



Every child, every chance

**Tackling Child Poverty
Delivery Plan
First year Progress Report 2018-19**



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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MINISTERIAL FOREWORD



In March 2018 the Scottish Government published 'Every Child, Every Chance', the first Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan due under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act. It sets out the concrete actions we are taking to 2022 to deliver progress against our ambition to eradicate child poverty in Scotland. This first annual progress report (2018-19) shows we've been working hard to build the foundations for transformational change as part of our determination to tackle generations of deep-seated poverty.

I am delighted that, in just the first year of this four year plan, 48 of the 58 actions are already in progress or being delivered¹. Collectively, these powerful actions support families in key ways and are already making children's lives better. This document demonstrates the great package of support this government provides for families across childhood - from birth to school, to further education, employment, and beyond - all helping to reduce costs for families.

From our Fair Start employment programme to our Best Start financial support for low income families; from increasing the value of school clothing grants to reducing the poverty premium through our new Financial Health Check Service, we have made major strides to tackle poverty and support people in Scotland.

In a new initiative, we are using this progress report to provide a first estimate of our direct spend to support low income families. We highlight here how we invested £0.5 billion in 2018-19 in direct support. But it is not the whole story. Taking into account the universal services we all enjoy and from which our society benefits; a multi-billion pound package of investment in key areas supports all children and all parents to realise their full potential.

I am very grateful to the Poverty and Inequality Commission, whose advice and challenge has helped shape our work from the start. They have rightly highlighted the scale of the challenge - and we are absolutely committed to rising to meet that challenge.

The Children's Parliament have also played a key part in this process from the beginning. They contributed to the development of the Plan, they have engaged with Cabinet highlighting the issues they believe this Government should be focussing on, and have provided insightful feedback on the Progress Report setting out their reflections on progress made to date. This process has ensured that the voices of children are recognised and considered in the development and delivery of our commitments to tackle child poverty.

We are working together, across government and more widely, to deliver on this ambition and local authorities and NHS boards will shortly outline the action they have taken locally, and will take, to reduce child poverty. I'm grateful for all the activity taking place locally and look forward to hearing more about the best practice underway.

¹ As set out in section 4, page 94.

This year also saw a visit from the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. His report makes clear families are bearing the brunt of disastrous UK Government policies which are driving increases in child poverty. Whilst he condemned the austerity and welfare cuts of the UK government, he praised the Scottish Government for mitigating against them, but also said it was 'unsustainable' for devolved administrations to mitigate everything. I agree. We cannot continue to soften the blows of another government at a scale that means we cannot use our resources on our other services.

And it is pursuing our own policies to tackle poverty that this government wants to do.

We do not yet have all the powers we need to tackle inequality, but we want to shift the curve of child poverty, and not see more pushed into poverty because of another government's policies. Our ambitions therefore require bold actions and to use the powers we have to deliver on our commitment to tackle child poverty and to work towards introducing a regular payment for low income families within the lifetime of the delivery plan by 2022.

The Scottish Government has undertaken a thorough assessment of a range of options, and in line with the two tests we set have decided on a viable and robust route to introduce a brand new benefit to eligible low income families with children under 16 by the end of 2022.

This new financial support will be called the Scottish Child Payment and will be an application based benefit delivered by Social Security Scotland, paid monthly and uprated annually in line with inflation. And it will be available to all children in eligible families with qualifying benefits including Universal Credit, Jobseekers Allowance and Child Tax Credits.

When fully introduced, this new benefit has the potential to reach around 410,000 children and reduce the relative poverty rate by 3 percentage points. The Payment will also help prevent poverty for families on insecure incomes just above the poverty threshold, as well as children at risk of material deprivation, another of our targets.

We have also looked hard at what we can do to support families sooner, particularly for the almost 60% who live in a family where a child is under six years old.

Therefore we have decided to introduce the Scottish Child Payment early for all eligible children under six by the end of this Parliamentary term, much earlier than our original commitment.

The payment will be worth £10 per week: a major help to around 140,000 eligible households with 170,000 children and a substantial investment in families most in need in Scotland.

This is only possible through changes to our planned benefit delivery timetable. This has been a difficult decision but we firmly believe the change is worth it to introduce a benefit which has the potential to be transformative.

The Scottish Child Payment is one of the most progressive policy proposals put forward since devolution. I am proud this government has agreed on this bold, ambitious and progressive new benefit – guided by doing what we know is right to shift the curve on child poverty.

AILEEN CAMPBELL
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and
Local Government

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

‘Every Child, Every Chance’ is the first Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan due under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and is backed by a range of investments, including the £50 million Tackling Child Poverty Fund. It outlines the concrete action we will take by 2022 to deliver on the ambitious targets set.

Since publishing the Delivery Plan in March 2018, we have made good progress. This first annual progress report outlines the steps taken since the Plan was published, the new actions committed and our priorities for the next reporting year.

We have begun to deliver on many of the key actions that could be progressed immediately. Most importantly, families themselves are already benefitting.

Alongside this, we have worked to progress actions with a longer lead-in time, and taken advantage of opportunities to develop new actions.

Some of our key achievements in the past year have included:

- A new **Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby payment** was launched in December 2018, with £3.5 million awarded by 28 February 2019. We’re providing a payment of £600 through Best Start Grant on the birth of a first child, and introducing a payment of £300 for second and subsequent children;
- An increase in the minimum level of **School Clothing Grants** to £100 for each eligible child, benefitting 120,000 children each year and backed by investment of £6 million each year;

- Our new **Financial Health Check** service launched in November, backed by £3.3 million of funding over two years, with a key aim to help low income families with children and older people with the poverty premium and benefit uptake. In the first six months 3,889 people have accessed the service with recorded financial gains of £2.5 million;
- The first payments of **Carer’s Allowance Supplement** were made in mid-September 2018, backdated to April. The supplement was worth £442 in 2018-19 – paid in two payments. Future improvements will include an additional payment for carers of more than one disabled child and a Young Carer Grant;
- **Fair Start Scotland**, our devolved employability programme launched in April 2018 – and over 10,000 people had accessed the service by 29 March 2019; and



I feel quite proud that some of our ideas have been listened to.

Member of the Children’s Parliament
AGE 11

- Our new **Innovation Fund**, in partnership with the Hunter Foundation, with £7.5 million of investment by 2022, has supported eight new projects to reduce child poverty in 2018-19.

Alongside these immediate actions, we have also taken positive steps to develop areas of future support, in particular:

- Making good progress with our early learning and childcare commitments. As a result of local authorities 'phasing in' the entitlement, over 11,000 two to five year olds are already benefitting from more than 600 hours of funded ELC;
- Undertaking a thorough assessment of a range of options for the income supplement commitment;
- Working to design our new £12 million programme of intensive parental employment support, with a view to launching in Autumn 2019;
- Publishing our strategy to tackle the disability employment gap - including an additional £6 million investment specifically focused on employment support for disabled parents on low incomes; and
- Setting out detailed action plans to reduce the gender pay gap and promote fair work - reflecting the importance of tackling women's poverty as we seek to reduce child poverty.

In the next year, we will continue to develop the actions within the Delivery Plan; explore new opportunities with a view to delivery of projects at scale to make the step change required to tackle the problem; and, as child poverty is increasingly seen as a collective responsibility, further develop partnerships within government and with stakeholders,

including with parents and children with experience of poverty.

Particular areas of focus in 2019-20 include:

- Working towards the introduction of the Scottish Child Payment for low income families;
- Progressing our commitment to almost doubling publicly funded early learning and childcare by August 2020;
- Developing our programme to support disabled parents into employment, as set out in a 'Fairer Scotland for Disabled People' in December 2018;
- Moving to the next stages of our work to deliver a draft strategic framework on After School and Holiday Childcare, with a public consultation in Summer 2019 and working to launch our new Out of School Care Fund by April 2020;
- Expanding the Children's Neighbourhood programme, backed by a £2 million investment;
- Collaborating with Timewise on a feasibility study for a new Centre for Flexible Work; this Scottish centre would be a UK first, aiming to design, test, embed and scale new approaches to increasing the availability of flexible working - in particular for low income parents; and
- Further developing our commitment to make housing more safe, warm and affordable for families.

This is only the end of the first year of the Plan but we know there is still much to do. We will continue to press forward and work with others to deliver on this shared ambition.

Introduction



We want Scotland to be the best country in the world to grow up and are taking strong action to make this a reality. We want children from all backgrounds to be able to access the same opportunities and achieve their full potential. In a country as rich and prosperous as ours every child should be able to rely on access to the essentials that so many of us take for granted; such as a warm safe home, access to nutritious food and clean clothes.

We have put in place legislation to meet our ambitions underpinned by our vision for a fairer and more prosperous Scotland and our Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach.

By supporting children to realise their potential, we will support them to achieve better lifelong outcomes and help to reduce child poverty levels in the long term – sustaining the reductions delivered through our Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

But legislation and vision alone will not help families to achieve better outcomes, for this it takes action. The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires Scottish Ministers to publish an annual progress report on the progress made during the year towards meeting the child poverty targets and implementing the Delivery Plan. This progress report includes that and also shows how we have brought together the wide range of key policies which help children get off to the best start and go on to lead successful lives and how we are laying the foundations for future delivery.

Realising the powers under the Scotland Act 2016, we have established a new programme of devolved employment support, Fair Start Scotland, and established our new Social Security Agency – both based on the principles of dignity and respect. We have also made use of new powers over income tax – raising new revenue to invest in vital public services and to tackle poverty.

These are important platforms from which to deliver the longer term actions committed to within the Plan, including our ambitious new Scottish Child Payment and programme of parental employment support.

This first report sets out our progress and future plans in detail. In the forthcoming years we will provide a shorter update on progress made, with a fuller report at the end of the four year plan period covering progress made over the term of the Plan.

In preparation of this report, and in line with the Act requirements, the Scottish Government has consulted the Poverty and Inequality Commission on the progress made within this first year. The Commission's feedback, based on information shared in April 2019, has been incorporated into this report and is available

on their website.² Our responses to the Commission's recommendations are set out within the relevant action updates. How we have responded to the Act requirements and the Commission is set out in section 4.

In the first section of the report, we set out our unique support for children and families in Scotland and how this helps achieve our vision for Scotland as the best place in the world to grow up. This 'timeline' shows how key actions in the Plan, and within our wider approach, fit together to support children and families throughout their lives.

The support and services to children and families in Scotland is unique: from our universal Early Learning and Childcare free hours for three and four year olds and targeted support for eligible twos; Education Maintenance Allowance and Attainment Scotland Fund; to our investment in affordable homes – we're making significant investment to support families throughout their lives. These policies and investments are supporting children to reach their full potential, helping families build resilience to challenges they face and helping to lift families out of poverty once and for all.

In section two, the report outlines our approach to assessing progress toward meeting the ambitious child poverty targets set for 2030, and presents the most recent data for the four targets and the main drivers of poverty reduction.

This includes the most recent child poverty data for the six priority groups identified in 'Every Child, Every Chance'. The focus on these priority families helps us make sure that the actions we take are reaching and meeting the needs of families who are at an increased risk of being in poverty.

Whilst the statistics available predate the Delivery Plan's first year (i.e. the activity outlined in this report), it is clear that we will need to make strong progress, particularly given the ongoing UK Government austerity and cuts to welfare, and that this will require further considerable investment to achieve.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the relative child poverty rate in Scotland continues to be lower than in the UK as a whole.

Section three, in line with advice from the Poverty and Inequality Commission, focuses on the key developments over the last year which will have the most significant impact on the child poverty targets.

As outlined in the Delivery Plan, our efforts are focused on three main drivers of child poverty reduction. So this section sets out action:

- to increase income from work and earnings, e.g. the intensive parental support programme.
- to reduce household costs, e.g. our increase to School Clothing Grants and new Financial Health Check service.
- to maximise income from social security and benefits in kind, e.g. through our Carer's Allowance Supplement and Best Start Grant.

² www.povertyinequality.scot

The Commission's original advice noted that we shouldn't ignore issues of quality of life for children in poverty now. So we also outline here action to help families in other ways – for example, our new support for students and communities from further and higher education.

The Commission also recommended that we focus on creating and improving jobs in relation to child poverty and take account of the Commission's research on inclusive growth. So within this section, we set out action to work with partners to stimulate local economies and develop local responses to poverty including through our new Innovation Fund.

In addition to updates on Delivery Plan action, this section also includes a number of **new actions to support families**. Enhanced support through the new Best Start Foods helping low income families with young children to buy healthy food – worth over £200 a year – begins in August. We have also committed to introduce a new programme of intensive employment support for disabled parents, backed by £6 million by 2022, a new Out of School Care Fund worth £3 million, and a feasibility study for a new centre on flexible work – which is key for working parents and for mothers in particular.

In section four of the report, we set out a series of 'at a glance tables' including: in relation to progress, and impact for priority families; investment from the Tackling Child Poverty Fund and more widely, and; how we have met the requirements of the Child Poverty Act.

This shows 48 of the 58 actions are either in progress or being delivered. We have made good progress since the publication of the Plan – we have already started delivering a number of the actions which will go on to provide vital support for children and families in the coming years – including those in our priority families.

In line with the recommendations of the Poverty and Inequality Commission, we have set out the spend committed through our Tackling Child Poverty Fund. To the end of 2018-19, £2.35 million was spent, with a further £29.8 million committed. Over the coming year we will identify further projects and policies to invest the remaining Fund into in 2020-21 and 2021-22.

We have produced best estimates on the wider investment directed at low income households with children – totalling over £527 million in 2018-19 – and set out how we have responded to the requirements of the Child Poverty Act, including responding to the comments and recommendations of the Poverty and Inequality Commission.

Alongside this report, we have separately published a series of accompanying annexes.

At Annex A³ we have published an evaluation strategy, setting out how the impact of key actions will be assessed over time. This ambitious work will help us understand the impact our investment is having against the four child poverty targets.

3 Annex A – Child Poverty Evaluation Strategy www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781787819634

Annex B⁴ sets out the trends over time for each of the 23 indicators in the Child Poverty Measurement framework, which are intended to monitor the drivers of poverty, and form part of the wider evaluation strategy.

In accordance with our focus on priority families, Annex C⁵ gives consideration to the experiences and issues faced by minority ethnic groups living in poverty. This paper presents ethnicity breakdowns, where possible, for the Child Poverty Measurement Framework indicators. It also draws on wider evidence about the drivers of poverty, and draws conclusions about the actions needed to address poverty among minority ethnic families. Future progress reports will include a focus on other priority families.

4 Annex B - Child Poverty Measurement Framework www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781787819641

5 Annex C - Child Poverty in Minority Ethnic Families www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781787819658

1

How we help children and families in Scotland



How we help Children and Families in Scotland

The Scottish Government is taking a wide range of action to help children and young people reach their full potential.

This support starts before a child is even born - with targeted help for women during pregnancy. We help children to flourish in their early years and to achieve the best outcomes in education. Once they leave formal education and training, we help young people find good-quality jobs and to move into a warm and affordable first home.

At each step of the way, help and support is available - particularly if there are additional challenges, like poverty, care-experience or disability.

By supporting children to achieve their best, we will improve outcomes and reduce inequality. Crucially, we will also reduce child poverty levels in the long term - sustaining the reductions achieved through the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

At each stage of life we are taking a range of actions, to support children and families and to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.

Giving children the best start in life

- Health Visitor
- Family Nurse
- Baby Box
- Neonatal expenses fund
- Best Start Grant
- Expanded Early Learning and Childcare



Supporting children to learn and grow

- Universal free school meals to P1-P3
- School Clothing Grant
- Attainment Scotland Fund including Pupil Equity Funding
- Education Maintenance Allowance
- Foundation level apprenticeships



Helping build skills and prepare for work



- Funded University Tuition
- Apprenticeships
- Graduate Apprenticeships
- Fair Start Scotland
- Intensive employment support for parents



Providing access to warm and affordable homes

- 50,000 affordable homes
- Home Energy Scotland – access to Warmer Homes Scotland programme
- Private Sector Tenancy
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme



Promoting fairer working lives

- Real Living Wage
- Encouraging flexible work
- Flexible Workforce Development Fund
- Job Grant for eligible young people
- Workplace Equality Fund



We're also supporting families on their journey through:

Social Security Scotland

Scottish Welfare Fund

Free Prescriptions

Access to sanitary products

Financial Health Check

National Transport Strategy



A FAIRER SCOTLAND



We are ensuring the best start to life...

PRE-BIRTH

We actively support pregnant women to have a healthy pregnancy and get off to a great start with their new child.

We issue free vitamins to all pregnant women – looking after the child’s and mother’s health. Pregnant women can also access funded dental treatment.

From August, mothers on low incomes will be able to access Best Start Foods payments throughout their pregnancy, worth £4.25 per week. This entitlement will be pre-loaded on to a payment card every four weeks and can be used to purchase a range of healthy foods.

From 24 weeks pregnant, parents and carers on certain benefits and tax credits can apply for the Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment. This awards £600 on the birth of a first child and £300 on the birth of any subsequent children – helping to pay for essentials such as a new pram or cot.

To support younger mothers with their first child, our Family Nurse Partnership programme provides much needed support from early pregnancy until the child is two. Backed by investment of around £16 million in 2019-20, family nurses provide tailored support to help children get the best start.

We are also helping to embed information and referral pathways between the NHS early years workforce and money/welfare advice services through key investment of £500,000 over the first two years of the Plan.



