

POLICY

TITLE: Student Childcare Funding Policy
2026-27

POLICY HOLDER: Alexandra Miller

APPROVAL BOARD:

VERSION NO: 3

LAST REVIEWED: July 2026

REVIEW PERIOD*: Annually

*The review period refers to our internal policy review process. The published policy is current and is the most recent approved version.

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Further information: If you have any queries about this policy or procedure, please contact the named policy holder.



LEGISLATION OR REGULATION:	Care to Learn academic year 2026 to 2027: conditions of grant funding - GOV.UK Accessed 06 th July 2026 Adult skills fund: funding and performance management rules 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK Accessed 06 th July 2026 Advice: funding rules for 16 to 19 provision 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK Accessed 06 th July 2026		
VERSION CONTROL DOCUMENT			
DATE	VERSION NO.	REASON FOR CHANGE	AUTHOR
July 2025	1	New policy	Alexandra Miller
January 2026	2	2.1 Reference to 19+ students on full time courses and the limitations of UC financial support. 2.4 Amendment of percentage paid during holiday periods for those on 50 wk/yr childcare contracts. Increased from 50% of eligible cost to 100% of eligible cost. 2.4 Examples changed due to inaccurate reference to a full time student claiming UC.	
July 2026	3	Annual update 1.3 & 2.3 Update reference to uploading	Alexandra Miller



		evidence via questionnaire on PMS 1.4 & 2.4- Request to provide childcare invoices within 1 month of receipt Update on cash payments and when permitted as reimbursements. 2.5 Included 50 week per year nursery cover 3.3 Updated appeal process	
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Introduction

The UK Government offers financial help for students who are parents and need support with childcare while they study. This support is available through two main schemes:

- **Care to Learn (C2L)** – for students aged **under 20**
- **Adult Skills Fund Learner Support** – for students aged **20 and over**

These schemes aim to remove childcare barriers so that young and adult learners can continue their education or training.

This policy explains who can get support, what it covers, and how to apply. It's designed to help students understand their options and make informed decisions about their education and childcare.

This policy states the eligibility criteria and process for the administration of the funds. The rules within this policy are subject to change at any time from the DfE.

By applying for any Government funded bursary, students are agreeing to pay back any funds already received if they withdraw from college within the first 6 weeks of the course. Extenuating circumstances considered.

1. Care to Learn

Care to Learn (C2L) is a government scheme that helps young parents (aged under 20) pay for childcare while they study. For young parents who want to stay in school or college, this funding can help cover the cost of childcare and travel to the childcare provider.

The College will handle applications for funding directly, however students will need to arrange their own childcare with an Ofsted registered nursery/childcare facility or childminder.

Care to Learn can help with;

- **Childcare costs** while students are in lessons or on a work placement.
- **Travel costs** to take the child(ren) to the childcare provider.¹
- **Deposits or registration fees** for childcare (if needed).
- **Childcare costs for study time** as part of the study programme to complete coursework, undertake revision or homework may be considered. Appropriate dates must be agreed between the student and the college prior to any booking/payment outside of the student's timetabled lessons.

¹ C2L will pay for travel costs, where appropriate, if these are necessary for the student to take their child(ren) between childcare and home. Travel costs are only paid if they are additional to the student's normal travel costs from home to the education institution. Travel costs must not be paid where the childcare takes place on the same site as the study programme.

Travel should be by the cheapest means of transport available, this is normally public transport. If the cheapest means is by car, institutions must calculate the amount using a rate of 25p per mile.

The total of the childcare and travel costs must not exceed the C2L maximum weekly amount.

Care to Learn cannot help with;

- Meals/snacks provided to the child(ren) during their booked session(s)
- Any additional charges for extra-curricular events such as days out or booked activities

1.1 Eligibility

To be eligible for Care to Learn the student must be:

- **Under 20** when the course starts.
- The **main carer** of the child and no other person with '**parental responsibility**' is available to care for the child e.g. they are also in education or are absent.
- Studying a **publicly funded course**
- Using a **childcare provider** which is Ofsted registered and approved. See 1.2 below for further guidance.
- Not already getting help for childcare from **another scheme**.
- No other person with '**parental responsibility**' is claiming any other form of government funding for the same child, such as funded early years places or Childcare Tax Credits.

Young parents must be living and studying in England to be eligible for C2L. Young parents must also meet the same residency criteria in the funding rules for post-16 provision². Where a young parent is not a British or Irish citizen, they may be eligible for C2L if one of the following immigration conditions applies.

