

## Childcare News August 2010

Welcome to the August edition of *Childcare News* from the YPLA's Learner Support Directorate.

This bulletin is aimed at learner advocates with a responsibility for the promotion of and administration of Learner Support childcare schemes; providers; local authorities; and other partners interested in these schemes.

### In this issue:

1. For Guidance: [Care to Learn and discretionary Learner Support Guidance published](#)
2. For action: [Completing the Care to Learn 2010/11 application form](#)
3. For action: [28-day backdating rule](#)
4. For action: [Attendance monitoring for Care to Learn](#)
5. For information: [Care to Learn workshops feedback](#)
6. For information: [Update on Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work](#)
7. For information: [Learner Support scheme websites](#)
8. For information: [Changes in the way you can sign up for this bulletin](#)
9. [How to find out more](#)

### 1. Care to Learn and discretionary Learner Support Guidance published

Guidance has been published for the 2010/11 academic year for Care to Learn and discretionary Learner Support (for both learners aged 16-18 and 19+), which includes information on 20+ Childcare. This Guidance is aimed at those involved in the delivery of Learner Support schemes, and outlines the scheme policy and how this should be administered.

The Guidance is available to download from each scheme's website:

- Care to Learn is available at <http://caretolearn.ypla.gov.uk/resources/guidance>
- discretionary Learner Support is available at <http://lsf.ypla.gov.uk/resources/guidance>

You may wish to download a copy for your records. The 2010/11 version of these documents should replace any previous versions you may have.

Please note that these documents may be subject to change within the academic year – you should check the website regularly to ensure that you are using the correct version.

2010/11 Guidance documents are also available for Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Adult Learning Grant (ALG). These are available to download from each scheme's website, which are accessible from [www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport](http://www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport).

If you have any queries on any of the policies that is not answered within the Guidance, you can call the Learner Support helpline on **0845 600 7979**. Please note that for queries on the discretionary Learner Support Guidance you should contact [dlsenquiries@ypla.gov.uk](mailto:dlsenquiries@ypla.gov.uk).

## 2. Completing the Care to Learn 2010/11 application form

Young parents wishing to apply for support from the Care to Learn scheme in 2010/11 should apply for support as early as possible. As you may be aware, the new application process for 2010/11 means that young parents can apply and be assessed for Care to Learn with only their own and their child(ren)'s details; they can apply before they start on their course and before they have approached a Childcare Provider.

However, young parents may need support in completing their application form. We have produced an *Application Resource Pack* aimed at Learning and Childcare Providers, support workers, student services and those working with young parents. This resource pack gives a high-level walkthrough of the application form, highlighting mandatory fields and giving useful advice on how to answer the questions, including what evidence may be required. The pack also gives a high-level walkthrough of the Learning Provider Registration Form and Childcare Provider Registration Form, to support them in completing these new forms for the 2010/11 academic year.

You can download the application resource pack from the Care to Learn website at <http://caretolearn.ypla.gov.uk/resources>.

Please note; it is very important that the parent wishing to apply for Care to Learn completes both Part A **and** Part B of the application form and returns these together to the Learner Support Service (LSS). Part B is for the parent to let us know the details of their child or children for whom they wish to claim Care to Learn. We are already receiving some learner applications without Part B. Applications that are submitted without Part B will be returned to the learner to complete and this will delay the assessment process.

In 2009/10, 85 per cent of learner applications did not include any details of a support worker. It is really important that where the young parent has a

support worker, their details are entered on the application form. Where there are any problems with the learner's application, the LSS will send a letter to the support worker named on the form to advise them so that they can help the young parent as necessary. Without these details the LSS cannot contact the support worker and they will be unable to discuss the young parent's application with the LSS.

### 3. 28-day backdating rule

As we mentioned in the previous article, the new application process for Care to Learn means that the learner does not have to secure a learning or childcare place before applying for support from the Care to Learn scheme. We therefore encourage young parents to apply for support before they enrol onto a course.

As you will be aware, since the 2009/10 academic year, the LSS will only make payments from the start of a learner's course if they receive the learner's application **within 28 days** of the start of their learning programme. If the LSS receive the application outside of these 28 days, payments will be backdated to the **Monday of the week in which the application was received**. This rule will be strictly adhered to in the 2010/11 academic year. The new application form and process have been developed to enable learners to get their applications in much sooner.

