



Coatbridge College

Childcare Support Policy 2010-2011

This policy is designed to enhance the student learning experience in the following way:

This policy will enhance the learning experience by providing qualifying students with a contribution towards childcare costs to support their learning experience at College.

Status: Operational

Policy Dated: May 2010

Author: Faculty Director responsible for Student Services

Review Date: June 2011

Purpose

This policy and these procedures detail how the cash limited College Childcare funds are distributed and monitored for Coatbridge College.

The information detailed in this policy is accurate at the time of publication and is subject to annual alterations following funding announcements.

Coatbridge College is committed to reducing barriers to education. The Childcare Support Policy outlines how we provide support for our students who need access to childcare.

1.0 Policy

Coatbridge College endeavours to provide students from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds with a contribution towards childcare costs to support their learning experience at the College.

2.0 Scope

2.1 The funds distributed under this policy are allocated to the College as part of the College grant-in-aid settlement. Once these childcare funds are committed, no more authorised expenditure can occur.

2.2 This policy applies to all eligible students with dependent children enrolled on programmes of study at Coatbridge College.

2.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Scottish Funding Council National Policy, SAAS Guidelines and the College's Student Attendance Policy and Procedures.

2.4 The amount of support is gauged through a means tested process to ensure that the funds are targeted fairly and that learners who are economically disadvantaged can also access education. To qualify for support, students must satisfy the criteria detailed in paragraph 4.6.

2.5 The extent of financial support available to an individual student is capped in order to maximise the number of students qualifying for assistance and is assessed as outlined in paragraph 5.3.

2.6 The policy will be administered to ensure that funds are effectively allocated and disbursed fairly and accountably.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 The Faculty Director responsible for Student Services is responsible for the management of this policy and for the management of childcare support for students.

3.2 The Student Services Manager and the Student Funding Officer are responsible for the effective operation of this policy.

3.3 The Faculty Directors are responsible for ensuring that course information and student attendance information is entered through the Enquirer system to support the conditions of the award of the childcare funding.

3.4 The Student Funding Team is responsible for ensuring that students satisfy the eligibility conditions for a childcare award.

3.5 It is the responsibility of students to inform the College of any changes in their circumstances (including voluntary withdrawal from a course).

3.6 It is the responsibility of the student NOT to place their child/children at a childcare provider prior to receiving a letter of confirmation for financial assistance. Students who choose to place their child/children at a child care provider in advance of confirmation of financial support will do so at their own expense.

4.0 Eligibility Criteria

4.1 Students applying for childcare support must have dependent children and be attending the College on a course of study.

4.2 Students applying for childcare support must meet the eligibility criteria set out in the SFC National Policy and SAAS Guidelines.

4.3 Students applying for childcare support will be required to provide evidence that they are the parent or legal guardian (family tax credit documents, letter from DWP, birth certificate).

4.4 Students nominating childcare providers must ensure that the provider is registered with the Local Authority and fully insured. (The Student Funding Team holds a list of registered childcare providers in the local area).

4.5 The College will prioritise allocation of places to the College Nursery and will support external childcare providers only if a College Nursery place is unavailable. Should College Nursery places become available through the academic session, these will be offered to students with external childcare arrangements. If the College is contributing to this cost, and the offer of a College Nursery place is not taken up, the College reserves the right to withdraw external financial support.

4.6 To qualify for childcare support, students should provide proof of one of the following:

PLEASE NOTE: FIGURES WITHIN TABLES A, B AND C MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

TABLE A

Benefit/Allowance Type	Eligibility
Low income - one person in household	*Financial year household income up to £8,282 qualifies for full college entitlement
Household income - with dependent children	*Financial year household income up to £24,275 - full college entitlement *Financial year household income up to £27,465 - 75% college entitlement *Financial year household income up to £33,156 - 60% college entitlement Above £33,157 - no entitlement
Asylum Seeker - (as defined in the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999)	Student or student's spouse/children are asylum seekers?

*The student must satisfy the College that their family's annual income does not exceed the stated amount. Evidence accepted is P60's or payslips pre-dating the start of the course.

