

16-19 CARE TO LEARN (C2L) HELP WITH CHILDCARE COSTS

We are committed to supporting students for them to overcome any financial barriers to learning.

You may be eligible for Care to Learn (C2L) funding to assist with your childcare costs whilst you study at college.

You must be aged **16-19** on 31st August of the year your course starts, and a Parent/main carer.

Your chosen childcare provider must be **Ofsted registered and have valid Public Liability Insurance**.

You must be living and studying in England to receive C2L.

If you are eligible for other childcare support, you are expected to take up any entitlement before applying for funding from C2L, but you may apply for C2L to cover any extra hours (over and above any other funded early education entitlement) to complete your study programme.

Information about other sources of childcare support is provided on [childcare choices](#), which includes a [childcare calculator](#) for parents to compare all the government's childcare offers and check what works best for your families.

[\(https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/\)](https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/)

<http://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>

TO BE ELIGIBLE YOU MUST:

- Be aged 16-19 at the start of your course. 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.
- Be classed as a UK National or have Leave to Remain with the right to live & work in the UK.
- Be enrolled with South Thames College Group on an eligible Government funded Further Education course (full or part time).
- Be the Parent or Main carer of the child(ren) that you are applying for.
- Be in receipt of Child Benefit for the child(ren) for whom you are claiming C2L.
- Maintain continuous attendance at college and your child(ren) must maintain continuous attendance at their provision.

HOW MUCH FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

A London weighting applies to the C2L scheme. Eligibility for London weighting is determined by the young parent's home address.

C2L will pay towards the cost of childcare up to a **maximum of £180 per child per week** or up to a **maximum of £195 per child per week** if the student's home address is in London.

C2L will also pay a registration fee that is 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.

C2L will pay for deposits of up to a **maximum of £250 per child** if the childcare provider requires this.

Summer retainers may 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.

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.

- C2L childcare payments can only be made directly to the Childcare Provider via **BACS** and are subject to continuing attendance by the child and the student.
- Childcare payments are made on a half termly basis as set out in the 16-19 Care to Learn Childcare Provider Guidance notes.
- Under no circumstances other than specific exceptions as agreed by C2L can payments be made for childcare directly to students or their families.
- C2L childcare payments will cease immediately if a student has stopped attending or has removed their child from childcare.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Once you have enrolled for your 2026/27 course at South Thames Colleges Group you must speak with a member of the Student Support Team at your campus to confirm that you wish to apply for Care to Learn funding.

1. You must then visit the bursary application portal at: <https://stcg.paymystudent.com> to complete your online application and provide the evidence requested. The Bursary application portal opens on the **19th of August 2026**

2. The Student Payments Team will email you with all the necessary documentation for your Childcare provider to complete.
3. Find a suitable Childcare provider who must be OFSTED registered and hold valid Public Liability Insurance, have them complete the 16-19 Care to Learn Childcare Fees Form, ensure that *their* bank details have been completed and that the childcare provider representative has signed the form. Please ensure that the amount on the form does not exceed the maximum amount that you are eligible for.
4. Upload the signed and completed Care to Learn Fees form plus application form along with the accompanying childcare evidence requested to your online bursary application at <https://stcg.paymystudent.com>
5. If you are eligible, you will receive an email confirming your Childcare funding with a copy to your provider.

Please note that if you take your child to the childcare provision prior to receiving a Childcare funding Confirmation email then you will be liable for fees incurred if your application is unsuccessful.

The college cannot recommend any Childcare providers, if you need help with this then please contact your local borough council who can assist you.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Childcare Bursary Team: childcare@stcg.ac.uk term time only

Student Support Carshalton Campus: ccstudent.support@stcg.ac.uk

Student Support Kingston Campus: student.support@kingston-college.ac.uk

Student Support Merton Campus: ccstudent.support@stcg.ac.uk

Student Support Tooting Campus: advice.wandsworth@south-thames.ac.uk

Student Support Wandsworth Campus: advice.wandsworth@south-thames.ac.uk

For further information please email childcare@stcg.ac.uk or see The Student Support Team at your Campus.