

Scottish Child Payment and Best Start (2025-26)

Scottish Child Payment (SCP) is a **£27.15** weekly payment for each child cared for in a family where an adult receives certain benefits. Families choose how to spend it.

Best Start is a programme of 4 other payments for families on low-incomes to help with the costs of caring for a child.



Who can apply for SCP?

You must live in Scotland and you (or your partner if you have one) are the main person looking after a child under 16. SCP doesn't affect other benefits you receive, but to qualify you (or your partner) must receive one of these:-

- ✓ Universal Credit
- ✓ Child Tax Credit
- ✓ Working Tax Credit
- ✓ Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)

Or, you are the only person named on any of these 3 benefits:

- ✓ Pension Credit
- ✓ Income Support
- ✓ Income-related Employment & Support Allowance

If your partner is named on one of these 3 but you are not, they should apply.

What information is needed to apply?

- Your name, date of birth, address and National Insurance Number
- The same details above for your partner (if you have one.)
- Names and dates of birth of each child for whom you are main carergiver.
- A document showing child(ren) named on either you or your partner's claim for Child Tax Credit, Child Benefit, Universal Credit or Pension Credit.
- If you or your partner are kinship carers, proof that you or they look after the child(ren) – either a letter from the Council or copy of a legal order.
- Your bank or building society details (if you have an account.)

Information in this guide is correct as of April 2025. Please visit websites linked in the guide to confirm it is accurate.



Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network

c/o Midlothian Community Action, 4/6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH22 1AE
Scottish Registered Charity SC035964. Scottish Limited Company SC282964
Registered Office: 14a John Street, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 8AB

How can I apply for Scottish Child Payment?

Online. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/SCP-Apply> or scan this QR code. You can either apply or add more children to an existing claim.



Phone. Social Security Scotland free on 0800 182 2222, M-F, 8am to 6pm.

Post. Download a form from <https://tinyurl.com/SCP-Form> to print and send.

What is available from Best Start?

You may be eligible for the Best Start programme if you or your partner are pregnant, or care for a young child or children, and receive one of the following:

Income Support, Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

Pregnancy and Baby Payment. A one-off payment of **£767.50** for the first child and **£383.75** for additional children, during pregnancy or until the baby is 6 months. It is to help with paying for maternity or baby clothes, cots, prams, etc..

Early Learning Payment. A one-off payment of **£319.80** for children between 2 and 3 ½ to help pay for books, toys, trips out, etc., to support their learning.

School Age Payment. A one-off payment of **£319.80** for children around school starting age, to help pay for school bags, school trips, after school activities, etc.

Best Start Foods gives families a monthly prepaid card to help buy nutritious food during pregnancy and while children are under 3. Weekly, it pays **£5.40** during pregnancy, **£10.80** for each baby 0-1 and **£5.40** for each child 1-3.

How do I apply for a Best Start Grant or Best Start Foods?

You can apply for Best Start along with Scottish Child Payment or separately.

Online. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/Best-Start-Apply> or scan this code.

Phone. Scottish Social Security 0800 182 2222, M-F, 8am–6 pm.

Post. Download a form from <https://tinyurl.com/Best-Start-Form>.

