmation that the following learners are still engaged in a programme of learning at the end of **September 2009** and are eligible for assistance with their childcare and associated travel costs. In this case please show "Y" or "N" if not in learning in **Column B**.

Where this is not the case please indicate so by entering the last date the learner attended in **Column C**. We will review the young parent's application and cease funding in due course.

Information in **Column A** advises if there is a known query about the learners assessment or entitlement or if the learner is already known to have withdrawn from study. An entry "Support Agreed" shows that an assessment has been made and payments have been or will be made.

This form should be completed by an appropriate officer within your establishment that has access to student attendance and performance records.

<u>Student's Full Name</u>	<u>Childcare Ref</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Course Name</u>	Column A <u>Application Status</u>	Column B <u>Student is in Learning (Y/N)</u>	Column C <u>Date Learning Ceased</u>

Please return the completed form within 2 weeks so that we can issue the next childcare and travel payment, as appropriate

Declaration to be signed by Learning Provider -

I confirm the above attendance monitoring information is correct

Signed: Name: Position in Organisation:

Date: Telephone Number:

Please return the completed form to : Care to Learn, Freepost RSAX-RXKX-GZBZ, Learner Support Service, Manchester, M3 3JZ . or
Alternatively you can fax the completed document to : 0161 834 7428. Telephone enquiries to Providers Line: 0845 600 7979.

[Learning Providers Stamp:]

Personal

26/09/2009

Annex 3: Childcare Provider remittance/monthly attendance monitoring form

CP0000001443
Team

Care to Learn Childcare



Care to Learn
Freeport RSAX-RXKX-GZBZ
Learner Support Service
Manchester
M3 3JZ

Tel: 0845 600 7979

C2L@capita.co.uk

Little Ducklings College Nursery
School Road
Purbrook
PO7 8ZZ

Care to Learn (C2L) Childcare Payments

Remittance for payment made by BACS on 20/05/2009 for Childcare costs.

Please find enclosed the details of the payments paid to you for students who are in receipt of funding whilst they continue their program of education.

Payments are made in advance on a monthly basis and cover the dates indicated on the following page(s). Should childcare cease, you must notify us immediately in order for us to cancel all future payments, and if appropriate, we will arrange payment for any notice period that may be due to you.

Student Name – Childs Name	Date of Birth	Amount	Payment for: (week beginning)
Total			

If any of the learners have left their studies, please show their details below		
Student Name – Childs Name	Date of Birth	Date you stopped providing childcare

BACS payments should reach your bank account within 3 to 5 days.

DECLARATION - to be signed by the childcare provider

I acknowledge receipt of the above payment and certify that I am still providing childcare for the learner(s) on the following page(s) Please return this remittance within three weeks, failure to do so may delay future payments

Signed _____ Date _____

Name _____ Contact Tel No _____
(please print)

Job Title _____

If you need any help or advice please ring the Learner Support helpline on 0845 600 7979

Yours sincerely
Care to Learn Childcare Team

On behalf of the Learning and Skills Council