They are an asylum seeker aged:

- under 18
- 18 or over and a care leaver aged 18 or 19 (they must include an original letter from their local authority that shows their address and confirms they are a care leaver with their application)

They have:

- refugee status
- humanitarian protection
- discretionary leave to remain
- indefinite leave to remain
- indefinite leave to enter
- limited leave to remain
- limited leave to enter
- leave outside the rules

If a student turns 20 years olds during their study programme, they can continue to claim funding until that specific study programme ends e.g. same course, same level.

If a student loses custody of their child(ren), even temporarily, they must notify the college immediately.

There is a London 'weighting' scheme which determines the amount young parents are eligible for. The National funding limit is £180 per child per week. For those living in a London Borough, the funding limit

² [Advice: funding rules for 16 to 19 provision 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#) - updated 17th June 2026

is £195 per week, per child. A list of the London Boroughs can be found in the C2L guidance³.

Where a student's childcare costs are over the capped maximum allowance per week, students who are eligible for 16-19 discretionary bursary, can apply for any additional costs to be paid by the bursary.

Where a student's childcare costs are over the capped maximum allowance per week, and students are not eligible for the 16-19 bursary, then the student will be liable for the remaining invoice due.

1.2 Childcare provider requirements

To receive Care to Learn (C2L) funding, the childcare provider used must be properly registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency. This includes being on the correct register for the child's age.

School-run childcare is allowed if the school is exempt from registration, but the college must be provided with the school's unique reference number (URN). In special cases, providers registered with the Care Quality Commission may be approved.

Relatives can only be paid for childcare through C2L if;

- they live separately from the related child(ren),
- care for other children as well,
- are Ofsted registered.

No funding will be given to unregistered providers.

1.3 Evidence

The college will require evidence before any payments can be made.

In all cases and before any payments can be made;

- Birth Certificate(s) proving parental responsibility.
- Proof of receipt of child benefit for the child(ren) for whom the student is claiming childcare.
- Signed contract between the childcare provider and the young parent with details of the child(ren) being cared for.

For each period of time/session claim;

- A dated invoice on headed paper which includes:
 - Ofsted unique registration number (URN)
 - Provider contact name, address, email address and phone number
 - Name of child(ren) being looked after and DoB
 - Parent/Carer name and address
 - Dates/hours of childcare being invoiced for and rates charged.
 - Bank or building society account details for payment

For each period of time/session claim;

- Details of journey travelled **in addition** to the normal route travelled to get to college i.e. if the journey to the childcare provider takes the student further than their normal journey to college and/or cost the student more than their usual daily transport costs between home and college.
- Receipts for public transport if used

Travel payments can only be paid if they are in addition to the student's normal travel costs from home to college. The travel award should be given as the cheapest form of transport. This could be the public

³ [Care to Learn academic year 2026 to 2027: conditions of grant funding - GOV.UK](#) accessed 06th July 2026

transport cost, or where there is no convenient public transport route/timetable, then a rate of 25p per mile can be awarded towards fuel costs. Travel costs are included within the weekly maximum amount payable, not in addition to.

Evidence can be uploaded to the Pay My Student online application form using the Childcare questionnaire feature.

1.4 Awards, Payments and Attendance

Each invoice provided will be individually assessed for eligibility.

C2L can only be paid where the child(ren) are attending the booked sessions and the student is attending their timetabled classes, work experience/industry placements or agreed self-study time.

C2L funding will be withdrawn immediately from the date a student is withdrawn from college, or the child(ren) ceases attending the childcare provision. The college reserves the right to determine the date and final payment due to the provider.

Student attendance is monitored, and we expect students to attend all of their timetabled sessions. The college recognises that student's will have signed a contract with their childcare provider and may also be eligible for a notice period. All student absences must be authorised and notified to the college through the absence line immediately. Where attendance levels drop below 100%, confirmation will be sought from academic staff for extenuating circumstances. Attendance monitoring does not apply to students who have justified absences or have been suspended without prejudice. Students should be aware that non-attendance at college will put their C2L funding at risk and they may be given notice of withdrawal of funding.

The college understands that childcare providers may operate on either an annual or term-time-only contract, and that students may not always be aware, or able to change, which type of contract their provider uses. The college will use discretion to consider any payments during the holidays for those on annual contracts.

C2L can only cover costs (up to the maximum amount) which are not already covered by Early Years funding, Child Tax Credits or any other government funded childcare scheme. An example might be;

- *An 18-year-old student on a 3 day a week course with a 3-year-old child.*

Student may be entitled to 15 hours of Early Years Funding which covers 1 x full day (8am-6pm) + 1 x half day (8am-1pm). The student is at college between the hours of 9am-4pm, however the childcare provider does not offer flexible bookings. Therefore 3 full day bookings are required. C2L funding could be applied for to cover the remaining 15 hours, which also provides the student with some funded self-study time.