It is important that this information is passed onto young parents thinking of applying for childcare support from Care to Learn, so that they can benefit from this funding from the point at which they need it.

### 4. Attendance monitoring for Care to Learn

Learning Providers are required to complete and return monthly attendance monitoring forms to the Learner Support Service (LSS) to confirm that the young parent is still attending the learning programme.

Payments for childcare are paid each month, subject to the receipt of attendance monitoring returns from both the learning provider and the childcare provider. The timely return of these forms is very important to ensure that childcare payments are not interrupted.

Failure to complete and submit the attendance monitoring forms will result in childcare and travel payments being withheld and could potentially put the young parent's childcare place at risk.

## 5. Care to Learn workshops feedback

As you may be aware, the Learner Support Service (LSS) ran a number of workshops around the country, during July and August, to let you know about the changes in the application process for Care to Learn.

We are pleased to say that we received positive feedback from those who attended the workshops, that they were useful; and that they felt the information would be useful to take back to their colleagues.

We have captured all your feedback about the new process, the way that attendance is monitored, and what issues you feel have not been made clear. We will use this to improve our communications to you, and will update you through this e-bulletin.

In the next few weeks, we will publish the presentation on our website, and answers to some of your most common questions.

You can also access the briefing notes, outlining the key changes to the process, from the Care to Learn website at <http://caretolearn.ypla.gov.uk/resources/childcarenews>.

If you have any additional questions, you can call the Learner Support helpline on **0845 600 7979**.

## 6. Update on Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work

We told you in the last edition of this e-bulletin that the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme will close from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010. No new applications are being accepted for this scheme; however, learners who are continuing on the same course (at the same level and Learning Provider) in the 2010/11 academic year that they started in 2009/10 will continue to receive financial support, providing they remain eligible under the scheme criteria.

The process for administering payments for these learners in 2010/11 will be different than in 2009/10. We have sent a letter to Learning Providers, informing them that we will be allocating payments directly to them, and asking them to make arrangements to pay the learner's Childcare Provider.

Full information on the new process is available on the website – we have also produced a flowchart to illustrate how the process will work in the 2010/11 academic year. This is available to download from [www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport/freechildcare](http://www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport/freechildcare)

If you are involved in the administration of Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work, or you have any continuing learners, please ensure that you have a look at the information.

## **7. Learner Support scheme websites**

We have recently made some changes to the structure of the Learner Support scheme websites, to make their navigation more simple and consistent between schemes.

This may mean that if you have saved any links to your favourites they may no longer work. All the same information is available on the websites. All key documents will be under the 'Resources' section, including scheme Guidance and application resource packs; the sites also contain key eligibility criteria and Frequently Asked Questions.

You can access information on all Learner Support schemes, including Care to Learn, from the YPLA website at [www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport](http://www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport)

## **8. Sign up to receive *Childcare News***

We have changed the way that you sign up to receive this e-bulletin.

If you would like to receive *Childcare News* regularly, you should email [childcare-news@ypla.gov.uk](mailto:childcare-news@ypla.gov.uk) with your contact details, and the organisation you work for.

If you would like to unsubscribe, you should email the same address.

You may also be aware that we produce the *Learner Support e-bulletin*, which gives information from the Learner Support Service, and key updates on Learner Support schemes. If you would like to sign up to receive this e-bulletin, please also include this in your email.

If you are aware of any colleagues who are involved in the administration of childcare schemes and are not signed up to receive this, please forward them a copy of this bulletin and encourage them to register.

Please note, we hope to improve the way you can sign up and will update you through this e-bulletin.

## 9. How to find out more

More information on Learner Support schemes is available at [www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport](http://www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport)

Learning and Childcare Providers can call the helpline for support on **0845 600 7979**.

Learners can find out more information from the helpline on **0800 121 8989**, or visiting [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) and searching for the relevant scheme.

If you have any feedback on this publication you can email [childcare-news@ypla.gov.uk](mailto:childcare-news@ypla.gov.uk).