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To improve outcomes for all children, especially those experiencing the most disadvantage, we are investing in high quality, flexible funded early learning and childcare (ELC) that is accessible and affordable for families.

Quality ELC will help to close the attainment gap and we're almost doubling our funded entitlement to 1,140 hours by August 2020 - backed by annual revenue investment of nearly £1 billion by 2021-22. This will be available for all three and four year olds and eligible two year olds, saving parents around £4,500 each year. It can also help parents to return to the workforce or training.

From 2020 onwards, children in childcare for two or more hours a day will benefit from free milk and a healthy snack. We'll also be extending free meals to all children attending a funded ELC session from August 2020.

Between the ages two and three and a half, parents and carers on certain benefits and tax credits can get a one-off Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment of £250 per child to support child development.

Parents will receive two more visits from their health visitor. This includes two Child Health Reviews at 27-30 months and four-five years. Again, this offers an opportunity to provide much needed support and for them to be directed to other available services.

Children will continue to benefit from the Bookbug book gifting programme, which gives every child four free packs of books between birth and primary one.

Children will continue to benefit from our Childsmile programme, providing universal and targeted support in areas of disadvantage to nursery and primary school children. This includes tooth brushing, fluoride varnish application and free dental packs, containing a toothbrush and toothpaste.

We also want Scotland to be a nation which values play as a life-enhancing daily experience for all our children and young people; in their homes, nurseries, schools and communities we encourage positive support for play.



We are supporting children achieve their best at school..

TACKLING THE COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY

To help children get the best from their education and reduce the cost of the school day for parents we've put in place a range of support to help make school more affordable.

Around the time a child normally starts school, parents and carers on low incomes can access the Best Start Grant School Age Payment, worth £250. This helps to meet essential costs at this key transition stage. The complete package of support through Best Start Grant is worth up to £1,900 for a two child family and is backed by investment of around £21 million in 2019-20.

We offer Free School Meals to all children in P1-P3 backed by investment of £54 million in 2018-19- saving families around £400 each year. We continue to provide targeted support for children whose parents and carers are in receipt of certain qualifying benefits right through their school years. We also support families during the school holidays by providing meals at clubs children attend.

We are investing £6 million each year so that every eligible child can benefit from a national minimum School Clothing Grant of £100; increased from a previous minimum of £40 in some areas - helping them to get the right clothes and sports kit to enable full participation in school life.



NARROWING THE POVERTY-RELATED ATTAINMENT GAP

The Scottish Attainment Challenge is about achieving equity in education and seeks to ensure every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

The Challenge focuses on improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and complements the broader range of initiatives and programmes in place to ensure children achieve their full potential.

We are investing in a £750 million Attainment Scotland Fund during the course of this parliament to support the Scottish Attainment Challenge. This fund comprises of a number of separate funding streams including the annual £120 million of Pupil Equity Funding which, since 2017-18, is being allocated directly to 96% of schools to be used on activities and interventions that are targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Other streams include funding to nine Challenge authorities and 73 schools with the highest levels of children affected by poverty and to support for the attainment of care experienced children and young people. The Scottish Attainment Challenge also supports the delivery of a number of national programmes such as the Cost of the School Day programme and new entitlements through the Young Scot pilot. Beyond our work on the Scottish Attainment Challenge we provide access to free sanitary products in education settings.

We also provide an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), to eligible young people from low income families participating in a course of non-advanced learning such as school, non-advanced college courses or Activity Agreements. Investing £25 million in 2019-20, EMA provides a financial incentive of £30 per week, and supports young people aged 16-19 to make learning choices based not on their financial circumstances but on their ability and aspirations.



WE PROVIDE A RANGE OF SUPPORT SO INDIVIDUALS CAN BUILD THEIR SKILLS AND ACCESS HIGH QUALITY JOBS.

Leaving school and moving into work or further education can be difficult for any young person, but in Scotland we've put in a range of support to help everyone reach their full potential.

Foundation Apprenticeships are designed to help young people in S5 and S6 gain valuable, real work experience and access work-based learning as part of their senior phase experience. They can provide young people with a head start on a career by providing industry-recognised qualifications and experience employers are looking for.

We have expanded the scheme since it started in 2016 and will make up to 5,000 Foundation Apprenticeships available in Scotland's schools by 2019.

Apprenticeships are a significant part of our work to address youth employment and develop a diverse and inclusive workforce in Scotland. Graduate Level Apprenticeships are also available to enable people to study for degree-level courses while in employment. Just under 900 places were made available in 2018, following a pilot scheme in 2016. This programme aims to meet the needs of employers looking for high levels of academic and industry accreditation with experience in the workplace.



Skills Development Scotland (SDS) support individuals to build their career management, work-based and employability skills, throughout their career journey, from school, into further learning opportunities and employment. With more than 900 careers staff, SDS offer free, impartial career information, advice and guidance in schools, SDS careers centres, the SDS Customer Contact Centre and community venues across Scotland. This support is available to individuals of all ages across Scotland empowering them to make informed decisions and realise their potential at any stage in their career.

In Scotland we believe that every child should have an equal chance to receive a quality education – that is why we continue to fully fund university tuition for every eligible individual. The number of students from the 20% most deprived areas entering higher education is now at a record high.

We provide generous bursaries and access to student loans to help low income families to access this educational opportunity and become qualified for a rewarding career.

An additional bursary, and help with the costs of accommodation during summer, is given to care-experienced young people, ensuring that this group has equal access to the opportunities associated with higher education.



WE'RE HELPING PARENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE ACCESS EMPLOYMENT AND CAPITALISE ON THEIR SKILLS.

Scotland is developing a strong package of support to help parents enter and progress into work – without the fear of benefit sanctions. We're also ensuring that young people leaving school go on to positive destinations, getting a great start to their working life.

Our devolved employability programme, Fair Start Scotland, is on track to support over 38,000 people move towards and into employment – backed by up to £96 million of investment by 2023.

We are complementing this with intensive employment support for parents, with additional help for disabled parents, investing up to £18 million during the lifetime of the Plan.

All of these support programmes are built on the belief that people should be able to access a service which treats them with dignity and respect.

A further suite of employability support is available locally and includes Community Jobs Scotland, Inspiring Scotland, Discovering Your Potential and the Employability Fund. This is in addition to the support funded through the new employability funding stream established by No One Left Behind. This approach seeks to ensure the design and delivery of employability support is centred around the needs of people and can flex when needs change. And by aligning funding approaches we will seek to reduce duplication of support and make the system easier for people to navigate.

To support young people on lower incomes (16-24, or 25 for care leavers) into work after an extended period of unemployment, we're putting in place a new Job Grant – backed by investment of around £1.2 million each year. This grant will provide support of £400 to young parents who have been out of work for more than 6 months, helping them to meet costs until their first wage arrives.

Beyond this we are taking a wide range of action to make workplaces fairer and to maximise the impact employment can have on family incomes. This is covered in more detail in section 3.



AND HELPING THEM ACCESS WARM AND AFFORDABLE HOMES...

Ensuring everyone has access to an affordable and warm home that meets their needs is central to this Government's vision for a fairer and more prosperous Scotland.

Over this Parliamentary term, we are delivering at least 50,000 affordable homes, including 35,000 homes for social rent. This ambitious target is backed by more than £3.3 billion – the single biggest investment in, and delivery of, affordable housing since devolution. We are proud of our record delivery of over 86,000 affordable homes since 2007.

We are also proud of the reforms we have made across all tenures, including introducing the new Private Sector Tenancy, providing increased support and protection to tenants, and ending the right to buy.

We're providing over £351 million in 2019-20 to fund the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, saving families an average of £701 per year.

And by the end of 2021, we will have allocated over £1 billion since 2009 through energy efficiency programmes to make homes warmer and cheaper to heat.

Warmer Homes Scotland is installing measures to people's homes to make them warmer and easier to heat. Typically, households receive over £4,000 worth of measures and make average fuel bill savings of £300 per year.

We are investing over £64 million in 2019-20 in Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs). This investment is mitigating the bedroom tax in full, and helping families to cope with the freeze on Local Housing Allowance rates.



WE PROVIDE SUPPORT TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGHOUT THEIR JOURNEY...

In Scotland we are helping families with children to cope with whatever challenges they face. We are the first country in the world to provide access to free sanitary products in all schools, colleges and universities. We have strong universal support too, including free prescriptions, and are working hard to ensure transport plays an effective role in helping families access opportunities.

We have focused here on our efforts to maximise family incomes, support those managing a new or existing disability, and help support care-experienced young people.

MAXIMISING INCOMES, MITIGATING AUSTERITY AND MAKING LIVES EASIER

In Scotland we are investing over £125 million each year to mitigate the worst impacts of UK Government welfare reforms and support those on low incomes.

This includes investment of £38 million to support individuals through the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF). SWF provides much needed Crisis Grants to families, and also Community Care Grants. This helps families cope with the unexpected and can assist in the preparation to settle into new tenancies.

Our new Financial Health Check, backed by £3.3 million in 2018-20, provides advice for families on low incomes to ensure they claim all the benefits and grants they are entitled to and maximise their incomes. It also helps them to get the best value for good and services - tackling the poverty premium.

Alongside this, we are supporting the growth of the Affordable Credit Sector ensuring that even those on low incomes have access to mid-cost credit and wider financial inclusion advice to support them in dealing with financial pressures.



MANAGING A NEW OR EXISTING DISABILITY

Living with a disability can create a number of challenges for individuals and families. These could include meeting additional day to day living costs, such as increased transport expenses. Additionally earnings potential may be reduced if individuals struggle to enter and progress in work or have to provide care to a family member.

In Scotland, we regard social security as a human right. We will begin delivering disability assistance for children and young people in Summer 2020.

Young people (15-21) with a disability can access the Independent Living Fund Transitions Fund. This offers a young person up to £7,500 to explore, plan and achieve outcomes or goals that they have identified as important in their life.

Our National Entitlement Card offers all disabled people free bus travel, saving cardholders an average of £260 each year, backed by record investment of over £200 million in 2018-19.

We have increased the value of Carer's Allowance, through the Carer's Allowance Supplement which put an extra £442 a year into 83,000 carers' pockets in 2018-19 – higher than Jobseeker's Allowance for first time. This is an investment in carers of £300 million a year. We have also committed to providing additional financial assistance to carers of more than one disabled child by early 2021. To support eligible young carers, aged 16-18, we are also introducing the new Young Carer Grant, which will be delivered by autumn 2019.

We have also published our “A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: employment action plan” setting out action to meet our ambition to at least halve the disability employment gap in Scotland.



SUPPORTING CARE-EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE

Almost 15,000 young people⁶ in Scotland are currently in the care of a local authority. We know that these young people are at risk of achieving poorer rates of attainment, are less likely to be in positive destinations post-school and are at increased risk of becoming homeless. However, we are taking strong action to improve the care experience and outcomes for our looked after children and young people.

As proud and responsible corporate parents we are proactive in considering how to address the challenge of embedding real culture change across the public sector so that no unnecessary disadvantages are experienced by our looked after children and care leavers.

A summary of activity to date is set out in a Report⁷ by Scottish Ministers, laid before the Scottish Parliament in June 2018. This Report, which includes honest feedback from care experienced children and young people, demonstrates how corporate parents have worked hard to adopt better ways of delivering their support or services. At Government level we also continue to fund, and encourage all corporate parents to use, the comprehensive training and practical support available on websites and directly from Who Cares? Scotland and the Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS).

We recognise and value the important role played by kinship carers in providing stable and nurturing homes for young people. In September 2015, we announced funding of

£10.1 million per annum to local authorities to raise kinship care allowances to the same level foster families receive in their area. The recommendations of the National Review of Care Allowances focused on greater consistency and transparency of kinship and foster allowances, as well as the wider support available and we are working in partnership with COSLA on a joint response.

To improve outcomes for this group we invested £33 million in 2018-19 specifically to support the educational needs of care experienced children and young people. We've ensured that young care experienced students have access to full bursaries for college or university. We have also now exempted care-experienced young people from Council Tax up to the age of 26; supporting them through the important transition into their first home.

Care-experienced young people are a key priority group for the First Minister and she has commissioned an independent review of care which is currently underway. The Review is root and branch, looking at the underpinning legislation, practices, culture and ethos of the system. Its aim is to make Scotland's care system the best in the world. The Review is being driven and shaped by care experienced children and young people themselves. Securing safe, stable, loving and permanent homes for every looked after child at the earliest opportunity is key to children succeeding. The Review underpins our work to close the outcomes gap that exists between looked after children and their peers.

⁶ 14,738 children were 'looked after' on 31st July 2018, a decrease of 1% from 2016-17.

⁷ Scottish Government - [Corporate parenting - turning legislation into practice together](#) - June 2018

2

Assessing progress against the targets



Introduction

This section outlines the Scottish Government's approach to assessing progress towards the child poverty targets, presenting the most recent data for the four targets and the main drivers of poverty reduction. This includes the most recent child poverty data for the six priority families identified in 'Every Child, Every Chance'.

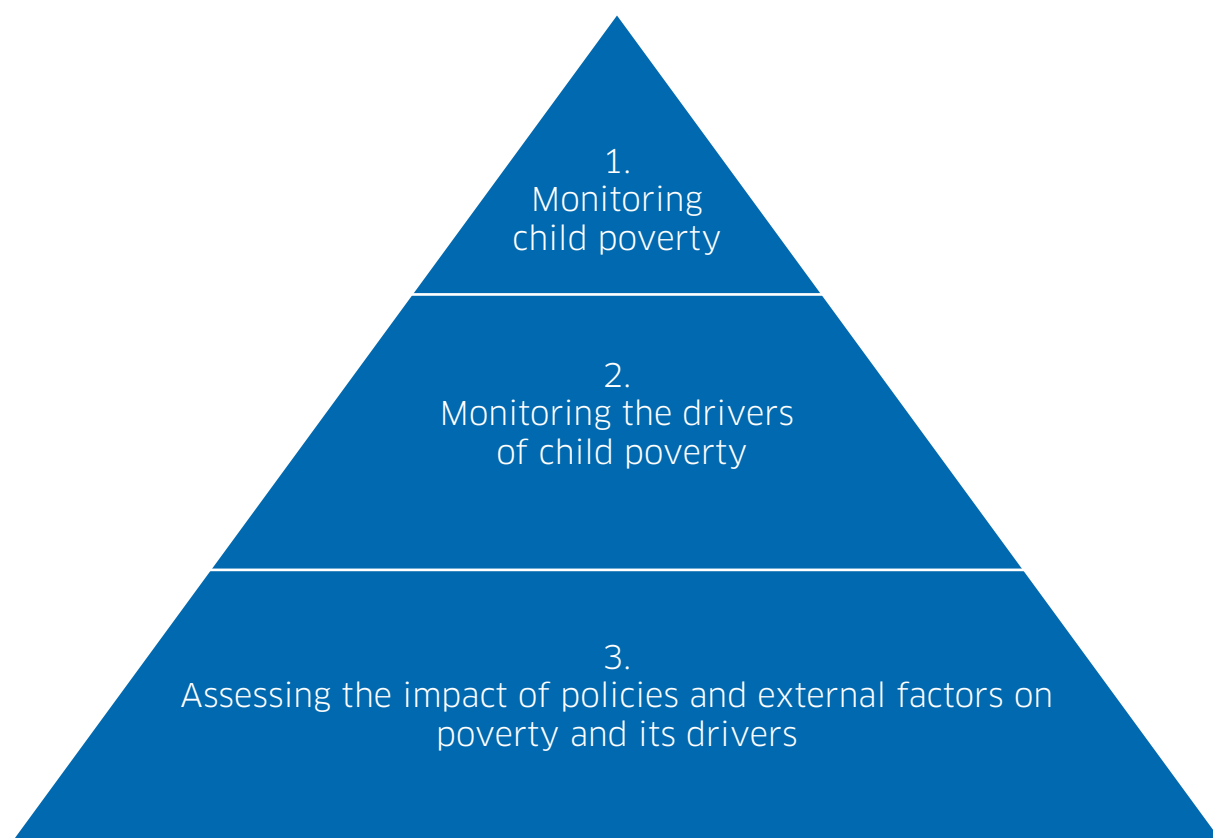
The latest available statistics predate the Delivery Plan's first year (i.e. the activity outlined in this report). However, it is clear that we will need to make strong progress, particularly given the ongoing UK Government cuts to social security, and that to achieve the targets will require considerable investment, on top of the significant sums the Scottish Government already spends to help children and families, set out in the previous section.

Our approach to assessing impact

There are three main elements to our approach to assessing impact as set out in the figure below.

In addition, across all three elements, there is a need to consider impacts for the six priority groups – family types that are at a higher than average risk of child poverty.

This section describes each of these elements in turn. It provides baseline data and historical trends for the four child poverty targets and for the drivers of child poverty (employment, costs of living and social security). It also presents baseline data on child poverty among the six priority groups identified in 'Every Child, Every Chance'.



Monitoring child poverty

We will report annually on the four child poverty targets. **The most recent child poverty statistics available describe the situation in 2017-18, which covers the period before publication of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.** These statistics provide the baseline for future progress. Statistics covering 2018-19 will be published in spring 2020.

The most recent child poverty statistics show the scale of the challenge we face in meeting the targets:

- in 2017-18, 24% of children were in relative poverty, against a 2030 target of 10%;
- in 2017-18, 22% of children were in absolute poverty, against a 2030 target of 5%;

- in 2017-18, 14% of children were in combined low income and material deprivation, against a 2030 target of 5%; and
- in 2013-17, 17% of children were in persistent poverty, against a 2030 target of 5%.

