

Care to Learn Terms and Conditions

V2 – July 2026

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Care to Learn (C2L) Scheme
Terms and Conditions 2026/2027

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1. References

The following DfE funding guidance for Care to Learn informs this document:

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

2. Introduction

C2L provides funding for childcare to help young parents aged under 20, continue in education after the birth of a child. The scheme provides funding for childcare whilst the young parent is engaged in a study programme and is not able to provide care for their child. It can also help the young parent with any additional travel costs involved in taking the child to the childcare provider. C2L can also provide funding for childcare whilst young parents are on work placements or industry placements, where these are a defined part of the study programme.

The maximum amount of C2L funding available is £180 per child per week.

If the students nominated childcare providers' costs exceed the weekly maximum of £180.00, then Nacro may be able to offset the excess if the student applies to their 16-19 Bursary Fund. ***All applications will be subject to a thorough assessment and will be considered in line with the availability of bursary funds held by Nacro.***

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide: 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#) - Our Nacro Education Centres can support students with these applications.

Receiving money from Care to Learn will not affect any benefits or allowances that the student is in receipt of and the student does not have to be on benefits in order to apply.

3. Eligibility

To receive C2L in academic year 2026 to 2027, the student, their education institution and childcare provider must all meet the following eligibility criteria.

3.1 Age

The young parent must be under 20 years old on the date they start their study programme. Young parents who become 20 years old during their study programme can continue to get funding to the end of that specific study programme, so to the end of the same programme at the same level.

3.2 Main carer for the child(ren)

The young parent must be the main carer and in receipt of Child Benefit for the child(ren) for whom they are claiming C2L. If a young parent loses custody of their child(ren), even temporarily, they must notify the college immediately. The mother or father of the child can claim C2L as long as:

- the other parent is unable to provide childcare, for example, they are also in education or are absent
- the other parent is not claiming childcare paid through any other source, for example, government funded early years places or Childcare Tax Credits

3.3 Residency

To be eligible for C2L the young parent must have the legal right to be resident in the UK at the start of their study programme. If a young parent indicates that they are not a British or Irish citizen, they will only be eligible for C2L if one of the following immigration conditions applies, evidence would be required to prove their legal right to remain in the UK:

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)

Or 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 rule

3.4 Eligibility: Childcare Provision

C2L only pays for childcare provision that is appropriately registered with Ofsted. It must be registered in one of the following ways:

- on the early years register with either Ofsted or a childminder agency
- on the compulsory or voluntary part of the general childcare register with either Ofsted or a childminder agency
- offered by schools (who are exempt from Ofsted registration for children aged 2+) such as school-run breakfast and after school clubs, and holiday care

Nacro will not work with childcare providers who are deemed 'Inadequate' following an Ofsted inspection.

4. Application Assessment and outcome

Following submission of a C2L application, we will contact the nominated childcare provider to verify their fees and request any further information needed to assess the application. Once the assessment has been completed, both the student and the childcare provider will receive notification of the outcome via email.

The student is responsible for paying childcare costs until Nacro has formally confirmed that it will contribute towards those costs.

Funding will normally commence from the approved start date confirmed by Nacro. Childcare costs incurred before an application has been approved will not normally be covered, except in exceptional circumstances and at Nacro's discretion.

The only exception to this rule is in an exceptional circumstance where a student has already paid some childcare fees before Nacro have fully completed their assessment of the students C2L application. In this instance, we may reimburse these costs, but only if the childcare:

- meets the eligibility criteria
- is within the agreed costs and dates you confirm on completion of your application assessment

4.1 Data Protection

Students and childcare providers should be aware that Nacro will collect, store and process personal information provided as part of a Care to Learn application and throughout the period of support. This information may be used to assess eligibility, administer funding, verify attendance, prevent fraud and ensure compliance with funding requirements.

Information may be shared with the Department for Education, funding bodies, childcare providers, auditors and other organisations where this is necessary to administer the scheme or where required by law.

All personal information will be handled in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and Nacro's Privacy Notice.

4.2 False or Misleading Information

Students and childcare providers must ensure that all information provided in support of a Care to Learn application is accurate, complete and up to date

Where false, misleading or incomplete information is provided, or where relevant changes are not reported, Nacro reserves the right to withhold payments, suspend funding, withdraw support or take any other action considered appropriate in accordance with the scheme rules.

4.3 Verification of Information

Nacro reserves the right to request additional information or documentary evidence at any stage of the application process or funding period in order to verify eligibility, attendance, childcare arrangements, residency status, travel costs or any other information relevant to a Care to Learn award.

Failure to provide requested information within a reasonable timeframe may result in delays to the assessment process, suspension of payments or the cessation of funding.

5. What C2L will pay for

C2L will pay towards the cost of childcare up to a maximum of £180 per child per week. C2L will support childcare hours in reasonable excess of the study programme hours to allow time for the student's travel between the education institution and the childcare provider, and for any independent study time undertaken, within the maximum weekly amount.