Payments will be made directly to the childcare provider. We kindly ask that invoices are forwarded to the college in a timely manner and within 1 month of issue to assist with our bursary budgeting and to pay the invoice on time. The Childcare questionnaire on the bursary application provides details of all the information required and can be accessed again after submission. It may be possible to arrange for invoices to be sent directly to the college for payment, in which case they should be sent to bursaryadmin@ccn.ac.uk.

Where a student has paid upfront costs for childcare whilst awaiting a bursary application assessment, the college will reimburse the cost as a BACS payment as long as the placement;

- Meets the eligibility criteria
- is within the agreed costs and dates on completion of our application assessment

Under no other circumstances will cash/BACS payments be made.

1.5 Deposits, Registration Fees and Summer Retainers

Where a childcare provider requires a deposit, the college can use C2L funding to pay up to a maximum of £250 deposit per child. This is only available if the student is currently enrolled on a programme which is not due to complete before the period of time the deposit is intended, or the student has re-enrolled for the following academic year in advance.

Where a childcare provider requires a registration fee, the college can use C2L funding to pay up to a maximum of £80 per child. This is a one-off payment and does not form part of the weekly payment. It will not be payable in subsequent years unless the child moves to a different childcare provider.

Summer retainers can be paid to childcare providers, if required, to hold the childcare place over the summer holiday period. This only applies if a student is finishing study in one year and continuing their study in the next academic year. Eligibility criteria still applies in the next academic year.

Eligibility for Summer Retainer. Students must;

- have received C2L funding in academic year 2026 to 2027 and be intending to return to the study programme in academic year 2027 to 2028
- be on a study programme that has lasted for 6 weeks or more in academic year 2026 to 2027
- be on a study programme that finishes no earlier than 26 May 2027
- be intending to continue with the same childcare provider they used during academic year 2026 to 2027
- have been using the childcare provider for a minimum of 6 weeks

Summer retainers can only be paid for a maximum of 8 weeks over the summer and cannot exceed the weekly C2L rate. The college can use its discretion to pay a further 2 weeks' summer retainer where the student's summer break exceeds the 8-week maximum.

Where a childcare provider operates an annual provision, and the expectation is to continue using the childcare provision over the summer break to retain the place, then the college will continue to pay the weekly invoice (within the maximum amount) for up to 10 weeks as a summer retainer. If the student fails to enrol at college in the Autumn term, then they will no longer be eligible for C2L funding and will be liable for any childcare costs made over the summer break. The college will be required to reclaim the funds paid and the student will receive an invoice. Exceptional circumstances will be considered.

2. Adult Skills Fund – Learner Support (for Childcare)

If you're 19 or older, you may be able to get help through the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) Learner Support towards your childcare costs. This funding is awarded through the college's 19+ Bursary. Support is available if:

- You are eligible for the college's 19+ bursary⁴
- You're studying an eligible course funded by the Department for Education
- You need help with childcare to attend your course;
 - Care to Learn top up for students aged 19 on the first day of learning on a DfE funded course.
 - Students aged 20 or older on the first day of learning who are at risk of not starting or continuing learning because of childcare costs.

The Adult Skills Fund can help with;

- **Childcare costs** while students are in lessons or on a work placement.

⁴ [Student Finance at City College Norwich](#)

- **Travel costs** to take the child(ren) to the childcare provider⁵.
- **Deposits or registration fees** for childcare (if needed).
- **Childcare costs for study time** as part of the study programme to complete coursework, undertake revision or homework may be considered. Appropriate dates must be agreed between the student and the college prior to any booking/payment outside of the student's timetabled lessons.

The Adult Skills fund cannot help with;

- Meals/snacks provided to the child(ren) during their booked session(s)
- Any additional charges for extra-curricular events such as days out or booked activities.

2.1 Eligibility

To be eligible for support with childcare costs you must be;

- **Over 19** when the course starts.
- Studying a **publicly funded course**
- Using a **childcare provider** which is Ofsted registered and approved. See 2.2 below for further guidance.
- Not already getting help for the same childcare costs from **another scheme such as Universal Credit or Child Tax Credits**.
- No other person with '**parental responsibility**' is claiming any other form of government funding for the same childcare costs, such as Universal Credit or Childcare Tax Credits.

Students studying a full time course, may not be eligible to claim for childcare costs through UC due to the requirement to be in work for a specific number of hours/earning a minimum weekly amount. We will assess each application individually and inform applicants of their entitlement to childcare funding via email.