Looking at historical trends over time in the following charts, while relative and absolute poverty rates had been falling for many years, there has been a slow increase in relative child poverty in recent years, whereas absolute poverty appears to be fairly stable. Persistent child poverty and the combined low income and material deprivation⁸ rate for children both fluctuated in recent years, showing no clear trend.

Relative poverty

MEASURES POVERTY RELATIVE TO THE REST OF SOCIETY -

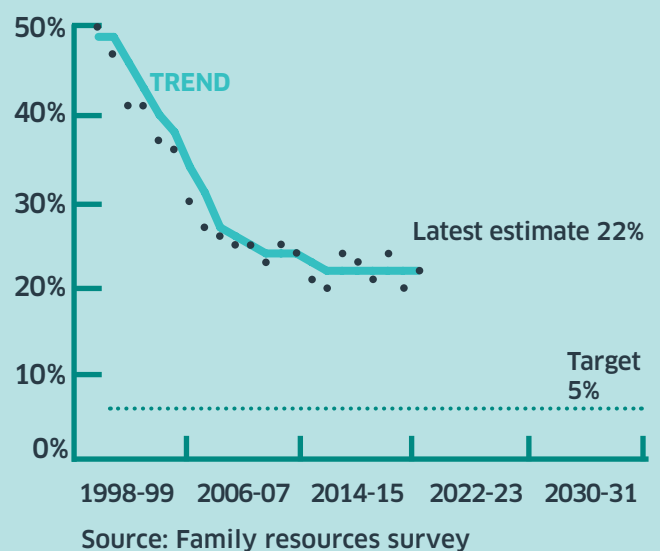
It is the proportion of children living in households with equivalised incomes below 60% of the median (middle) UK income in the current year.



Absolute poverty

MEASURES CHANGES IN POVERTY RELATIVE TO A POINT IN TIME -

It is the proportion of children living in households with equivalised incomes below 60% of the median UK income in a base year (currently 2010/11) adjusted for inflation.

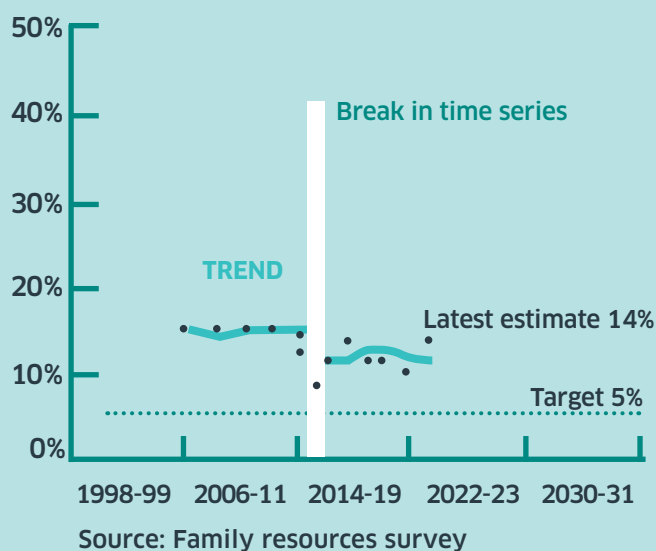


⁸ Material deprivation data has been collected since 2004. Due to a change in the methodology, it is not possible to compare the most recent years with years before 2010-13. The break in the time series indicates this change.

Combined low income and material deprivation

MEASURES WHETHER HOUSEHOLDS ARE ABLE TO AFFORD BASIC NECESSITIES -

It is the proportion of children in households with equivalised incomes below 70% of the UK median income and going without certain basic goods and services.



Persistent poverty

MEASURES WHETHER PEOPLE HAVE BEEN LIVING IN POVERTY FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS -

It is the proportion of children who have lived in relative poverty in 3 or more of the last 4 years.



Monitoring the drivers of child poverty

The Scottish Government has developed a new Child Poverty Measurement Framework to monitor how the various issues we know influence child poverty levels - for example, parental employment and housing costs - are changing over time. Checking which of the poverty drivers are moving in the right direction, and which are not, will give us a better understanding of why levels of poverty are or aren't reducing, and where we might need to change approach or do more.

As with the headline poverty statistics, the most recent data on the drivers of child poverty relate to the period predating the publication of the Tackling Child Poverty

Delivery Plan, and therefore provide a baseline for future progress. Annex B presents the baseline figures, along with the historical trends over time.

Annex B also shows that key employment indicators (participation, pay, hours worked and underemployment) are all stable or moving very slowly in the right direction. But we need to see much bigger moves in order to progress towards the interim targets. Likewise, skills measures show that the attainment gap between school leavers in the most and least deprived areas has narrowed considerably, however, there are still too many parents with degrees who are in low or medium skilled occupations.

Availability of flexible childcare is improving slowly, but we know more needs to be done to ensure the offer is flexible enough to enable parents to increase their income from employment. Stakeholder feedback suggests the need to address wider barriers (e.g. transport) to accessing childcare.

Annex B shows there have been reductions in the numbers of families in unmanageable debt or lacking savings. However, Brexit forecasts suggest future rises to food and fuel costs, so it will be important to continue to monitor movement in cost of living indicators for low income households.

UK Government welfare reforms have continued, with the indicators in Annex B showing reduced values of payments for families, particularly for working families.

In summary, Annex B presents a mixed picture. On employment, skills and cost of living measures, there has been broad stability, with some positive movement. The value of social security payments reserved to the UK Government has been falling. As delivery plan actions are implemented and become visible in the data, we will need to see much more decisive positive movements to be optimistic that we are making progress towards the child poverty targets.

Assessing the impact of policies and external factors on poverty and its drivers

Monitoring the drivers will tell us **how** they have changed over time, but not necessarily **why** they have changed. Poverty and its drivers are influenced by many different factors, only some of which can be influenced by public policy in Scotland.

One way of attempting to account for the impact of UK-wide factors is to compare trends over time in Scotland and the rest of the UK. Baseline data show that, on all four measures, rates of child poverty are lower in Scotland than in the UK as a whole.

Percentage of children in poverty after housing costs (Sources: Family Resources Survey, Understanding Society)

	Scotland	UK
Relative poverty 2017-18	24%	30%
Absolute poverty 2017-18	22%	26%
Low income + material deprivation 2017-18	14%	15%
Persistent poverty 2013-17	17%	20%

Children are less likely to be in relative poverty in Scotland (and Northern Ireland) than in Wales or any of the regions of England.

Percentage of children in relative poverty after housing costs, 2015-16-2017-18 (3 year average) (Source: Family Resources Survey)

UK	30%
Scotland	24%
Northern Ireland	24%
Wales	29%
England	31%
South East	25%
South West	25%
East	27%
East Midlands	28%
Yorkshire and the Humber	30%
North West	32%
West Midlands	34%
North East	35%
London	37%

A number of forecasts for future child poverty levels have been produced over the past couple of years^{9, 10, 11}. There is a degree of uncertainty about the rate of increase, but all of the projections indicate that there will be a rising trend in child poverty in the coming years, primarily resulting from the announced UK Government cuts to social security.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's assessment of changes to tax, social security and public spending up to the tax year 2021-22 found that these changes will have a greater negative impact on low income households in England than in Scotland. For example, by 2021-22, households on the lowest 10% of incomes in England are forecast to lose an average of around £1,300 per year, compared to around £900 for those on the lowest 10% of incomes in Scotland. This partly reflects policies introduced by the Scottish Government to mitigate the impact of the UK Government's benefit and tax credit cuts.

In future progress reports, we will also evaluate the key actions in the Delivery Plan, to estimate the contribution they have made to changes in the drivers and targets. For example, we will consider whether they have been carried out as planned, how many low income families they have reached, and how families have benefitted. Initial evaluation efforts are focussed on the following key actions:

- Fair Start Scotland
- Expanded Early Learning and Childcare
- Private Residential Tenancy
- Financial Health Check
- Best Start Grant

Other actions – including Parental Employment Support and the Scottish Child Payment – will also be evaluated when they come on stream.

The causes of child poverty are complex, involving a wide range of structural, household and individual-level factors. Therefore, there is no single 'magic bullet' to tackle child poverty in Scotland, and meeting the targets will require concerted action across a wide range of policy areas and organisations. We therefore intend to evaluate how well actions are working together, as a joined-up system.

9 Scottish Government (March 2018), [Tackling child poverty delivery plan: forecasting child poverty in Scotland](#)

10 Resolution Foundation (March 2019), [Wrong direction - Can Scotland hit its child poverty targets?](#)

11 Scottish Parliament Information Centre (April 2019), [Child poverty in Scotland: forecasting the impact of policy options](#)

‘Priority families’

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires that the annual progress reports describe the effect of delivery plan actions on the number of children living in single-parent households who are living in poverty, and on children living in households whose income is adversely affected, or expenditure is increased, because a member of the household has one or more protected characteristics.

‘Every Child, Every Chance’ identified the following six ‘priority families’ – family types that have a higher than average risk of child poverty:

- Lone parent families, the large majority of which are headed by women
- Families which include a disabled adult or child
- Larger families
- Minority ethnic families
- Families with a child under one year old
- Families where the mother is under 25 years of age

There are considerable links between the priority families and the protected characteristics.

Baseline data on child poverty rates among these priority groups are presented below, and will be updated in future progress reports to enable progress to be tracked.

Percentage of children in poverty after housing costs 2015-18 (Source: Family Resources Survey)

	Relative poverty	Absolute poverty	Low income + material deprivation
Disabled person in household	30%	27%	20%
3+ children in household	32%	30%	20%
Baby aged under 1 in household	32%	31%	12%
Minority ethnic household	40%	37%	18%
Lone parent household	41%	36%	28%
Mother aged under 25	56%	51%	26%
All children	24%	22%	12%

Percentage of children in persistent poverty after housing costs 2013-17 (Source: Understanding Society)

Disabled adult in benefit unit	14%
3+ children in benefit unit	32%
Lone parent benefit unit	38%
All children	17%

Every household circumstance is different. There will be children living in families where many of these factors apply, yet they do not live in poverty. And there are some children experiencing poverty even though

they are not in any of the priority family types. However, the six priority groups, taken together, do cover the majority of children in poverty in Scotland.

Number of children in poverty after housing costs 2015-18 (Source: Family Resources Survey)

	Relative poverty	Absolute poverty	Low income + material deprivation
All children	240,000	220,000	120,000
Baby aged under 1 in household	30,000	30,000	10,000
Mother aged under 25	30,000	30,000	10,000
Disabled person in household	100,000	90,000	70,000
Minority ethnic household	30,000	20,000	10,000
Lone parent household	90,000	80,000	60,000
3+ children in household	80,000	70,000	50,000
None of the above	40,000	30,000	10,000

Annex C takes a more in-depth look at child poverty and its drivers among one of the priority groups: minority ethnic families. Subsequent annual reports will look in-depth at other priority groups.

Evaluations of the key actions in the Delivery Plan will, where possible, collect information on the extent to which the actions are reaching and meeting the needs of the six priority groups.

3

Reporting on progress 2018-19



Introduction

This section sets out progress made in the first year since the launch of the Delivery Plan in March 2018. It covers all actions, with additional detail on new programmes put in place since publication.

In line with the advice of the Poverty and Inequality Commission, those actions expected to have the biggest impacts on poverty are covered in more detail. A progress ‘at a glance’ table is also provided in section four.

As set out in section two, this programme of work is being supported by an ambitious evaluation strategy which, in time, will provide valuable analytical insights on the impact of these policies and programmes. The impact of our actions is already becoming evident in a number of areas. To illustrate this we’ve included case studies for a number of actions to show how families are benefiting from these changes. We also include reflections from members of the Children’s Parliament on programmes they have either directly benefitted from or observed others who have accessed the support.

But it is important to recognise that this is year one of a four year plan. We are moving with pace in many areas but some programmes are only just starting or have still to begin. The key principle for our work is that we deliver with pace and at scale, wherever possible, and that roll out is carefully considered to achieve the right results.

The actions described below are arranged under the five original chapters set out in Every Child, Every Chance:

- A. Increasing income from employment and earnings
- B. Costs of living
- C. Social security
- D. Helping families in other ways
- E. Partnership working

A. INCREASING INCOME FROM EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

Sustainable, fair work is a long-term route out of poverty for families. Every Child, Every Chance identified ‘increasing income from employment’ as a main driver of child poverty reduction. However, to be sustainable, employment needs to offer parents decent rates of pay, good training and support, opportunities to progress, a flexible working environment and enough hours in work to provide a wage that, as a minimum, meets basic family needs.

That is why the Delivery Plan, through a range of programmes, supports this vision of a fair work future for families.

By promoting fair, inclusive and flexible employment, we can help parents work and earn more, effectively lifting them out of poverty.

Here we have provided updates on all the actions committed, with a spotlight on new employment support for parents and our work to build a living wage nation.

NEW EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

We are making considerable investment in employment support through Fair Start Scotland (FSS) and the Parental Employment Support Fund and a pilot programme to help disabled parents in particular. Of the three strands, FSS is the furthest developed to date, being launched at the same time as Every Child, Every Chance. The other programmes will come on stream this year and next.

FAIR START SCOTLAND

FSS launched in April 2018 and, by 29 March 2019, 10,063 individuals had accessed the service, of which more than half (64%) have a long term health condition. Of these participants 2,013 started work after joining FSS.

FSS provides tailored, person-centred support and, by 2023, will reach a minimum of 38,000 people who need support to enter and sustain work.

We know that parents are amongst those benefitting from the programme but information collected at the start of the programme was limited. We have now taken steps to address this. Information collected from July 2019 will enable us to demonstrate the impact the programme is having on parents with dependent children.

The Poverty and Inequality Commission asked for more information on how FSS and our new Parental Employment Support Fund will work together - this is explored further in our update on the Fund. The new fund will help prepare parents to participate in the support offered through FSS, and support those already in work to progress and increase their earnings.

Case study – Fair Start Scotland:

Sam* had been out of work for over 10 years and being mum to three children, felt her options for work were limited. Throughout this time, Sam tried to find work that would suit her circumstances. However, with a lack of recent work experience finding a job proved difficult – and left her feeling disheartened that she would never get the chance to show her value in the workplace.

In February 2019, Sam chose to participate in Fair Start Scotland. Sam knew that she wanted to work in the care sector, and by working with a Fair Start Scotland Adviser, Sam recognised she had a lot of life experience and skills that she could develop. Together, they created a personalised plan to help her achieve her employment goals.

Through Fair Start Scotland, Sam updated her qualifications through a sector-based learning academy, developed her CV and accessed individual support that involved interview preparation and advice. As a result, she has just secured a job as a support worker, working 39 hours a week.

Sam said “Fair Start Scotland gave me hope and worked with me. My confidence grew and my light came back and all because they gave me the tools to build myself up. I now work in a job I didn’t ever think was possible – and they will still continue to help and support me for a year.”

***Name has been changed**

PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FUND

In 2018-19, we laid the groundwork for a new programme of employment support targeted specifically at parents backed by £12.2 million investment. This service will work with FSS to support low income parents engage and progress towards work, and support those in work to increase their earnings. We aim to commence delivery of this new service in November 2019.

Based on the No One Left Behind (NOLB) principles, we are working with local authorities and their partners, on the new Parental Employment Support fund to draw extensively on the lived experience of potential service users and identify best practice. This will be integral to the final delivery model. The development of proposals will allow us to more accurately identify the numbers of parents the fund is likely to support. At present, we anticipate 17,500 low income parents will be supported.

The programme is in its early development stages (with the funding weighted towards the final three years of the Plan). The team established to develop the programme is in place and has been making good progress in laying the groundwork for delivery.

Parental Employment Support Fund provides the opportunity to build on existing services, enhancing what is already working and increasing the support for those facing in-work-poverty. This investment should therefore not be seen in isolation – coupled with the wider package of employment support we are set to invest £43 million¹² in addition to investment in Fair Start Scotland each year. The need for childcare services will, in part, be addressed through the expansion of universal provision of Early Learning and Childcare for three and four year olds, and eligible twos and the recent announcement of the new £3 million Out of School Care Fund. Using the NOLB principles at a local level, we are building on existing expertise gained from Working for Families and other programmes to ensure synergies with wrap-around services and wider local government, third and private sector investment. This offers a comprehensive package of support, linking the many streams of government investment.

Within their advice the Poverty and Inequality Commission noted that investment in the Parental Employment Support Fund is lower than in the previous Working for Families Fund which ran from 2004-08. However as previously noted there have been considerable changes to the employability support landscape since this programme was delivered. Substantial investment in the previous programme also owed to the provision of childcare services.

¹² No One Left Behind £35 million; Disability Employment Support £3 million; Parental Employment Support Fund £5 million per annum by 2022.