5.0 Financial Assistance

5.1 The maximum financial support offered to students should not exceed College time or placement time (as defined in the Course Design Document) plus 30% study/travel time. In total, this must not exceed 35 hours per week, and must not exceed 8 hours per day.

5.2 For non advanced students, the maximum allowable financial assistance will not exceed £100.00 per week for a first child and £50.00 for a second child. For advanced students, the maximum allowable financial assistance will not exceed £60.00 per week. This assistance is limited to the College Academic Calendar (37 week period).

5.3 Financial assistance will be assessed with reference to TABLE A above as follows:

TABLE B: Non Advanced Entitlement

Nursery/Child Care Requirement	Allowance
Student applying for assistance with 1 child	Up to £105.00 per week (37 weeks)
Student applying for assistance with 2 children	Up to £105.00 per week (37 weeks) - 1st child Up to £52.50 per week (37 weeks) - 2nd child
Student applying for assistance with 3 or more children	Up to £105.00 per week (37 weeks) - 1st child Up to £52.50 per week (37 weeks) - 2nd child NIL financial support - 3rd child +
After-school Requirement	Allowance
Student applying for assistance with 1 child	Up to £42 per week (37 weeks)
Student applying for assistance with 2 children	Up to £42 per week (37 weeks) - 1st child Up to £21 per week (37 weeks) - 2nd child
Student applying for assistance with 3 or more children	Up to £42 per week (37 weeks) - 1st child Up to £21 per week (37 weeks) - 2nd child NIL financial support - 3rd child +

TABLE C: Advanced Entitlement

Nursery/Child Care/After-school Care Requirement	Allowance
Student applying for assistance	Up to £63.00 per week (37 weeks)
After-school Requirement	Allowance
Student applying for assistance	Up to £42 per week (37 weeks)

6.0 Procedure

6.1 Students applying for childcare financial support should complete their application form, no later than 15 working days prior to the commencement of their course of study. Late applications will be processed as soon as possible, however students should be aware of their responsibilities under 4.6 of this policy and that the funds are allocated on a first come, first paid basis and allocation is dependant on the availability of cash funding.

6.2 A member of the Student Funding Team will assess the application form, ensuring that the student meets the eligibility criteria including evidence that he/she is the parent or legal guardian of the child/children and whether or not the student is receiving grants from other sources. The details will be held in a central file. A letter confirming financial support will be sent to the student by the Student Funding Team.

6.3 Student attendance will be monitored in accordance with the Student Attendance Policy and Procedures. Unexplained or irregular absences will be notified to the Student Funding Team for action. This may cause a termination of childcare payment to an outside provider or a removal of a College nursery place where unexplained student absence falls below 90%. Attendance rates are subject to change.

6.4 Academic staff will monitor attendance and inform the Student Funding Team of any student not attending the College in accordance with the Student Attendance Policy and Procedures, and will inform the student of any decision to withdraw childcare financial assistance.

6.5 Applications for childcare financial support may not be considered if the funds are fully committed. The level of these funds is set nationally and, once allocated, no further funds are available.

6.6 Student must NOT place their child/children at a childcare provider prior to receiving a letter of confirmation for financial assistance by the Student Funding Team. Students who choose to place their child/children at a child care provider in advance of confirmation of financial support will do so at their own expense.

6.7 Those College nursery places supported through government funding must allocate these funded sessions within the College nursery.

7.0 Withdrawing Financial Assistance

7.1 This action will, under normal circumstances, follow the procedure as detailed in Section 6.0.

7.2 Should a situation arise whereby the student does not attend College, and does not inform the College of his/her absence, but places their child/ children at the childcare provider (including the College Nursery) during these absences, it will be left to the discretion of the Faculty Director to authorise the withdrawal of childcare financial support or removal of a College Nursery place. A letter will be sent to the student informing him/her of the decision.

7.3 The College reserves the right to recover from the student any overpayment made.

8.0 Right of Appeal

8.1 Any student has the right to appeal any decisions made in relation to the application of this policy and appeals should be made to the Faculty Director responsible for Student Services.

9.0 Review of Policy

9.1 This policy will be reviewed each year in conjunction with the National Policy Guidelines and available cash funding.