2.2 Childcare Provider Requirements

To receive 19+ bursary funding towards childcare, the childcare provider used must be properly registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency. This includes being on the correct register for the child's age.

School-run childcare is allowed if the school is exempt from registration, but the college must be provided with the school's unique reference number (URN). In special cases, providers registered with the Care Quality Commission may be approved.

Relatives can only be paid for childcare if;

- they live separately from the related child(ren),
- care for other children as well,
- are Ofsted registered.

⁵ The 19+ bursary can pay for travel costs, where appropriate, if these are necessary for the student to take their child(ren) between childcare and home. Travel costs are only paid if they are additional to the student's normal travel costs from home to the education institution. Travel costs will not be paid where the childcare takes place on the same site as the study programme.

Travel costs will be reimbursed by the cheapest means of transport available which is normally public transport. If the cheapest means is by car, the college will calculate the amount using a rate of 25p per mile.

No payments will be made for unregistered providers.

2.3 Evidence

The college will require evidence before any payments can be made.

In all cases and before any payments can be made;

- Birth Certificate(s) proving parental responsibility.
- Proof of receipt of child benefit for the child(ren) for whom the student is claiming C2L.
- Signed contract between the childcare provider and the student with details of the child(ren) being cared for.

For each period of time/session claim;

- A dated invoice on headed paper which includes:
 - Ofsted unique registration number (URN)
 - Provider contact name, address, email address and phone number
 - Name of child(ren) being looked after and DoB
 - Parent/Carer name and address
 - Dates/hours of childcare being invoiced for and rates charged.
 - Proof of payment

For each period of time/session claim;

- Details of journey travelled **in addition** to the normal route travelled to get to college i.e. if the journey to the childcare provider takes the student further than their normal journey to college and/or cost the student more than their usual daily transport costs between home and college.
- Receipts for public transport if used.

Travel payments can only be paid if they are in addition to the student's normal travel costs from home to college. The travel award should be given as the cheapest form of transport. This could be the public transport cost, or where there is no convenient public transport route/timetable, then a rate of 25p per mile can be awarded towards fuel costs. Travel costs are included within the weekly maximum amount payable, not in addition to.

For students claiming childcare costs, we will also request a recent UC statement at the end of each term (where applicable).

Evidence can be uploaded to the Pay My Student online application form using the Childcare questionnaire feature.

2.4 Awards, Payments and Attendance

Each invoice provided will be individually assessed for eligibility.

The total award for childcare (including deposits/registration fees) and travel is capped at a maximum of £75 per day. Funding is awarded on a first come first serve basis. The 19+ bursary is a finite amount and being eligible for the bursary is not a guarantee that childcare costs will be paid for the duration of a study programme. To assist the bursary team with budgeting, we kindly ask that the estimated weekly costs is completed as part of the Childcare Questionnaire on the bursary application form.

Childcare costs can only be paid where the child(ren) are attending the booked sessions and the student is attending their timetabled classes, work experience/industry placements or agreed self-study time.

All committed funding will be withdrawn immediately from the date a student is withdrawn from college, or the child(ren) ceases attending the childcare provision. The college reserves the right to determine the date and final payment due to the provider.

Student attendance is monitored, and we expect students to attend all of their timetabled sessions. The college recognises that student's will have signed a contract with their childcare provider and may also be eligible for a notice period. All student absences must be authorised and notified to the college through the absence line immediately. Where attendance levels drop below 100%, confirmation will be sought from academic staff for extenuating circumstances. Attendance monitoring does not apply to students who have justified absences or have been suspended without prejudice. Students should be aware that non-attendance at college will put their bursary funding at risk and they may be given notice of withdrawal of funding.

The college understands that childcare providers may not operate a term-time-only contract, and that students may not always be aware of, or able to change, which type of contract their provider uses. The college will pay 100% of the eligible childcare costs for students who are required to continue paying their childcare provider outside of term time (within the start and end date of the course).

19+ Bursary funding can only cover costs (up to £75 per day) which are not already covered by Early Years funding, Child Tax Credits, Universal Credit or any other government funded childcare scheme. A few examples might be;

- *A 24-year-old student on a 3 day a week course with a 3-year-old child.*

Student may be entitled to 15 hours of Early Years Funding which covers 1 x full day (8am-6pm) + 1 x half day (8am-1pm). The student is at college between the hours of 9am-4pm, however the childcare provider does not offer flexible bookings. Therefore 3 full day bookings are required. 19+ Bursary funding could be applied for to cover the remaining 15 hours, which also provides the student with some funded self-study time.

- *A 30-year-old student on a 2 day a week course, who works 2 days a week and is on Universal Credit with a 5-year-old child in breakfast and after school clubs 5 days a week.*

Student may be able to claim 85% of their childcare costs through Universal Credit.