Early engagement and learning work

Our approach to developing Intensive Parental Employment Support has focused on learning from the evidence base and having early engagement with those responsible for past and current programmes, also ensuring we learn from people with lived experience of poverty:

- An early workshop on Intensive Parental Employment Support (June 2018), hosted by Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) was very helpful in making initial contacts with those from current and past programmes and we were able to exchange evidence and perceptions about what works.
- Recent research from the JRF¹³ and various evaluations of “in-work support” programmes have informed our thinking regarding the key groups that could be targeted, the key design principles and delivery model.
- Stakeholder roundtable events in Glasgow, Ayrshire and Dundee during March 2019 raised awareness and sought views/ ideas from a range of attendees. These included a range of organisations with direct experience of supporting low income families¹⁴. Everyone recognised the important role key workers can play, the need to work collectively in partnership to maximise current wrap-around services, and to focus support on in-work poverty.
- Visits to a range of existing programmes have deepened our understanding of current practice. These further discussions

with organisations and users have underlined the vital importance of a key worker in supporting families to move towards and into sustainable employability outcomes.¹⁵

Eligibility and targeting

The Delivery Plan identified six priority family types who will be the focus of all programmes being developed, including on Intensive Parental Employment Support where all six priority families will be eligible. An appraisal by Scottish Government analysts of wider employment and poverty data suggests that the following specific priority groups would benefit most from the support offered through this investment:

- Families where the parent or child has a disability;
- Lone parents who are unemployed and need support to access employment; and
- Lone parents currently in employment that require support to progress within the work place.

In addition, another group – couples where only one parent is in employment – were identified as a key sub-set of low-income parents who could particularly benefit. This focus on the priority families and these other considerations will guide our thinking as we move towards delivery later this year. We will ensure that, as the programme develops, we can provide data breakdowns by this typology to inform our evaluative work.

¹³ Joseph Rowntree Foundation – [UK Poverty 2018](#)

¹⁴ This included One Parent Families Scotland, Gingerbread, Action for Children, Women’s Aid, as well as local authorities and colleges.

¹⁵ Programmes we have visited include ‘We Work for Families’, North Ayrshire; ‘Make it Work’ in Fife; and ‘Clyde Gateway – Supporting Families Project’ in Glasgow.

ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT DISABLED PARENTS

As an extension of the parental employment approach, in December 2018, the Scottish Government announced an additional £6 million investment covering the period of the Delivery Plan. This will offer additional support to disabled parents to help them move towards and into work and be aligned to existing employment provision.

We committed to co-produce a pilot fund with disabled parents and representative bodies to look specifically at issues disabled parents face in entering the workforce and progressing through a career.

The rationale for an additional programme specifically focused on disabled parents is that this group are likely to face particular challenges and barriers in employment

non-disabled parents do not. These barriers may need bespoke support to overcome. However, there is limited evidence on the job outcomes for disabled parents currently being generated through existing employment support and what additional assistance may be required to improve those outcomes. Therefore, it will be important to develop pilots in a small number of areas which will be supported by robust monitoring and evaluation, complementing existing provision and which considers the potential need to have a more local focus.

This is a very new programme, but we are already working to ensure close alignment with Intensive Parental Employment Support, sharing design and delivery thinking and learning as we go.

Impacts:

- Fair Start Scotland will positively impact on up to 7,000 children living in poverty by 2023
- Our employment services support parents to increase income from earnings and/or progress through a career
- Disabled parents, minority ethnic people and lone parents are expected to benefit most
- The Parental Employment Support service will reach 17,500 parents by 2022
- Our new disabled parents pilot programmes will reach 2,000 parents by 2022

TACKLING LOW PAY AND SUPPORTING EQUALITY AT WORK

By promoting fair, inclusive and flexible employment, we can help parents work and earn more, effectively lifting them out of poverty. Paying the real Living Wage is a cornerstone of our approach – ensuring that the hourly rate parents receive affords them a good quality of life.

In 2018-19 we set out our plans to build a fair work future for Scotland – publishing our Fair Work Action Plan¹⁶ and Gender Pay Gap Action Plan¹⁷ and commencing development of a Future Skills Action Plan. We also revised the Scottish Business Pledge, and will take forward delivery of this in the next year ensuring closer alignment to the Fair Work Framework. We have also continued to promote flexibility for unpaid carers in the workplace through Carer Positive.

BUILDING A LIVING WAGE NATION

Tackling low pay for parents is crucial to reducing child poverty. It is one focus of our work on the real Living Wage and Public Sector Pay. The Scottish Government aims to lead by example and is an accredited Living Wage employer, meaning all employees in the public sector for which we control remuneration are benefitting from this commitment.

Scotland is already the best performing of UK countries in paying the real Living Wage with 80.6% of employees paid at least that amount (£9 p/h as of 5/11/18). But we want to see more employees benefit.

We are in the second year of our three year plan to build a Living Wage Nation and we have made substantial progress. In the first year, 2018-19, we secured an uplift in the hourly rate of over 5,000 employees across Scotland – as part of our ambition to achieve at least an additional 25,000 uplifts by 2021 through employer accreditation. This is putting more money in the pockets of families across Scotland. We have committed a further £380,000 to the Poverty Alliance for 2019-20 to build upon the growth in workers receiving the real Living Wage in the last year and drive up accreditation.

A key success was Dundee being recognised for its commitment to become the first ‘Living Wage Place’ in March 2019, with its alliance of prominent employers launching an Action Plan setting out how they will work together on “Making Dundee a Living Wage City”. According to End Child Poverty Coalition estimates, Dundee has the second highest child poverty rate in Scotland, so this place focus is important.

¹⁶ Scottish Government – [Fair Work Action Plan](#) – Feb 2019

¹⁷ Scottish Government – [Gender Pay Gap Action Plan](#) – March 2019

Living our values – embedding the real Living Wage through Scottish Government investment.

Through our expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), our shared aspiration with COSLA is for all workers in ELC settings to be paid the real Living Wage as a minimum. We are fully aware that many parents will be interested in the employment opportunities ELC will offer and are actively considering how to maximise links between this and the intensive parental employment funding we are making available.

Similarly, in our work to tackle fuel poverty and energy efficiency, action has been taken to ensure contractors pay the real Living Wage as a condition of grant to councils delivering our Area Based Schemes. Through Warmer Homes Scotland, our flagship fuel poverty scheme, Warmworks Scotland LLP, the managing agent, is an accredited Living Wage Employer and is contractually committed to ensuring its supply chain pays its employees the Scottish Living Wage.

In addition, those involved in delivering the Fair Start Scotland service receive at least this rate.

Tackling low pay in the public sector

The Living Wage commitment continues in our 2019-20 public sector pay policy which takes a progressive, fair and affordable approach. It also aims to reduce the overall income pay gap between low and high earners. All employers covered by the policy must ensure their staff are paid a full time equivalent salary of at least £17,385

and provide a minimum 3% basic pay award for all staff earning below £36,500. In addition, our no compulsory redundancy policy protects public sector jobs, and provides reassurance of employment. NHS Scotland staff are paid the Scottish Living Wage in line with Agenda for Change pay scales.

Impact:

- Higher pay rates mean more income from employment
- This is particularly relevant for women who are more likely to work in the public sector
- Young parents stand to benefit by up to £2.85 for every hour worked¹⁸
- 80.6% of workers in Scotland are paid the real Living Wage or more
- Part time workers, Lone Parents and Mothers under 25 are most likely to benefit

¹⁸ Based on 18-20 year old earning National Minimum Wage of £6.15 from 1st April 2019.

NEW ACTION ON THE GENDER PAY GAP

Tackling low pay must go beyond Living Wage accreditation to address the range of factors which prevent parents, carers of children, and young people from accessing their full potential in the labour market.

We know that tackling gender inequality is central to making progress on our ambition. Child poverty is often a proxy for women's poverty and we are clear that we will not solve child poverty without tackling the gender pay gap. Many priority family concerns intersect with gender issues too – so we need to focus on helping minority ethnic and disabled women, and particularly mothers, to make real progress.

The Scottish Government published its Gender Pay Gap Action Plan in March 2019. This was developed over 2018-19 in partnership with stakeholders, including Engender and Close the Gap, on a Gender Pay Gap Working Group, chaired by the Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills.

The Plan includes 50 actions and has a strong intersectional focus, particularly on minority ethnic women and disabled women.

Looking forward, key actions with specific child poverty resonances include supporting around 2,000 women to return to work after a career break through the new Women Returners Programme. Worth £5 million over three years, this builds on the success of a pilot project run since 2017. Crucially, this should provide a significant boost to parental incomes.

The Plan also committed to a new Centre for Flexible Work as a specific child poverty commitment. More information on this is provided later in this section.

FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Year two of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund was launched in July 2018. This allocated a further £10 million in academic year 2018-19, supporting eligible employers to access a maximum of £15,000 of college training. This benefit can be passed to the supply chain; either through nomination of supply chain companies to receive their entitlement or including supply chain staff in training. Statistics on delivery will be published in line with college reporting cycles. The Flexible Workforce Development Fund has the potential to benefit all priority groups. Employers are being encouraged to give due consideration to specific groups, including those belonging to equality groups.

THE WORKPLACE EQUALITY FUND

We are providing £750,000 to the workplace equality fund to enable businesses with innovative ideas to embed dimensions of the Fair Work Framework in their workplaces. Twenty two projects have been funded and include those that should target priority families. These include:

- improving recruitment procedures to better attract a diverse workforce;
- offering paid internships to minority ethnic people;
- supporting women returners;
- building flexible and agile workplaces for companies in the construction, STEM, finance, technology, and furnishing sectors; and
- extending the fund in 2019-20 to enable us to work with more employers while also continuing to support women, minority ethnic and disabled workers and encouraging family friendly working practices to support parents in the workplace.

NEW SUPPORT FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING

We are partners in the Family Friendly Working Scotland (FFWS) Partnership alongside Working Families, Parenting across Scotland and Fathers Network Scotland we support and promote the development of family-friendly workplaces across Scotland. We provided £159,000 to FFWS for 2018-19 and again in 2019-20 to support and promote development of family friendly workplaces.

As set out in The Gender Pay Gap Action Plan, we have commissioned a feasibility study for a new 'Centre for Flexible Work'. This centre will be a UK first, aiming to design, test, embed and scale new approaches to increasing the availability of flexible working - in particular for low income parents. Cross-government funding of £50,750 (with £25,750 being met through the Tackling Child Poverty Fund) has been agreed for 2019-20 to support the initial feasibility study in the first year of a potential three year programme to establish the prototype centre. The centre's core aim would be to ensure that those who have the most to gain - low income parents - are supported to access this work and raise their living standards.

B. COSTS OF LIVING

Reducing household costs is one of the keys to delivering a reduction in child poverty levels. This covers many unavoidable costs such as flexible and affordable childcare provision; safe, warm and secure housing; fuel, food and day-to-day essentials; and affordable credit – which is often required due to insecure incomes.

As set out in section 1, the Scottish Government is already investing heavily to support families with the costs of living – beyond the actions outlined in ‘Every Child, Every Chance’. For example in 2018-19:

- The universal provision of school meals for primaries 1-3 was backed by £54 million of investment and delivered an annual saving of £380 per child.
- Free prescriptions saved £9 per item, which is of particular benefit to families who have ongoing health conditions.
- The Council Tax Reduction Scheme, backed by £351 million, benefitted almost half a million households and saved recipients an average of £701 per year.
- Our investment of over £63 million in Discretionary Housing Payments helped families on low incomes meet their housing costs, including mitigating the bedroom tax in full.

In November 2018, the Poverty and Inequality Commission published helpful advice on the challenges faced by families during the school holidays in particular. Our actions here and on ‘social security’ and ‘helping families in other ways’ seek to address many of the issues raised.

Coordination of support was identified as a key area for work and we are currently finalising options to pilot and evaluate a comprehensive holiday hub over the summer; bringing together nutritious food, childcare and activities for children in a rural community. However, we will give further careful consideration to the challenges and suggestions made by the Commission in developing the programme of action needed to reach our 2030 targets.

This section provides more detailed information on Early Learning and Childcare, supporting families with the cost of the school day and housing affordability and energy efficiency.

ENHANCED SUPPORT THROUGH EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

Quality Early Learning and Childcare will improve outcomes for children and unlock parents earning potential.

EXPANDED EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

The Scottish Government is rolling out a transformational expansion of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provision in partnership with local government. From August 2020, all three and four year olds and around a quarter of two year olds will be entitled to 1140 hours of funded ELC – nearly double the current entitlement of 600 hours a year. 1140 hours means about 30 hours of funded ELC a week over term time, which is equivalent to a primary school week, but parents and carers can also choose to access their child's entitlement through a smaller number of hours over a greater number of weeks. We are also introducing 'Funding Follows the Child' which will help ensure greater flexibility and choice for families in how they access their child's funded entitlement.

Quality is at the heart of the ELC expansion. International evidence has shown that high quality early years provision can improve lifelong outcomes. Our investment in ELC is intended to support children's outcomes and narrow the attainment gap. It will also make a practical difference to families, both in terms of saving them money (1140 hours of funded ELC is estimated to save households on average £4,500 per child each year) and giving parents and carers greater opportunities to consider work, training or study.

Scotland's funded ELC offer is available to all families with three and four year olds, regardless of income or working pattern. Evidence shows that children growing up in more disadvantaged circumstances benefit particularly from high quality ELC.

In addition to this universal offer, around a quarter of two year olds are eligible for funded ELC in Scotland. From August 2020, their entitlement will also increase to 1140 hours. The eligibility criteria include children who are looked after, the subject of a kinship care or guardianship order, or whose parents or carers are in receipt of a number of qualifying benefits, including Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Tax Credits or Universal Credit. Local authorities also have discretionary powers to offer funded ELC to children who don't meet the criteria but would benefit from earlier access to high quality funded ELC.

As a result of our landmark multi-year funding agreement with COSLA to fully fund the ELC expansion, annual revenue investment in ELC will reach nearly £1 billion by 2021-22. This is an increase of £567 million on 2016-17 levels. £476 million in capital funding over four years has also been provided to support the next phase of infrastructure investment in ELC, and local authorities are making good progress with major capital projects to ensure enough places are available for the expansion. Total additional revenue and capital spend over five years from 2017-18 to 2021-22 will reach almost £2 billion.

Local authorities are already “phasing in” the expanded offer of funded ELC in preparation for August 2020. The planning guidance we issued in March 2017 made clear that plans for phasing should reflect the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation to ensure that families and communities who stand to benefit most from the expansion also benefit first.

Local authorities are working closely with a range of ELC providers to prepare for August 2020. Phasing looks different across the country, with some councils offering additional hours in specific settings or postcode areas, and others gradually increasing the ELC entitlement for the vast majority of families. Over 11,000 two to five year olds are already benefitting from more than 600 hours of funded ELC, including over 1,100 eligible two year olds. We are already hearing about the positive impacts of additional funded ELC from families and ELC practitioners.

Within their advice the Poverty and Inequality Commission recommended that the Scottish Government “*model the potential impact of investment in early learning and childcare on the child poverty targets through enabling parents to work, or work more*”.

We are already taking firm action on this recommendation. The Scottish Study of Early Learning and Childcare (SSELC) is collecting information that will help the Scottish Government to evaluate the extent to which the following benefits of ELC expansion have been achieved:

- *Children’s development improves and the attainment gap narrows*
- *Increased family resilience through improved health and wellbeing of parents and children*
- *More parents will have the opportunity to be in work, training, or study*

It is very challenging to accurately predict in advance the impacts on parental employment. Previous studies in other countries have found widely varying impacts, and differences in context and the services offered mean they may not translate to the current situation in Scotland. In Scotland we are aiming to maximise the potential impact of the expansion of early learning and childcare on increased opportunities for parents to be in work, training or study through fully making the connection to, and building on the momentum created by, employability initiatives referred to elsewhere in this report including the Parental Employability Support Fund.

Impact:

- Around 80,000 households stand to benefit from the expanded entitlement.
- At least 11,000 children already benefitting from an increase in hours.
- By 2020, all three and four year olds and eligible two year olds will be entitled to 1140 hours a year of funded ELC, worth £4,500 per child per year.
- Reduces essential family costs for those who would otherwise need to pay for childcare, which aims to reduce risk of material deprivation.
- Makes it easier for parents to work more and increase family incomes, aiming to impact on all four targets.

Case study – Early Learning and Childcare:

Jemma*, a single mum from Edinburgh, has a two year old daughter, Lucy. Jemma's mum had been looking after Lucy while Jemma looked for work, however Jemma had been wondering whether Lucy needed more time with children her own age and more time and space to play and learn.

Jemma was still in touch with a Family Nurse, Alice, she met when Lucy was first born. Alice now works as a Health Visitor and knows about the Council's offer for funded early learning and childcare for two year olds.

Alice thought Lucy would be eligible for a place and helped Jemma get in touch with the Council. Working together, the Council team, Alice and Jemma found a place that suited Jemma and Lucy. The Council is phasing in the new 1140 offer, which meant Lucy could start going to nursery four days a week from 8am – 2pm. She can go almost all year round. This enabled Jemma to find a part-time job that fits around her family's needs. It makes a big difference to Jemma knowing Lucy is well looked after while she is at work.

Jemma's mum wasn't sure nursery was right for Lucy as she's so young. But when she saw the nursery and met the staff, she realised they were brilliant at responding to Lucy's interests and giving her opportunities to play and learn.

Jemma really sees the difference nursery is making to Lucy – she has come on leaps and bounds in her speech and understanding and has made some great friends.

Quote from Jemma:

“Lucy's teachers spent time supporting us, never rushing for her to leave me, working out what routine was best. Knowing the time they spent with her and attention they gave her put me at ease. Getting back to work has really helped me to be the best mum I can be and watching Lucy's independence and confidence grow has been the most satisfying part of the journey.”

***Names have been changed**

AFTER SCHOOL AND HOLIDAY CHILDCARE

In 2018-19, a dedicated team was established to develop a strategic framework for after-school and holiday childcare. The team has worked collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders to assess the current picture in relation to out of school care in order to inform our developing policy.