If the students nominated childcare providers' costs exceed the weekly maximum of £180.00, then Nacro may be able to offset this from their 16-19 Bursary Fund.

C2L can pay **deposits** of up to a maximum of £250 per child if the childcare provider requires this. Deposits will be deducted from the overall agreed amount of childcare funding for the duration of the student's programme.

C2L can also pay any **registration fees** that are charged by the childcare provider, up to a maximum of £80 per child. This is a one-off payment that does not form part of the weekly maximum rate and will not be paid for subsequent academic years if the student uses the same childcare provision.

6. Travel payments for the student

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 should be by the cheapest means of transport available; this is normally public transport. If the cheapest means is by car, we will 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. i.e. £180.00

7. Childcare provider payments

Where a student is eligible for any other government-funded free childcare provision, Nacro will only use C2L funding for the additional childcare days or hours that fall within the student's normal programme of study and attendance pattern, as set out in their study timetable.

Nacro will only make childcare payments when the student continues to actively attend their study programme, and the child continues to attend an approved childcare provider.

Childcare payments will be made directly to the childcare provider by bank transfer (BACS) monthly, in arrears.

Childcare payments will not be released until such time as the childcare provider has confirmed that child is continuing to be cared for in line with the agreed number of days/hours, and Nacro has confirmed that the student continues to attend their study programme.

Conditions of funding – The childcare provider will receive an email on the last working day of every month, with a deadline, asking them to confirm the child's attendance during the month.

Assuming the deadline has been met, then payments will follow within the next 10 working days.

If we do not receive confirmation of attendance from the childcare provider by the deadline, then payments will be put on hold and will not be released until the following month.

Continuing C2L payments are subject to the student continuing to attend their study programme (as well as the child attending childcare). As per [section 8](#) of this document

If the student stops attending their education provision, even if the child continues to attend childcare, payments to the childcare provider will cease.

Any overpayments made to the childcare provider which are a result of incomplete or inaccurate attendance data provided by them may result in a request for payments to be repaid.

8. Attendance

It is important that students maintain regular attendance on their study programme to ensure that childcare payments are not affected.

Childcare payments will only be made where the student continues to attend their course and the child or children continue to attend the approved childcare provider in line with the agreed childcare arrangements.

Absences – We will review the student's attendance record monthly. Where there have been short-term absences, such as illness or a family emergency, we will consider the frequency, duration, and reasons for the absence to determine whether it is reasonable to continue making payments. **Nacro reserves the right, at its discretion, to pro-rata payments where appropriate.**

The following are examples of absences which may be authorised and the required evidence:

- Student absences and/or sickness – should be reported every day to your Nacro Education Centre. The number of absences will be closely monitored and if considered excessive, payments may be withheld.
- Appointments – for example: hospital, doctors, dentist etc. Evidence of appointments must be provided in the form of a letter or appointment card. Failure to provide this could result in your childcare payments being withheld.
- Interviews – for example: Job, University etc. Evidence of interviews must be provided in the form of a letter or email confirmation. Failure to provide this could result in your childcare payments being withheld.
- Bereavement or funeral.
- Religious holidays.

If the student fails to attend for a period of 4 weeks or withdraws from their course, C2L financial support will finish on the last date of recorded attendance. The responsibility for all childcare costs reverts to the student from this date.

9. Summer Retainers

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. The young parent and their study programme must continue to meet the eligibility criteria for a summer retainer to be payable.

To be eligible for a summer retainer for summer 2027, the student 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 be paid for a maximum of 8 weeks with the amount per week not exceeding the C2L weekly maximum rates.

10. In year changes

Students and childcare providers must notify Nacro of any relevant changes as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 10 working days after becoming aware of the change. Failure to notify Nacro of changes may affect ongoing eligibility for support and could result in delays to payments or a reassessment of funding.

To ensure timely and accurate payments, Nacro must be made aware of any of the following changes that occur in year:

- any changes relating to the student's residency status
- any changes in travel costs between childcare and home – an increase, decrease or the student needing to claim these later in the year
- changes in childcare arrangements – the number of hours, changes in the provider being used or an additional child requiring childcare, for example
- changes to study programme arrangements/requirements – the number of hours or changing study programme, for example
- for childcare providers – revised childcare fees or a change in bank account details

11. Complaints or Appeals

Any student who is dissatisfied with the way Nacro has handled their Care to Learn funding application should, in the first instance, contact Nacro's Head of Funding, Compliance and MIS to discuss their concerns and seek a local resolution.

If the matter cannot be resolved locally, it will be managed in accordance with Nacro's Compliments, Comments and Complaints Procedure. Students may request a copy of this procedure or submit their complaint using the online form.

<https://www.nacro.org.uk/for-nacro-service-users/compliments-comments-and-complaints/>