Payments will be made directly to the childcare provider. We kindly ask that invoices are forwarded to the college in a timely manner and within 1 month of issue to assist with our bursary budgeting and to pay the invoice on time. The Childcare questionnaire on the bursary application provides details of all the information required and can be accessed again after submission. It may be possible to arrange for invoices to be sent directly to the college for payment, in which case they should be sent to bursaryadmin@ccn.ac.uk.

2.5 Deposits, Registration Fees and Summer Retainers

These will only apply to students who are;

- Currently enrolled on a programme which is not due to complete before the period of time the deposit is intended.
- Registration fees which fall within the student's timetabled programme (not prior to official start dates)
- Finishing study in one year and continuing their study in the next academic year for which the summer retainer is intended.

Eligibility criteria still applies in the next academic year.

Where a childcare provider requires a deposit, the college can use 19+ bursary to pay up to a maximum

of £250 deposit per child (funds dependent).

Where a childcare provider requires a registration fee, the college can use 19+ bursary to pay up to a maximum of £80 per child. This is a one-off payment and does not form part of the weekly payment. It will not be payable in subsequent years unless the child moves to a different childcare provider.

Summer retainers can be paid to childcare providers, if required, to hold the childcare place over the summer holiday period.

Eligibility for Summer Retainer. Students must;

- have been enrolled at college in academic year 2026 to 2027 and be intending to return to the study programme in academic year 2027 to 2028
- be on a study programme that has lasted for 6 weeks or more in academic year 2026 to 2027
- be on a study programme that finishes no earlier than 26 May 2027
- be intending to continue with the same childcare provider they used during academic year 2026 to 2027
- have been using the childcare provider for a minimum of 6 weeks

Summer retainers can only be paid for a maximum of 8 weeks over the summer and cannot exceed the weekly amount which was paid in the previous academic year. The college can use its discretion to pay a further 2 weeks' summer retainer where the student's summer break exceeds the 8-week maximum.

Where a childcare provider operates a 50/52-week provision, and the expectation is to continue using the childcare provision over the summer break to retain the place, then the college will continue to pay the weekly invoice for up to 10 weeks as a summer retainer. Where students are increasing their childcare hours for the following academic year, they will be liable for any additional costs over the summer from where the increase takes place. If the student fails to enrol at college in the Autumn term, then they will no longer be eligible for 19+ bursary and will be liable for any childcare costs made over the summer break. The college will be required to reclaim the funds paid and the student will receive an invoice. Exceptional circumstances will be considered.

3. General information for all bursary applicants

3.1 Unsuccessful applicants

Unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by email via the Bursary administration system Pay My Student or emailed directly by a member of the student finance team. Applicant details will remain on the system for the remainder of the academic year and applicants will be contacted should they become eligible due to funding or income threshold changes.

3.2 Delays in submitting evidence

Students who submit a bursary application but fail to complete it e.g. they do not send sufficient evidence or do not sign the application, will not be assessed on their eligibility until the application is complete. Where evidence is submitted later within the academic year and a student is then eligible for either the 16-18 discretionary or 19+ bursary, awards will be processed on the following basis.

Type of Support	Childcare (on timetabled days)	Travel (for all eligible students who incur additional travel costs outside of their normal journey to college)
Amount paid	Paid from the beginning of the month of application (in which they were eligible) and provided all other childcare support has been accessed.	Paid from the beginning of the month of application (in which they were eligible)

If a student is able to provide backdated evidence of eligibility to the date of application, then we will backdate travel and childcare costs for that period of time, where registers confirm attendance.

3.3 Appealing a decision

Appeals should be directed to the Vice Principal Inclusion, Safeguarding and Student Services via the Bursary Admin email bursaryadmin@ccn.ac.uk in the first instance. Should further evidence or re-assessment change the outcome of the application, then a letter will be sent via the Bursary administration system and the award payments will be set up. If no change is determined, then this will be communicated to you in writing. All decisions are final.

3.4 Data Protection

Student records are kept for 6 years after the year of attendance in line with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), after which electronic records are deleted and paper records are securely disposed of. Please see our College Data Protection policy for more details¹¹. [Our Information, Compliance and Policies department can be contacted at \[compliance@ccn.ac.uk\]\(mailto:compliance@ccn.ac.uk\).](#)

3.5 Fraud

The bursaries are Government funded and as such the college takes any cases of fraud very seriously. Any application which is found to be fraudulent through false representation of household income, or of other eligibility rules, may be cancelled. The money will be recovered, and the student will be subject to the College's disciplinary procedure. The college may refer the matter to the Police.