Early establishment of an out of school care reference group allowed us to agree a vision for out of school care in Scotland, and to consider the changes which might be required within the system and the barriers which exist to enabling that change. Our vision will form the centrepiece of our draft strategic framework due to be published for consultation later this year. This policy is in the early stages of development but we have been keen to engage with a range of key user groups to ensure our future policy better meets the needs of children and families in Scotland.

- **Parents and Carers** – we have commissioned a survey of 2000 parents of children aged 5-13 to understand their views on out of school care. This included parents who don't currently use out of school care and those from low income families. We also engaged groups of parents from a wide range of backgrounds including lone parents, parents of disabled children, parents with lived experience of poverty and kinship carers.
- **Children** – we have gathered data from recent surveys to look at children's views of out of school care. We also delivered theatre workshops within after school clubs to ask children their views about what they would like to do after school and in the school holidays.

- **The Out of School Care sector** (including childminders) – we delivered a number of regional events across Scotland engaging with those working in the out of school care sector. We have also surveyed childminders across Scotland and engaged with individual childminders to gather their views.

We will also reflect upon the Poverty and Inequality Commission's advice on 'poverty in school holidays' in this process. This intensive engagement will continue as we develop the policy, and consider all types of provision for children and families during the holiday period, ensuring it is affordable and accessible. The issue of how food can be best integrated into provision will also be considered alongside wider actions to tackle food insecurity.

Out of School Care Fund

In order to test theories of change we have created a £3 million fund for delivering community based childcare and activities which will help to reduce the cost of living for low income families (by providing subsidised or low cost childcare for school aged children), coupling it with support to enter employment or training or to increase current hours of work. The fund will be delivered over a two year period starting in April 2020, supported by investment from the Tackling Child Poverty Fund. The activities and resources on offer through these projects will also deliver equal opportunities for children from low income families to access a wide range of social play-based experiences which for many are currently out of reach.

We will maximise opportunities to align this fund with the £12 million Parental Employment Support Fund (PESF) and the £6 million investment to support disabled parents considering how this can provide parents with a wider package of support. We will work to shape the project criteria, including discussion on eligibility and guidance to ensure maximum impact and that key delivery partners are fully aware of the child poverty reduction potential of the fund.

Across the fund we would expect to see all six groups and children's outcomes positively impacted and would expect evaluation of the impact of funding to measure child poverty outcomes. We would measure these outcomes linked to employability as well as in relation to children's health and wellbeing. Specific eligibility criteria will be developed with suitable partners over the coming months. We would expect the projects to consist of a mix of before, after school and holiday childcare provision and also include food provision where this adds value.

The fund will:

- Test the change required to remove the barriers of school aged childcare costs for low income families as a driver for reducing child poverty
- Test the change required to deliver our vision for after school and holiday childcare
- Provide solutions to enabling equal opportunities for all children to enjoy a full range of play experiences outside of school
- Consider appropriate models of delivery which can support this change.
- Provide robust evidence of the social impact and positive outcomes for children and families which access to affordable, accessible and flexible after school and holiday childcare and activity programmes can deliver.

NEW HELP WITH THE COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY

AN INCREASED SCHOOL CLOTHING GRANT

An estimated 120,000 children each year are benefitting from an increased School Clothing Grant – helping low income families meet the costs of their child’s school uniform, sports equipment and other essentials. The announcement about this increased support was made in May 2018, two months after the publication of the Delivery Plan.

A new minimum grant of £100 per eligible child was agreed by every local authority in Scotland and was introduced at the start of the 2018-19 academic year. This represents a significant increase from previously, where the grants paid were as low as £40. Six authorities have chosen to pay more than £100, with the highest level now set at £140.

The Scottish Government and our partners in local authorities are jointly funding this enhanced grant, having contributed £6 million each in 2018-19. The minimum amount to be paid will be reviewed every two years to ensure that the levels paid continue to reflect the costs of buying these essential items.

The Children’s Parliament thought the minimum School Clothing Grant is a good idea and it had been set at the right level. They highlighted that being unable to afford new uniform at the start of each school year or replacing lost, damaged, or outgrown items might mean that children feel unhappy and different from others who have proper school uniform.



If you don’t have the right uniform or sports kit or equipment, you feel left out.

Member of the Children’s Parliament
AGE 11

Impact:

- A new minimum annual payment of £100 per child – increasing by £60 the previous lowest amount
- Six councils pay more than the minimum
- 120,000 children benefitting each year
- Reduces costs of the school year for families
- Especially helpful for larger families

Enhancing the reach of School Clothing Grants through automation

Our new Innovation Fund is supporting work in North Lanarkshire, backed by investment of £70,000 in 2019-20, to help the Council explore ways in which it can automate entitlement of school age benefits using its own data. The aim is to improve the lives of families by reducing or removing some of the costs associated with the school day. Auto-enrolment in North Lanarkshire will build on the positive steps taken by Glasgow City, Dundee City, Highland and other councils to ensure that uptake of entitlements such as School Clothing Grants are maximised.

The National Child Poverty Coordinator, funded through the Tackling Child Poverty Fund, has been supporting this development. She has been sharing good practice and bringing together local authorities from across the country at national learning events.

Learning from this project will be disseminated across all local authorities and will make it easier for all eligible families to receive the full support they are entitled to. We will also work with Councils on how we share data on the Scottish Child Payment to further increase their work reaching families in their communities.

REDUCING FOOD INSECURITY IN THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

We know that food insecurity is a considerable worry for households in Scotland. For some families, the additional cost of the school holidays and the loss of support that is available during term time, such as Free School Meals, can tip the balance of household finances and can mean people struggle with the cost of food. This challenge cuts across a number of issues, including nutrition, childcare, and fun activities for young people. That is why we asked the Poverty and Inequality Commission to provide us with advice on how to best address this.

To recognise the importance of this issue, we have increased investment to tackle food insecurity among children from £0.5 million to £2 million in 2019-20, bringing the total for the Fair Food Fund to £3.5 million. This action addresses the Children's Parliament recommendation that due to the affordability of food being an issue for most families, more should be done to tackle it.

The Tackling Child Poverty Fund supported this investment with £100,000 in 2018-19 and will provide a further £500,000 in 2019-20. This resource has supported a range of third sector organisations in both rural and urban areas to deliver engaging holiday activity programmes that include nutritious meals from the summer holidays in 2018 to February half-term holidays. The range of projects supported reflects the different approaches that can be taken. However, we are clear that approaches which take a dignified approach and offer activities and/or other services to children and families are most effective.

Behind all of this work is a significant effort to ensure we are working in a more collaborative way both internally across Scottish Government and externally with local authorities, the third sector and other stakeholders. This will help build momentum, trial new approaches and develop a clear plan of action for the future to eradicate food insecurity during the school holidays. We have invested in projects that work across boundaries, for example, linking sport and activity with food and out of school care. We will also look for opportunities to identify and share the successes that local authorities and schools are having through our £750 million Attainment Scotland Fund.

Impact:

- 70,000 children are estimated to have benefitted
- Directly impacts costs of living for families
- Additional support will benefit larger families in particular

Case studies:

Our funding to Cash for Kids is supporting the **Printfield Community Project** in Aberdeen. This funding allowed the project to provide lunches for 130 children living with disadvantage for six weeks during the summer holidays. Children were involved in choosing healthy, filling meals and snacks and also preparing them and sitting down with friends to enjoy the meal.

One attendee, age five, commented:

"I love coming to club because we get to eat as much food as we like and there is always lots of food"

A parent of four said:

"The holiday club has meant so much to us and has taken pressure off me to find extra money for meals".

We are also providing funding to **Achieve More Scotland** to support the delivery of fun holiday camps, with access to sport activities throughout the Spring, Summer, October and Christmas holiday periods in Glasgow and West Lothian for 400 attendees each day. This third sector project works closely with local authorities to unlock access to community resources, such as sports centres and school gym halls during the school holidays, and go out into the community with mini-buses to pick up children and young people and ensure they can get to camp. They also link with a social enterprise organisation to provide healthy hot meals to the children and young people attending camp each day, and link with local businesses to provide fruit and bottles of water.

One attendee, commented:

"I love dancing and gymnastics. I have been coming for years and it has helped me so much. I love the food, I have made new friends and the coaches are great."

A parent of three said:

"My daughter loves camp. She can't sleep the couple of days before it begins because she is so excited. The food helps me a lot as summer is really expensive when you have three kids and two of them are under four. I can't wait until they are old enough and they can come here and enjoy it. What a difference the food makes."

FURTHER SUPPORT ON COSTS OF THE SCHOOL DAY

We awarded grant funding of £31,500 to the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) Scotland to fund a national project manager and to continue to deliver the Cost of the School Day (COSD) project through 2018-19. This funding is part of the £750 million investment to tackle the poverty related attainment gap. CPAG provided a range of support to local authorities, head teachers, teachers, COSD champions and newly qualified teachers. They gathered and shared best practice and developed a COSD rural research project to understand challenges in rural schools and communities.

Further grant funding of £75,300 has been allocated to CPAG in 2019-20, increasing the investment in the project to over £100,000 over two years, to support the progression of the rural work and respond to the recommendations from an evaluation of the COSD project which is due to be published later this year.

This was also a key recommendation from the children involved in the Children's Parliament scrutiny of the draft progress report that this work should be continued to ensure participation in school life was equitable for all.

NEW SUPPORT, INCENTIVES AND REWARDS WITH THE YOUNG SCOT CARD

Young Scot launched phase 1 pilot innovative projects by delivering new entitlements via the National Entitlement Card (NEC) in three initial pilot local authorities (Renfrewshire, North Ayrshire and Highland) in 2018-19.

The overall aim of the project is to tackle inequalities, improve attainment and challenge rural poverty in a non-stigmatising way. This is backed by funding of £374,392 over three years.

The project should focus on proving concepts and testing models of practice to show impact for longer term initiatives. After sharing lessons learned from phase 1, phase 2 of the pilot project began in April 2019 with Dundee, North Lanarkshire and Falkirk participating.

Case study – Renfrewshire Young Scot Card:

Renfrewshire Council appointed a Modern Apprentice to support the Youth Services Team to work with groups of young people in the area. Over a hundred young people are accessing entitlements, including through Renfrewshire Youth Voice, young carers groups, young people identified from local attainment schools and through Who Cares? Scotland and Homelink contacts and young people at Longcroft Children's Unit.

The target groups are in receipt of smart travel entitlements, allowing them free travel around the local authority through their Young Scot NEC.

In addition, Homelink identified a number of young people who would benefit from a daily breakfast entitlement; encouraging morning attendance at school and improving attainment. This entitlement plan, in partnership with a local café, aims to test a model of practice which can be rolled out to other local authorities and scaled up with new technology to read the Young Scot NEC when available.

ENSURING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

We are moving forward with a range of actions to ensure everyone has access to a safe, warm, affordable place to call home. We have demonstrated that commitment through our record of delivering 86,000 homes since 2007 and investing £1 billion in energy efficiency measures by 2021.

We are firmly on track to deliver our ambitious target of 50,000 affordable homes by March 2021. We estimate that around 16,000 of the 50,000 homes will directly benefit families, helping about 27,000 children.

Since April 2016 to March 2019 we have delivered 25,405 affordable homes and, since the launch of the Delivery Plan at the end of March 2018, we have successfully delivered over 9,500 affordable homes, including 6,573 for social rent (by end March 2019) backed by the single biggest investment in affordable housing since devolution totalling £3.3 billion.

In order that the right type of homes are provided in the right locations for those most in need, local authorities and their partners have a key role to play in assessing local housing need and demand. Social landlords allocate social rented homes delivered as part of the affordable housing supply programme based on an applicant's housing need and circumstances, with housing need likely to correlate strongly with low income and with the characteristics of the priority groups within the child poverty delivery plan.

The Poverty and Inequality Commission recognises the progress that has been made towards the target of delivering at least 50,000 affordable homes, although

it has noted the need to understand more on the detail of particular benefits of this investment on child poverty. Impact of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme is currently monitored through a range of data available, including Scottish Household Survey data on the characteristics of social rented households over time. We are exploring if there are ways of collecting additional information that would allow the impact of affordable housing supply on child poverty to be measured in more detail.

We are continuing our work to end homelessness by moving to a system of rapid rehousing and Housing First backed by around half our £50 million Ending Homelessness Fund. This will help families spend less time in temporary accommodation and into settled homes. But temporary accommodation is an important safety net so, when it is required, we want it to be of a high quality. We have therefore amended our Unsuitable Accommodation Order to ensure that families with children and pregnant women spend no more than seven days in unsuitable accommodation, such as B&Bs. We are currently consulting on bringing in a legally enforceable standards framework to ensure that accommodation provided is of consistently good quality, safe, warm and affordable.

Since 2003-04 the estimated number of children in poverty in the private rented sector has approximately doubled to 60,000. Our new private residential tenancy came into place in December 2017 and introduced the most significant change in private renting in Scotland for almost 30 years. The new tenancy provides a range of measures to help increase security and tackle high rents, including the abolition of 'no fault' eviction; limiting

rent increases to once in 12 months (with three months' notice required); enabling tenants to challenge unfair rent increases for adjudication by a Rent Officer; and providing local authorities with new discretionary powers to designate an area as being a Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ).

We are working closely with the Nationwide Foundation which is working on a major longitudinal, qualitative and quantitative research project on the new Private Residential Tenancy and its impact on low-income tenants in Scotland. We will fully consider the outputs, and any key recommendations, which emerge from the Nationwide evaluation project.

In 2018-19, we began a programme of work into affordable rents with a child poverty focus. This work has included research into rent affordability in the affordable housing sector, which was published in June. This research was welcomed by the Poverty and Inequality Commission, and further activities are ongoing. We have established a steering group to manage future work.

In September 2018, we published a discussion paper on future housing options. This highlighted that tackling child poverty is a key challenge and that our vision for homes and communities by 2040, and the route map to get there, must address this. We also published a report on stakeholder feedback in May 2019¹⁹ and will look to widen this consultation later in 2019.

We also want to progress our commitment to ensure housing is affordable for families. So over June 2019, we held workshops with academics and housing stakeholders to explore what we are all doing now on the housing challenge in relation to child poverty; what we think could be done over the next five years; and what we think should be priority actions in 2019-20. Specifically, these workshops considered the challenges and opportunities around rent affordability, non-housing costs (especially energy costs) and income maximisation with a view to developing a programme of work which will show how all of our combined activities aim to make an impact on child poverty by reducing housing and housing-related costs.

Impact:

- Ensuring adequate supply helps limit rent increases
- 27,000 children estimated to benefit across the five years of the 50,000 affordable homes target
- An estimated 3,050 households with children helped into affordable housing in 2018-19

19 Scottish Government - [Housing to 2040: stakeholder engagement report 2018](#)

NEW HELP WITH FUEL POVERTY

We are truly committed to making homes warmer and cheaper to heat. Key to reducing household spend on energy costs is increasing the uptake of the Scottish Government's Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland (HEEPS). This includes the Warmer Homes Scotland scheme and ensuring we target fuel poverty and energy efficiency support measures at those most in need.

In order to increase the uptake of Warmer Homes Scotland among low income families, the Energy Saving Trust carried out a marketing exercise. This helped to achieve an increase in the number of referrals to Warmer Homes Scotland compared to the same period the previous year. In 2018-19, 5,728 households were referred to Warmer Homes Scotland via the Home Energy Scotland helpline.

In the financial year 2018-19, Warmer Homes Scotland invested just over £24 million by installing measures in more than 3,800 properties, helping these households to save on average £298 per annum off their fuel bills. We announced an additional £38 million of funding for a two year extension to Warmer Homes Scotland.

Scottish Government funding per fuel poor household has risen for every council area in 2019-20 as part of our Area Based Schemes (ABS) to tackle fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency. The average amount of ABS funding available for fuel poor households in 2019-20 across Scotland has increased by 18% compared with 2017-18. This increase partly reflects a reduction in the overall number of fuel poor households but also better targeting of resources.

In June 2018, we introduced the Fuel Poverty (Target, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Bill. This was approved by Parliament in June 2019. The key focus of the Bill was to set new targets; strengthen the definition of fuel poverty and align it more closely with income poverty to ensure that resources are more effectively directed at those with the greatest need; and to set out a new strategy for delivery. The new definition will see a shift to include low income families with children as fuel poor and requiring support to make their homes warmer and cheaper to heat.

Alongside the Bill, we published a draft Fuel Poverty Strategy and will be working with stakeholders, including local authorities and those with lived experience of fuel poverty, to develop the final strategy.

Members of the Children's Parliament recognised this as a key issue.



Hopefully there will be fewer people in poverty because they have better houses.

Member of the Children's Parliament
AGE 11

Impact:

- Increasing energy efficiency of the home helps reduce fuel costs for families, and can reduce the risk of material deprivation
- All priority groups can benefit from this support
- In 2018-19, 5,728 households were referred to Warmer Homes Scotland via the Home Energy Scotland helpline
- Warmer Homes Scotland delivers average fuel bill savings of around £300 per year
- Households typically receive over £4,000 worth of measures
- In 2017/18 our Area Based Schemes delivered energy efficiency measures to around 8,000 households.
- Typically these were 'hard to treat' insulation measures worth up to £9,000 per property. This type of measure provides a long term improvement with energy savings of between £200 and £300 per year for 30-40 years.

Case study – Home Energy Scotland:

Rana* was living with her family, including her young daughter, in a home with a broken heating system and no insulation, meaning her family was constantly cold. She contacted Home Energy Scotland (HES) to see what help she might be eligible to receive and was referred to Warmworks for a survey to be arranged to assess her home under Warmer Homes Scotland. Rana was found to be eligible for a full gas heating system and loft insulation under the scheme, all of which were installed at no cost to her.

The installation was inspected a few days later and found to be installed to the correct specifications and in line with Warmworks' quality standard. The Energy Efficiency rating in Rana's home went from 5 to 58, which means she and her family are now living in a warmer, more energy efficient home.

Rana has really noticed the difference in terms of the quality of life her whole family enjoys, but particularly her youngest child.

"My little one is a lot happier now as she used to cry because she was so cold; to see a difference in her face is great. We don't have to wear two coats anymore just to stay warm."

"You can notice how fast the house heats up compared to the old system. I have also noticed my bills have dropped too and it's been great to have a bit more money to spend on other things."

***Names have been changed**

NEW HELP FOR INCOME MAXIMISATION AND TO TACKLE THE POVERTY PREMIUM

We are taking action so that households are able to take advantage of all the financial support available to them and to help them access the best deals for essential goods and services.

Within the Delivery Plan, we committed to three actions focussed on providing financial support. We explored the best way to make those on lower incomes aware of the support available and how to access it. We combined the proposed income maximisation, council tax reduction and benefit uptake campaigns into one Financial Health Check service.

This made access clearer for the target audience, enabled us to use resources more effectively and therefore potentially reach a wider audience, and meant those on lower incomes were able to access holistic support.

Coupled with services provided through other channels, such as health settings and affordable credit providers, this adds to a strong range of advice and support to families.

NEW FINANCIAL HEALTH CHECK SERVICE

Backed by £3.3 million investment over two years, the Financial Health Check service was launched in November 2018 to help low income families and older people maximise incomes, reduce household costs, and help avoid the ‘poverty premium’ of paying more for essential goods and services.

The new service can be accessed through Scotland’s network of local Citizens Advice Bureaux in person and by phone. Those accessing the service receive support to maximise their income through identifying entitlement to key reserved and devolved benefits, the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and other local authority delivered benefits. The 17 elements covered in the check also supports families to get the best value for essential goods and services, for example, more cost-effective energy tariffs, helping to manage and tackle debt, and access to affordable credit options.

We are now exploring an online Financial Health Check so people can access the service and get information at any time, whilst also always having a face to face option.

The Children’s Parliament considered it to be “a good thing” to have a service helping people claim benefits they are entitled to.

To maximise the reach and impact, we undertook a national marketing campaign in January consisting of radio adverts, national and local press coverage and social media activity. This was complemented by targeted marketing local bureaux undertook within their area, which included local promotional events and awareness sessions and work with partner organisations.

Later this year we will also undertake a further national marketing campaign this summer to promote the service at a time when financial pressures are felt and expenses like new uniforms and school shoes have to be met.

The Children's Parliament considered it to be "a good thing" to have a service helping people claim benefits they are entitled to.



People shouldn't be embarrassed [about accessing benefits].

Member of the Children's Parliament
AGE 11

Impact:

- 15,000 households a year expected to receive support from the service once fully operational
- Reduces household costs for families
- Maximises their incomes from social security and benefits in kind
- 3,889 households reached in first six months, of which 995 families with children
- Total financial gain reported was £2.5 million, of which £1.06 was from families with children

How has this new service helped families in Scotland?

Case study 1 – Financial Health Check:

Sharon* is a single parent and lives with her two year old daughter in a socially rented house. She was made redundant in 2016 and unfortunately hasn't been able to return to work since.

She used the money she received from her redundancy to pay off debt she had at the time and has managed to stay out of debt since then. She currently receives Income Support, Child Tax Credits, and full Housing Benefit, and pays only the water and waste charges on her property.

She accessed the Financial Health Check service, and whilst a benefit check did not reveal any further benefits that she could claim, she was advised about (and subsequently claimed) Healthy Start vitamins, funded Early Learning and Childcare for her daughter, and was also signposted to a local organisation who offer practical support to single mothers who find themselves in difficulty.

Sharon was also advised about the Best Start Grant Early Years payment for two to three year olds which she subsequently claimed and received a one off payment of £250. A price comparison check identified a saving of £10 per month on her utility bills which prompted her to switch supplier.

***Name has been changed**

Case Study 2 – Financial Health Check:

Jenny* is a single parent with a four year old child and pregnant with her second child. She is currently a full time student and also works part time to provide for her son.

Unable to access the local bureaux, Jenny contacted the Financial Health Check Helpline to enquire about maternity pay. After learning about her circumstances, the friendly adviser informed her that she could claim Maternity Allowance and that this would not be affected by her being a student. However, as she also received Child Tax Credits, she was advised that she would be eligible for the new Best Start Pregnancy and Baby payment and the Baby Box.

Jenny was delighted with the news and subsequently claimed these grants and, along with the Baby Box, received the Best Start grant of £300, and £140 per week in Maternity Allowance. This resulted in an overall gain of more than £5,600 to her annual income.

***Name has been changed**

HEALTH AND INCOME MAXIMISATION

Income maximisation help is not restricted to the Financial Health Check.

In recognition of the unique position of health services to support families at key transition stages, we provided funding of £250,000 to NHS Health Boards in 2018-19 to support income maximisation services in health settings, with a further investment of £250,000 to be made in 2019-20 from our Tackling Child Poverty Fund.

We also funded a Welfare Advice Services Adviser to the end of 2018-19 to promote the use of Welfare Advisers principally in Primary Care and Maternal Health settings. The adviser is working with Health Boards, Local Authorities and primary care practices across Scotland. This draws on strong evidence that placing advisers in such settings can have a significant impact on the uptake of benefits and maximises incomes for vulnerable patients. This work will continue into 2019-20.

NEW SUPPORT FOR AFFORDABLE CREDIT

Income maximisation help is crucial to reducing child poverty, but we know that sometimes that won't be enough. Families will be claiming every benefit they are entitled to, but still their incomes will fluctuate and they will look to borrow small sums of money to tide them over. However, the risk is that they will be charged high levels of interest which they may then struggle to pay back, driving them deeper into debt.

To help tackle this, we invested £1 million into the Affordable Credit Fund in 2018-19, match-funding the initial investment made by the Carnegie UK Trust. The Fund is further supported by £80,000 from our Tackling Child Poverty Fund to allow social lenders borrowing from the Affordable Credit Fund to market their services.

This funding enables not-for-profit social lenders, such as Community Development Financial Institutions and Credit Unions, to provide access to mid-cost credit to low income households. The Fund will be available to these lenders as a repayable loan over 10 years to help grow the affordable credit sector in Scotland. Alongside making loans, these social lenders offer wider financial inclusion advice and support to help increase borrowers' financial sustainability, such as opening a bank account, debt advice and help in claiming benefits. The first payment from the Fund was made in October 2018 to Fair For You, a not-for-profit credit provider which specialises in loans for essential home items.

How is affordable credit different?

Case study – Conduit Scotland:

Amanda* visited Conduit Scotland (*a not-for-profit community lender*) looking to borrow £700 as she needed new floorcoverings and a washing machine. Amanda has two young children, so when her washing machine had broken, it was essential she got a new one as soon as possible. She also had no floor covering on her kitchen floor and her living room carpet was threadbare.

Amanda wasn't able to access a loan from the bank and had very few options available. She had already considered a doorstep lender or using hire purchase to meet her needs – which would mean paying much more.

By accessing an affordable credit lender she was approved the same day for a loan to be repaid over a 26 week period. Conduit carried out checks to ensure Amanda could afford the repayments and, through broader advice and support offered, helped her to reduce her utility bills and maximise her benefit income – linking her with a range of support available locally to meet her needs.

Owing to a lower APR, the total cost payable to Conduit Scotland was £833. If Amanda had taken the same loan from a doorstep lender, with an APR of 535%, this would have cost her £1,092**. A loan from Conduit Scotland saved Amanda £259, making her monthly payments £43 less than what they would have been had she resorted to a traditional high cost lender.

***Name has been changed**

**** Costs correct as of May 2019**

NEW HELP FOR BASIC ESSENTIALS

We are taking action to support families with essential goods and services.

ACCESS TO SANITARY PRODUCTS

Sanitary products are essential items but some families on low incomes can find it difficult to afford them. The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring access to sanitary products for low income families.

As a start to this work, we agreed a £5.2 million funding package between August 2018 and March 2019 with local authorities and the Scottish Funding Council to fund access to free sanitary products across educational establishments in Scotland. Since August 2018, up to 395,000 students attending schools, colleges and universities in Scotland have benefitted from this. We will be fully evaluating the provision in autumn 2019 which will continue through 2019-20. This is backed by an additional £4 million to local authorities by March 2020 to expand access to sanitary products across Scotland in a wider range of locations.

In May 2018, we also provided over £500,000 to FareShare to expand access to sanitary products to low income families through over 650 third sector partners, helping around 40,000 low income individuals to date. We will continue to work in partnership with a range of public and third sector organisations to increase the number and range of places in communities where these products are available for those who need them, and to encourage more organisations to take similar action.

C. SOCIAL SECURITY

Social security has a key role to play in tackling child poverty, putting money directly in the pockets of those in need. Because the six priority groups are more likely to be excluded from the paid labour market, they are often more reliant on the social security system. Therefore, the impact of UK Government welfare cuts is even more apparent. However, while social security has the ability to lift significant numbers of children out of poverty, we are clear that reaching our child poverty targets cannot be achieved through this measure alone and long lasting change is needed.

Last year saw the passage of the Social Security (Scotland) Bill, establishing the first social security system in the UK, based on the statutory principle that social security is a human right. Since then we have established a new Social Security Agency, which currently employs 400 people, and paid £197 million to over 77,000 families and carers. We have also published our social security charter and established the Scottish Commission on Social Security. Scotland's social security system is being shaped by people with direct experience of the current benefits system, through the use of Experience Panels. These panels were set up in 2017 and will run for four years – through this we are benefiting from the insights of more than 2,400 volunteers from across Scotland.

We have made strong progress in delivering new support in Scotland and will continue to deliver other devolved benefits in line with our ambitious timescales. We will also publish our first plan to support the uptake of devolved benefits in October 2019.

Here we have focused on our plans for the Income Supplement, called the Scottish Child Payment, and on the impact of the Best Start Grant. We have also included details of the new enhanced support through Best Start Foods.

A NEW INCOME SUPPLEMENT

Given the key role of social security in tackling child poverty, a commitment was made to work towards introducing a new income supplement for low income families who need it most within the lifetime of the Plan (2018-2022); and that appropriate steps would be taken to ensure that it met two tests:

1. It is targeted at those families who need it, therefore helping to lift the maximum number of children out of poverty.
2. There is a robust and viable delivery route to get it to families, and that the delivery costs are reasonable – ensuring we maximise the resources available.

2018-19 saw the Scottish Government making substantial progress towards the introduction of a new income supplement.

This new benefit, called the Scottish Child Payment, will be made to children under the age of 6 before the end of this parliamentary term (March 2021) and to all eligible children aged under 16 by the end of 2022.

The Scottish Child Payment will be administered by Social Security Scotland through an application-based process and will be a payment of £10 a week for each eligible child in the family – paid on a regular basis.

We have published a policy position paper²⁰ that sets out the process of development of the Scottish Child Payment and the expected policy impacts it will have. This has been published alongside the *Analysis of Options for the Income Supplement*²¹ – a detailed analytical paper that shows the consideration given to a wider set of policy options.

As set out in detail in those papers, the first stage in the policy development process was to establish a set of key objectives to help guide the development of the Scottish Child Payment to determine potential options and support future evaluation.

The second stage, guided by these objectives, was to develop a number of policy options and test these with stakeholders. We have hosted roundtables with key stakeholders –with CoSLA and local authority representatives, and with third sector and anti-poverty organisations, academics, and representatives of priority family groups – and met with wider interested groups.

These events were designed to provide stakeholders an overview of the development of the Scottish Child Payment, and also to gather their views on potential options and guide the criteria we use to evaluate those.

The third stage was to undertake detailed policy modelling, to analyse the potential policy costs and impact on poverty, and complement it with a thorough consideration of how options compare against key criteria that would contribute to the success of the policy.

Delivering a new benefit on the scale of the Scottish Child Payment inevitably comes with challenges. Delivery of the Payment will take place at the same time that the Scottish Government is also taking over delivery responsibility for many of the benefits devolved under the Scotland Act, including the complex disability and carer benefits. Further work will be undertaken over the summer to determine more detailed implications and considerations for delivery.

In recognition of the urgency to introduce the Scottish Child Payment, we will do so through secondary legislation, using our powers to top up reserved benefits. We will introduce regulations by the end of 2019 and these will be submitted to the Scottish Commission on Social Security for scrutiny.

Impact of the Scottish Child Payment

- At full roll out, an estimated 410,000 children will be eligible for the Scottish Child Payment
- It has the potential to reduce child poverty by 3 percentage points, lifting 30,000 children out of poverty.
- Two-thirds of recipients are estimated to be living in households in the lowest three deciles of the income distribution

²⁰ [Scottish Child Payment Policy Position Paper](#) – Scottish Government

²¹ [Analysis of Options for the Income Supplement](#) – Scottish Government

A NEW BEST START GRANT

We have delivered key components of the new Best Start Grant over 6 months ahead of schedule, providing crucial financial support to families when they need it most.

The Best Start Grant (BSG) Pregnancy and Baby Payment was introduced on 10 December 2018, with an exceptional response by applicants. The value of payments to a family's first child increased from £500 to £600 by comparison with the previous Sure Start Maternity Grant (SSMG) and introduced a £300 birth payment for second and subsequent children – which is not available anywhere else in the UK.

By 28 February 2019, we had already awarded over £3.5 million to low income families in Scotland, helping to cover the cost of essentials such as cots and prams for their new child.

Since the end of 2018-19, we've made significant progress on the other two BSG payment stages.

On 29 April, Social Security Scotland started taking applications for the BSG Early Learning Payment. This payment provides £250 per child, to help with the costs of child development, at the age of two or three years old; around the time that a child may be making the transition to nursery. The payment can be used for anything from children's clothes and shoes to toys and days out.

Applications for the BSG School Age Payment opened on 3 June, offering low income parents a further £250 around the time their child starts school. There is no UK equivalent for the new Early Learning and School Age Payments.

Scottish Fiscal Commission

The Scottish Fiscal Commission (SFC) forecasts estimate that the total number of Best Start payments made annually to low income households will be around 73,000 at a cost of £21 million based on 2019-20 figures.

Impact:

- BSG directly increases household income through social security
- £3.5 million was paid to more than 9,700 low income families in Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment in the first three months of operation
- 7,300 of those families would have received no support through SSMG
- Families will receive financial support worth £1,100 in the early years for their first child and £800 for second and subsequent children

Case study – Best Start Grant:

Emma*, a young single parent living in Glasgow, was 28 weeks pregnant with her second child. She was in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance and struggling to cope financially to provide items for herself and her family. Her financial situation was causing her stress and anxiety and although she had previously received the Sure Start Maternity Grant for her first child, she no longer had any of the essential items that she needed due to the length of time between their births.

Unlike the UK Government, the Scottish Government do not put a cap on the number of children they help with the Best Start Grant. Emma was delighted to learn that she was eligible for the new Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment and was assisted to apply for the new benefit by One Parent Families Scotland. When she received the £300 payment, she was able to go out and choose what items she needed and plan the room that her new baby would have.

Emma said:

“...I don't usually have money to spend so it made me feel so good being able to go shopping for the baby.”

***Name has been changed**

A NEW BEST START FOODS

We know how important healthy food is for young families. But for too many families, maintaining a healthy diet is a daily challenge, with poverty and deprivation being a barrier to this. That's where our new Best Start Foods programme – providing direct financial support to low income families to support a healthy diet in the earliest of years – comes in.

Best Start Foods is the Scottish Government replacement for the UK Healthy Start Voucher scheme following the devolution of Welfare Foods powers in Scotland. Best Start Foods will provide direct financial support to access a healthy diet to pregnant women and families with children under the age of three on certain benefits.

In April 2018, shortly after the Delivery Plan was published, we started a formal consultation on what the replacement Scottish scheme would look like. 147 respondents completed the consultation, – 75 individuals and 72 organisations – and an analysis of responses was published in October. This feedback, and ongoing consultation with stakeholders including parents throughout the year, has led to a number of important changes for the new Scottish approach. The remainder of the 2018-19 reporting year was spent planning and agreeing these improvements.

Changes include:

- Increasing the value of support families receive from £6.20 a week to £8.50 a week for children under one, and from £3.10 a week to £4.25 a week for pregnant mothers and children aged one and two who are eligible;
- Expanding the universal eligibility for under 18s (which currently applies to pregnant women) to continue into the first year of the child's life, so parents under 18 can benefit from double payments in the first year of their child's life; and
- Ensuring there is no limit to the number of children who can be supported.

By the time a child reaches three, recipients will receive an additional £112 through Best Start Food payments (from £899 in the UK scheme to £1,011 on the Best Start Foods scheme).

Best Start Foods will be available through a pre-loaded payment card, helping to ensure families are not negatively impacted by the stigma of using paper vouchers, and are able to fully utilise this valuable support.

We are also expanding the range of foods families can purchase to include not only fresh/frozen fruit and vegetables, cow's milk and first infant formula milk (suitable from birth), but also tinned fruit and vegetables, fresh/frozen/dried/tinned pulses (including lentils, peas, barley and beans) and eggs to provide greater choice.

These important changes will be introduced when Best Start Foods is launched in summer 2019. We expect this to be a considerable support to low income parents, particularly when joined up with other actions in the Plan.

Impact:

- Low income families with a child under one will receive £8.50 each week – equivalent to £442 a year – per child
- Pregnant women and children aged one and two who are eligible will receive £4.25 each week – equivalent to £221 per year
- All priority families will benefit. Larger families and lone parents may benefit particularly.

Resources	Impact Summary
Best Start Foods is a demand led budget. The annual estimated budget for Best Start Foods (and Healthy Start Vouchers) is expected to be £5 million in 2019-20 and £6 million in 2020-21. ²²	<p>Potential to impact on all four of the targets.</p> <p>Of particular benefit to parents with a child under one, due to higher payment value in a child's first year, and to larger families, as the payment is per child.</p> <p>Young mothers (under 18 years) are automatically eligible during pregnancy and until their child reaches one.</p>

²² From the Scottish Fiscal Commission [forecasts](#) – May 2019

NEW SUPPORT FOR CARERS

We know that carers are more likely to live in poverty and many have responsibility for children or are children themselves. We are determined to help.

In 2018-19, Carer's Allowance Supplement helped 83,000 individuals, 99% of which were working age, with over 20,000 paid as the carers of disabled children – one of our priority family groups. We provided an extra £442 into carers' pockets, an increase of 13% and an investment of over £33 million. This increased to an extra £452 (2.4%) this year as a result of our commitment to uprate all aspects of Carer's Assistance annually by inflation.

Looking forward, a new Young Carer Grant will be introduced in autumn 2019. This will provide £300 to young carers aged 16-18 who do not receive Carer's Allowance. Ministers have also committed to providing additional payments to carers of more than one disabled child by spring 2021. It is estimated these payments will support around 1,900 carers. This support will be crucial to helping improve the lives of carers.

A NEW JOB GRANT

We are developing the Job Grant to support young people starting a new job. Aimed at eligible 16-24 year olds (or 25 for care leavers) with a particular focus on young parents, it will help meet the initial costs of starting work, supporting a smooth transition into employment for around 4,000 young people on low incomes who may struggle ahead of receiving their first salary. This support will help ensure work is manageable for families over the first few months and is ultimately sustainable as a key step into a career.

We intend to provide a one-off cash payment of £400 for eligible young people who have responsibility for a child, and £250 for those without – backed by investment of around £1.2 million each year. We are currently progressing with policy development and design of the application process.

WIDENED FUNERAL SUPPORT PAYMENT ELIGIBILITY

Later in summer 2019 our new Funeral Support Payment will provide financial support at the point of bereavement to eligible groups, including low income families with children. The Funeral Support Payment will mean around 40% more people are eligible for help towards funeral costs, and is backed by around £2 million extra funding on top of the UK Government allocation in its first year. We have committed to increasing the flat rate part of the payment each year to take into account the impact of inflation.

EXPANDED ELIGIBILITY FOR WINTER HEATING ALLOWANCE

From Winter 2020, any family in Scotland with a child who is in receipt of the higher rate component of Disability Assistance for Children and Young People will be eligible for Winter Heating Assistance (WHA). We propose that these families will benefit from a new £200 payment. We forecast that around 16,000 families will access this. We are seeking views on this as part of our consultation on Disability Assistance in Scotland, the responses will inform our approach.

Resources	Impact Summary
Investment of around £3 million per annum from Winter 2020.	Potential for impact on all four targets through income from social security for families with a disabled child.

D. HELPING FAMILIES IN OTHER WAYS

We want children who currently live in low income families to achieve their full potential.

The timeline we have included in Section 1 sets out some of the key support that families can access throughout their lives. This ranges from the baby box of essential items on the birth of a child to fully-funded university tuition for every eligible individual.

One of our key aims is to help ensure that children and young people living in poverty now do not become the parents of children in poverty in 2030. Improving health, well-being and quality of life, and helping families cope with adversity should improve long-term outcomes. Whilst many of these actions will not directly impact on the 2030 targets, by supporting children living in poverty today to reach their full potential, we will help ensure that reductions in poverty are sustainable for future generations.

The Social Mobility Commission, in its recent report, found that people in Scotland are “becoming significantly more socially mobile, as a person’s job and life chances are less determined by their socio-economic status at birth.” This highlights the value of our collective action.

This section provides additional detail on our work to support students to access further and higher education, funded through our Tackling Child Poverty Fund.

NEW HELP FOR CHILDREN'S NEIGHBOURHOODS

If children grow up in successful, thriving communities, they and their families will be more resilient to disadvantage and poverty. That's why we are funding new Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland (CNS) programme, led by the University of Glasgow and Glasgow Centre for Population and Health. This is a distinctive approach to improving outcomes for all children and young people in neighbourhoods with high levels of poverty. It has the empowerment of children, young people and communities at its core. CNS is working to join up efforts and services within a locality to reduce poverty, increase participation and capacity within communities, and support improvements in the poor childhood outcomes associated with disadvantaged settings.

The first CNS is in Bridgeton and Dalmarnock in the east end of Glasgow, an area in which over 45% of children are in poverty. After a period of trialling different approaches, CNS will, in partnership with local public, private and third sector organisations, set up further sites in urban areas, a small town and a rural community. In each case, the approach will target areas with high levels of child poverty and will focus on ensuring more coordinated and effective support and opportunities for those children and their families.

The focus is to promote the participation of children and young people, families and local organisations in identifying shared priorities for action. These further sites will be identified and projects rolled out over the next year. CNS is backed by investment of over £2 million by 2022 from our Tackling Child Poverty Fund.

Children involved in the project told us why this new approach is so important to them:

"Children and young people always get the raw deal and decisions are always made for them and not with them."

"Their voices are swept under the carpet by adults who think they know better ... regardless of whatever the child has said, the adult still knows better so we need to try and raise some of those voices up."

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND COMMUNITIES FROM FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Success in further and higher education makes success in later life more likely. Education should open the doors to opportunities which enable children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society. We want every child, no matter their background, to have an equal chance of entering and succeeding in higher education.

In 2018-19, we provided the significant financial investment in further and higher education of £1.8 billion. This total allocation included support for teaching, capital and research for both sectors, providing a minimum of 116,000 full-time equivalent college and over 128,140 university places. Through this we have

achieved a record number of Scottish students getting a place at university through UCAS.

Alongside support to encourage young people to access further and higher education, we have committed additional investment of £21 million each year, by the end of this Parliamentary term, in response to the recommendations made by the Student Support Review. This has been used to increase care-experienced bursaries across further and higher education (FE/HE) to £8,100 per year in 2018-19. From 2019-20, increases will be made to FE/HE bursaries, a 'guaranteed' FE bursary system will be introduced and we will make further improvements to the HE bursary income threshold. These improvements are expected to benefit around 31,000 students in HE and 7,000 in FE.

In order to increase awareness of the funding available to access higher and further education and the opportunities that education can bring, the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) established an action group on child poverty. The group explored and recommended how best to provide information to young people. They considered what approaches worked best, from leaflets to online information, and how young people would access this information. As a result the distribution of funding

literature has been extended to now include libraries via local authorities, Citizens Advice Bureaux and Social Bite Scotland, targeting new audiences to encourage their participation in HE.

Funding literature and social media posts were also produced in alternative languages to target the most vulnerable ethnic communities, with social media material accessed over 150,000 times. SAAS has commenced work with Jobcentre Plus staff to raise awareness and offer support to work coaches on the funding available for claimants to enter further and higher education as a route out of poverty. SAAS will continue to work in partnership with Jobcentre Plus to extend this service to Jobcentres across Scotland.

SAAS also produced an awareness video targeted at S2 to S4 pupils which highlights available funding options for young people to continue their studies at college or university. The video Facebook campaign targeted the top 200 SIMD deprived areas and has been viewed by a significant number of the social media platform subscribers. This video highlights further and higher education as a real option for young people, irrespective of their family's financial situation or personal circumstances.

Impact:

- 38,000 students will benefit from bursary changes in 2019-20
- Bursary increases will directly increase household incomes
- Improved educational outcomes may improve earned income for families long term

MAKING SURE YOUNG PEOPLE RECEIVE EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE PAYMENTS

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is financial support for eligible 16 to 19 year olds who want to continue learning.

We have been in constant dialogue with local authority partners on how to improve the application process for EMA. As a result of discussions in 2018-19, we authorised the acceptance of online EMA applications. This change has helped to make the service more readily accessible and to speed up the processing of applications. We have also refreshed the mygov.scot EMA site to help direct applicants to the correct information and contacts for their particular query.

Looking forward, we recently met with members of the NHS Health Scotland Child Poverty Team who shared examples of best practice from local authorities who are committed to increasing the uptake of EMA in their council area. We will develop this partnership in the coming year to assist our commitment to an improved EMA service.

TAILORED LEARNING SUPPORT FOR GYPSY/ TRAVELLER FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

The Delivery Plan acknowledged that Gypsy/Traveller children and young people are among the most disadvantaged in Scotland. The Plan committed to a new tailored community education programme for Gypsy/Traveller families.

The Ministerial Working Group on Gypsy/ Travellers met throughout 2018-19 discussing how to improve outcomes in the key areas of accommodation, education, health and tackling poverty. The Scottish Government will now publish an action plan on these issues later this year.

£275,000 (2018-20) will be made available from the Equality Budget to improve the offer of education to Gypsy/Traveller children and young people across Scotland. The programme of actions will be delivered in partnership with STEP, Education Scotland and local authorities and Gypsy/Traveller families. This will pave the way for a further £500,000 (2020-22) from the Child Poverty Delivery Fund to work directly with Gypsy/ Traveller families and other partners on the community education programme.

In addition, the Scottish Government is providing practical and financial support to the Young Gypsy Traveller Assembly and to the new Gypsy/Traveller Women's Voices project, to help Gypsy/Travellers families be more involved in the decisions that affect their lives, not only in relation to education but a wide range of policies and services.

ADDRESSING ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Responding to and better preventing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is crucial for reducing child poverty over the longer-term.

The Scottish Government is focusing on four key areas of action here:

- Providing inter-generational support for parents, families and children to prevent ACEs happening in the first place;
- Reducing the negative impact of ACEs for children and young people already affected;
- Developing adversity and trauma-informed workforce and services; and
- Raising awareness of ACEs and supporting action across communities.

Action on parental imprisonment

We are helping build resilience for families to cope with parental imprisonment and reduce the impact of this ACE. By taking a preventative approach, we are working to reduce the number of people going to prison and continue to put greater emphasis on use of alternatives to custody to help maintain employment, tenancies and family links for individuals. For women in custody we are implementing a progressive new approach and will be opening a new national women's facility and two community custody units in 2020-21.

To minimise the impacts of parental imprisonment on children, the Scottish Prison Service (SPS):

- has invested in specialist services to provide support through Barnardos Here and Now at Polmont;
- launched its new Child Protection policy in December 2018;
- delivers parenting support in all prisons;
- has engaged, across 7 establishments, with Early Years Scotland, delivering positive parenting support; and
- has extended the number of Prison Visit Centres to 12 in the 15 prisons in Scotland - backed by £700,000 of funding in 2019-20.

INCREASED FUNDING FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Good mental health is crucial for children and families.

Our 2018 Programme for Government included a £250 million package of measures to do more to support positive mental health and prevent ill health. In December, we published a delivery plan for a range of commitments,²³ including school counselling services; school nurses; mental health first aid training for teachers; and developing a community mental wellbeing service for 5-24 year olds.

We established a Children and Young People's Mental Health Task Force in October 2018 as part of a comprehensive approach to improve support for children and young people's mental health across health, education and children's services. This is supported by a £5 million transformation fund. The Perinatal Managed Clinical Network published a report on perinatal and infant mental health in March 2019. To address the report's recommendations we announced the establishment of a new Perinatal and Mental Health Programme Board. The board will oversee and manage £50 million of investment to improve access to mental health services for expectant and new mothers.

²³ [Better Mental Health In Scotland](#) - Scottish Government - Dec 2018

NEW ACTION ON TRANSITIONS

The Poverty and Inequality Commission suggested that the Scottish Government should consider a transitions fund to help families and children at key milestones/crisis points.

As a direct response to this advice, we have begun an appraisal of the support already available. This work has already highlighted the generous package of support provided in Scotland which isn't available elsewhere in the UK. Through our appraisal, we will identify the full range of support already in place and any potential gaps that exist.

We have also been examining whether it would be possible and desirable to implement a capital endowment or matched-savings plan for young people leaving the care system. We have been engaging with various partners and our next steps are to explore possible legislative options, consider how we might overcome potential delivery challenges and assess the proposal in light of the output of the Independent Care Review.

ACTION ON TRANSPORT STRATEGY, POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Transport can represent a significant cost in terms of accessing essential services or maintaining social connections with friends and family. It also plays a crucial role in supporting people's ability to access new employment opportunities that bring higher incomes.

In recognition of this challenge we are engaging on our National Transport Strategy (NTS2) review to set out our ambitions for Scotland's Transport system over the next 20 years. Our vision is ***We will have a sustainable, inclusive and accessible***

transport system helping to deliver a healthier, more prosperous and fairer Scotland for communities, business and visitors.

To facilitate the commitment in "Every Child, Every Chance", the NTS2 team are engaging with stakeholders (Poverty Alliance, Child Poverty Action Group, One Parent Families Scotland, BEMIS, and Young Scot). We will then capture this engagement in an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)/Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA). NTS2 will work towards a public consultation on a draft strategy this summer, in which our commitments on child poverty will be set out. It is anticipated the final strategy document will be published by the end of 2019.

In addition, work is also underway to review an extension of discounts on public transport available to 16-18 year olds to extend to those under the age of 26 (this incorporates a cost and benefits appraisal on extending free bus travel as any changes to the concessionary fares schemes must fully consider financial sustainability).

And we're helping to connect families with opportunities by investing over £1 billion annually in public transport and other sustainable transport options. We made record investment of £202.1 million in 2018-19 in the concessionary travel scheme - supporting disabled people. And we are committed to extending the National Concessionary Travel Scheme to provide companion cards for eligible disabled children under age 5. This will provide the benefits of free bus travel to about 3,000 families and carers each year.

SUPPORT TO ADDRESS BULLYING

We established a working group to develop a consistent and uniform approach to recording and monitoring incidents of bullying in schools. A Support Group is now assisting local authorities to implement the new process on a phased approach. This will be fully implemented by August 2019.

respectme, Scotland's anti-bullying service, continues to provide direct support to local authorities, youth groups and all those working with children and young people to build confidence and capacity to address all types of bullying effectively. We provided funding to LGBT Youth Scotland to work collaboratively with respectme to produce a resource and deliver practice seminars to address homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying which is in line with 'Respect for All'.

We also funded Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) to produce similar guidance in line with 'Respect for All', for schools to address bullying based on race. This was published in January 2019.

FACILITATING ACCESS TO MUSIC EDUCATION

We have worked with the Music Education Partnership Group, COSLA and key stakeholders on a group to identify solutions that help ensure instrumental music remains accessible to all. Guidance, highlighting potential unintended consequences and examples of good practice has been developed for local authorities to consider when taking funding decisions on instrumental music tuition. The COSLA Children and Young People Board have agreed that local authorities will not charge for tuition where children and young people are in receipt of free school meals, or are studying for a SQA qualification.

TARGETED OPPORTUNITIES FOR CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

Our work with young people under the umbrella of Scotland's youth arts strategy, Time To Shine and supported by initiatives including the Youth Music Initiative, Cashback for Creativity, Sistema Scotland, are designed to ensure that no-one's background is a barrier to taking part in cultural life and giving young people all over Scotland a chance to take part in the arts.

Our long-standing investment of £118 million since 2007 in the Youth Music Initiative (YMI) has made a huge impact helping young people across Scotland access music making opportunities and develop their wider skills and learning. CashBack for Creativity has helped engage over 43,000 young people in areas such as film making, dance and music helping them learn new skills, boosting their confidence. Sistema Scotland continues to have a significant and positive impact, increasing the confidence, aspirations and self-esteem of the 2,500 children and young people involved in the programme every week, backed by £2.5m four-year funding package (2016-17 and 2019-20).

We are developing a Culture Strategy for Scotland that will set out a vision and priorities for the future development of culture in Scotland. The strategy aims to develop opportunities for people to take part in culture and promote an inclusive and extended view of culture. The final strategy will be published in autumn 2019.

IMPROVING INCLUSION IN SPORT

Taking part in sport can be crucial to children's health and well-being.

sportscotland launched their new corporate strategy, Sport for Life, on 1 May 2019, outlining the vision for an active Scotland where everyone can benefit from sport. The strategy is underpinned by inclusion. They want to help all children in Scotland get the most from the sporting system. They have a number of programmes that have an impact on tackling deprivation: Active Schools; Community sports hubs; and the Sport Facilities Fund.

Active Schools provides more and higher quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity before school, during lunchtime and after school, and to develop effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community. It has been very successful in addressing the inequalities in participation between the areas of lowest and highest multiple deprivation seen in many other sport and physical activity programmes.

Community sport hubs bring together sport clubs and key local partners who want to develop and grow the sporting offering in the community. They focus on sustainable, community-led approaches that get clubs working together to develop welcoming, safe and fun environments for sport. Hubs are designed to respond to the needs of their communities. There are examples of hubs delivering sport programmes, which also tackle issues associated with poverty such as hunger during school holidays.

The Sport Facilities Fund supports capital projects that create or improve places where people take part in sport and physical activity. They provide enhanced support to club and community-led projects serving the most deprived communities, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Contributing up to 75% of the total project cost (up to maximum of £100,000) for projects serving deprived areas.

Resources	Impact Summary
£12 million for Active Schools	Likely to impact on cost of living, and feed through to the low income and material deprivation target.
£1.5 million for community sport hubs	Regular participation in sports during childhood is associated with lower levels of mental illness.
£2.6 million for Sports Facilities Fund	Improved parity of access reduces stigma. Increased access to sport activities will improve health and wellbeing of children.

A NEW RESOURCE FOR DISABLED CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Delivery Plan set out that we would develop a new online resource for disabled children, young people and their families, as well as for those working with them²⁴. In developing this online resource we engaged with a range of stakeholders, parents, carers and young disabled people across Scotland, and took account of their suggestions when developing the website. We utilised support from the Disabled Children and Young People Advisory Group and Young Disabled People's Forum to work on their areas of expertise, particularly access. We know 14% of all children in poverty live in a family with a disabled child. This website, published in April 2019, will signpost families to financial support that they may have been unaware of and can be accessed.

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NHS ON CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING TO PROVIDE EXTRA HELP FOR FAMILIES IN THE EARLY YEARS

In 2018-19, we took a range of action to enhance the support available to families through our partnership with the NHS.

We're supporting better health outcomes and by 2021-22 we will have increased investment in Primary Care by £500 million per year. This funding includes support for delivery of 250 Community Link Workers to work in GP surgeries; connecting people

with local services and support. Investment in a package of measures to support positive mental health and prevent ill health - worth £250 million. And development of our 10 year Child and Adolescent Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.

We launched the neonatal expenses fund on 1 April 2018 with £1.5 million made available for families of babies in neonatal care to cover costs of travel and subsistence. An end of year one report will be published later in 2019, however the in-year report shows that 435 families were helped in the first four months of the scheme, totalling nearly £60,000 in claims. Funding for the scheme will continue in 2019-20.

We have increased the health visiting workforce by at least 509 (45.7%) since 2014. In addition, over the same period 804 health visitors have completed training with a further 270 in training²⁵.

As children of teenage parents are at particularly high risk of poor outcomes in the antenatal and post-natal period we are providing support through Family Nurse Partnership Programme. With an annual investment of around £16 million per year, the service is delivered to eligible mothers under 19 years in 11 health board areas and young mothers under 24 in some areas, reaching over 3,000 families at any one time. Work over the next year will identify how we can extend the programme to Island Boards.

24 Scottish Government - [Supporting disabled children, young people and their families: guidance](#) - April 2019

25 Figures correct as of 31 March 2018

E. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Delivering on our ambition to end child poverty is not something that can be achieved by government alone. As we said in our Fairer Scotland Action Plan, “It takes all of us to build a fairer Scotland”, including local and national government, third sector partners, business and people with lived experience.

The Poverty and Inequality Commission made clear in their advice that we should ***“have a greater focus on creating and improving jobs in relation to child poverty and should take account of the Commission’s research on inclusive growth”***.

This is something we are absolutely committed to, and our partnership actions outline our progress and approach here. Since March 2018 we have taken a range of steps to maximise the impact of the partnerships we are involved in.

This includes adoption of the Place Principle²⁶ to help overcome policy silos and organisational boundaries and improve the impact of our combined investment and resources throughout Scotland. Successful implementation requires the discipline of a more joined-up, collaborative and integrated approach to services, land and buildings; improving collaboration between communities and the public, private and third sectors; and the efficient and effective utilisation of our collective energy and resources.

This means that work and plans being led by Scottish Government and its agencies is taken forward in a way that is integrated and co-ordinated with those of other public service delivery partners to make good on our ambition to end child poverty.

We have provided a range of support for local partners to help tackle child poverty and develop local responses. In the past year a new national child poverty co-ordinator has been appointed, a new analytical partnership has been established, the Poverty Alliance have commenced delivery of their Get Heard Scotland programme and we brought the Fairer Scotland Duty into force. All of these actions together help to sharpen the focus across Scotland, and ensure that every pound spent can have the maximum impact for families in need.

26 Scottish Government – April 2019 – [Place Principle](#)

INVESTING IN INNOVATIVE ACTION TO TACKLE CHILD POVERTY

Our partnership approach is supported by investment in innovative projects, which respond to local needs. This has been strengthened with the launch of the new Innovation Fund in partnership with the Hunter Foundation, the £16 million Families and Communities Fund and continued investment in the STV Appeal.

INNOVATION FUND

In May 2018 we launched a new Innovation Fund in partnership with the Hunter Foundation, worth £7.5 million by 2022.

Following a competitive application process we agreed to fund eight new projects, with a combined investment of £450,000. These projects demonstrated a range of innovative approaches including job training, school-based mentoring and support for lone parents.

Building on our existing strong partnership with the Hunter Foundation and the successful Social Innovation Partnership, we made further investments in five organisations already delivering highly impactful work. This takes total investment from the Innovation Fund for 2018-19 to approximately £720,000.

In the coming years we will identify suitable projects to benefit from further investment - maximising the impact of our investment and scaling up and replicating successful approaches.

What organisations are benefiting from this funding?

MCR Pathways:

Our increased investment is supporting MCR Pathways to expand its highly successful school-based mentoring programme. This is intended to ensure care-experienced and disadvantaged young people get the same education outcomes, career opportunities and life chances as other young people.

Already supporting over 1,300 young people weekly across all 30 Glasgow secondary schools, our investment is allowing MCR Pathways to expand its programme to more than 60 additional schools throughout the country as part of its three-year expansion plans.

MCR Pathways' programme is about supporting these young people to achieve positive destinations - reducing the risk they will become the parents of children in poverty. Evidence from the programme in Glasgow points towards better staying on rates, better attainment and an increase in the number of young people going on to positive destinations

Many larger organisations encourage and support staff to become MCR Pathways mentors. Mentors, in turn, develop a greater appreciation of the reality of poverty and its impact on people's lives, becoming more empathetic and taking their experiences back to their own places of work and communities.

Flexible Childcare Services Scotland:

Linked to our action on out of school care, our increased investment has benefited Flexible Childcare Services Scotland (FCSS). FCSS champion the role of flexible childcare in supporting low income families to take up employment, increase their working hours or access educational opportunities.

We are working with FCSS as it shares its flexible childcare model and best practice with the wider Early Learning and Childcare community. In 2017-18, at its facility in Families House in Dundee, FCSS provided 28,932 hours of childcare to 184 children from 163 families, with 70 percent of families reporting that using the service allowed them to take up or remain in employment.

NEW PRIORITY IN THE EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES FUND

The Empowering Communities Fund, which in 2019-20 has become the Empowering Communities Programme, supports our national outcomes by focusing investment and funding on deprived communities and disadvantaged rural areas.

The main funding vehicle within the programme is the Investing in Communities Fund. Building on the learning and progress from previous community funds we have brought forward the importance of action to address child poverty throughout the design stage of this new fund, placing child poverty and poverty of all forms as a key priority in the criteria for the fund. The fund's purpose makes clear that tackling child poverty is a priority and provides essential guidance on the many ways in which the fund can be utilised to reduce child poverty.

We launched our new Investing in Communities Fund on 7 May 2019 which, backed by investment of £11.5 million in 2019-20, has the Place Principle at its heart; aiming to ensure that all organisations within a place or community work collaboratively together to identify priorities, solutions and maximise their assets. The fund will provide further focus on the key priorities of reducing poverty and child poverty, and encourage holistic project design that can help to unlock the various barriers which grip people in poverty.

STRENGTHENING OUR INVESTMENT IN THE STV CHILDREN'S APPEAL

During 2018-19, we again supported the STV Appeal with £1 million. In the first six months to June 2018, the Appeal supported 18 large projects and 211 small projects across all 32 local authorities, reaching 8,636 families and 12,564 children and young people, and leveraging nearly £1.75 million in additional funding.

BUILDING STRONGER LINKS BETWEEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS AND TACKLING CHILD POVERTY

Employment is one of the key drivers to help families out of poverty.

In order to stimulate delivery of more and better employment opportunities, and protect existing jobs, we are working with the Regional Economic Partnerships (REPs) developing from the experience of local authorities and partners implementing City Region and other Growth Deals.

The maturing REP network is focused on growing regional and local economies by increasing prosperity while enabling more equal communities.

Central to all of the Growth Deals' ambition is activity to promote Fair Work, and its clear focus on improving skills and enhancing employability, with the aim of ensuring that new jobs are accessible to local people. Growth deal investments across Scotland include additional support for those furthest from the workplace, or from disadvantaged groups or areas, including parents. In the longer-term, it is hoped that this approach can also break generational cycles of unemployment, underemployment and poverty. We consider that Growth Deals and the work of REPs will have the most significant impact on reducing child poverty by increasing parental earnings through work.

We will continue to work with the Glasgow City Region and other REPs across Scotland to help them in their mission to deliver real benefit to families and communities in the form of well-paid and secure employment. We also intend to gather evidence of the impact of Growth Deals on employment and earnings as these deals progress.

COMMUNITY WEALTH AND LOCALISM

As part of the Ayrshire Growth Deal, we will invest £3 million in a Community Wealth Building Fund. This fund will be made available regionally, with activity co-designed between the Scottish Government and the new Ayrshire Regional Economic Partnership. When fully established, this project will aim to improve local employment prospects and also empower local communities to access fresh economic opportunity – having a direct impact on household income from employment. We will work with the Ayrshire partners to guide this work in a way that makes a clear link to the reduction of child poverty in Ayrshire.

As part of our broader work on Community Wealth Building, we are also working with a Glasgow Procurement Collaboration Group, led by Strathclyde University and including Glasgow City Council, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, University of Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian University, City of Glasgow College, and Glasgow Clyde College. This project is focussing on opportunities to increase the amount of investment from large local employers being spent locally. We will encourage partners engaged in this work to examine how increased investment locally can make a measurable impact on child poverty experienced in the city and region.

We have already provided detailed breakdowns of spend across all of the partners, demonstrating shared suppliers, spend within the City, Region and beyond, allowing the partners to identify areas where procurement spend could be targeted to increase local spending.

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND GLASGOW CITY REGION ON INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND CHILD POVERTY

We have been working collaboratively across government portfolios to assist the Glasgow City Region on this ambition. At the regional level we are working to build on and scale best practice, especially in skills and employability, to drive up household incomes and break the cycle of low income employment.

We have supported Glasgow City Region to develop inclusive growth monitoring and evaluation frameworks. We are also exploring ways in which employability support could be tailored to support low income parents in order to increase household incomes and reduce child poverty.

A STRONG PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL AREAS

Local solutions to tackle child poverty are a crucial part of the picture. That's why we included a local reporting duty in the Child Poverty Act, which covers local authorities and health boards.

In 2018-19 we have put in place a new range of support measures to maximise the impact of local action.

A NATIONAL CHILD POVERTY CO-ORDINATOR

Following a competitive recruitment process, a National Child Poverty Co-ordinator was appointed at the Improvement Service from July 2018. Scottish Ministers have committed to funding this post until 2022. The Co-ordinator has been providing a range of support to local leads across the country, helping to build capacity and share learning.

The National Co-ordinator, working with the Local Child Poverty Coordination Group (consisting of Scottish Government, Improvement Service, NHS Health Scotland, Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit, NHS LIST, COSLA, the Poverty Alliance and Child Poverty Action Group) have begun the delivery of a shared work plan.

The Co-ordinator has led on a range of actions including: undertaking a survey and creating a network of local authority leads on the development of Local Child Poverty Action Reports (LCPARs); delivering events to facilitate good practice sharing and relationship building; establishing and facilitating an online network of over 150 members involved in the development of LCPARs; developing guidance and a feedback framework for LCPARs; actively engaging key stakeholders in the development and implementation of LCPARs; briefing and delivering a webinar for Elected Members on the legislative requirements around LCPARs for local authorities and health boards; providing 'critical friend' feedback on draft LCPARs; and providing ad hoc input to local planning meetings in relation to tackling child poverty locally.

A NEW ANALYTICAL PARTNERSHIP ON LOCAL CHILD POVERTY

In 2018-19, we provided an initial £20,000 of grant funding to support the establishment of the Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit (SPIRU). We have committed to providing funding to SPIRU until 2021.

The Unit is a member of the Local Child Poverty Co-ordination group and is acting as a critical friend to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) – clarifying their duties in relation to the Child Poverty Act, responding to requests for assistance and advice, and disseminating examples of effective practice from across and beyond Scotland.

A NEW FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

We brought the new Fairer Scotland Duty into force from the 1 April 2018. We published interim guidance²⁷ on 28 March 2018 and have subsequently funded a National Co-ordinator post in the Improvement Service until 2021 – providing £33,000 in funding in 2018-19. The post holder is working closely with the Child Poverty Co-ordinator to ensure good links are made and strengthened across these two complementary areas.

BRINGING THE VOICES OF PEOPLE WITH EXPERIENCE OF POVERTY INTO LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

We continue to support and invest in key organisations, including the Poverty Truth Community, to enable people with lived experience of poverty to get their voices heard.

In 2018-19, we provided new investment in the Edinburgh Poverty Commission. The Commission will define the long-term actions and responses needed to reduce poverty and inequality in Edinburgh and make recommendations for change to partners across the city, informed by the views and experiences of people affected by poverty who are at the heart of this work.

NEW SUPPORT FROM THE POVERTY ALLIANCE

The Poverty Alliance have been working closely with their network of local and national partners since March 2018 to develop and commence the rollout of Get Heard Scotland (GHS).

To maximise the impact of their resources, the initial phase of GHS has focused in three key areas [*Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dumfries*] and on three key topics: fuel poverty, transport and child poverty.

The first outputs from this new programme on transport, were shared at an event in Glasgow on 29 April 2019.

A ROLE FOR THE CHILDREN'S SECTOR STRATEGIC FORUM IN MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION

The Scottish Government actively engaged with the Children's Sector Strategic Forum over the course of 2018-19. The Forum's advice and scrutiny to strengthen cross-government delivery of the actions committed has been very useful. Representatives of the forum attended meetings of Scottish Government Directors in October 2018, April 2019 and May 2019 specifically to discuss our approach to child poverty. These meetings have provided an open forum in order to discuss progress and offer their insights into what is working well and what areas need improve.

Due to the value of this engagement to both parties, the Forum offered to continue the relationship in 2019-20 and the Scottish Government has gratefully accepted this offer.

27 Scottish Government – [Fairer Scotland Duty Interim Guidance](#) – March 2018

4

At a glance summaries



Introduction

This section of the report provides a series of 'at a glance' tables, including: progress made and equality considerations; resources invested from our Tackling Child Poverty Fund and more widely to tackle child poverty in 2018-19, and; how we have addressed the requirements of the Child Poverty Act and recommendations and comments from the Poverty and Inequality Commission.

The first table provides overall progress on each of the actions committed; whether we are delivering, in progress, or at early stages of development. It also sets out which of the priority families we expect to benefit and the expected outcome.

The Poverty and Inequality Commission asked for us to be clear on investment made from the Tackling Child Poverty Fund. Our second table responds to this ask, clearly setting out what has been spent from the fund or committed to date.

The Commission also asked for us to be clear on our wider investment to tackle poverty. Our third table sets out Scottish Government investment directed at low income households with children and investment targeted at low income households more generally – where children are also expected to benefit.

This latter table is currently our best estimate, but we acknowledge that this is challenging work. Further work will be done ahead of the second progress report to ensure investment information is as accurate and up to date as it can be.

The final table outlines the requirements of the Child Poverty Act, and how we have addressed each within this report. As the Act requires us to respond to the comments and recommendations of the Poverty and Inequality Commission, this is also noted here.

ACTION	Priority groups expected to benefit	Expected outcome	Status
Flexible Workforce Development Fund	ALL – but especially LP, DAC, ME, YM	EMP	★
The Workplace Equality Fund	ALL – but especially DAC, ME	EMP	★
New support for flexible working	ALL – but especially LP, DAC	EMP	▲
Enhanced support through Early Learning and Childcare	ALL – but especially LP, 3+	EMP, OC, LC	●
After School and Holiday Childcare	ALL – but especially LP, 3+	EMP, OC	▲
An increased School Clothing Grant	ALL – but especially 3+	SS	★
Reducing food insecurity in the school holidays	ALL – but especially 3+	OC, SS	★
Further support on costs of the school day	ALL – but especially 3+	OC, SS	★
New support, incentives and rewards with the Young Scot Card	ALL	OC	●
Work with the social housing sector to agree the best ways to keep rents affordable	ALL	HC	▲
Ensure that future affordable housing supply decisions support our objective to achieve a real and sustained impact on child poverty	ALL	HC	▲
Evaluate the impact of the private residential tenancy on families with children	ALL	HC	●
Scottish Housing Regulator	ALL	HC	▲
Increase uptake of our Warmer Homes Scotland programme amongst low income families	ALL	OC	★
Target fuel poverty and energy efficiency measures on those most in need, including low income families	ALL	OC	★
New Financial Health Check Service	ALL	SS, OC	★
Health and Income Maximisation	ALL	SS, OC	★
New support for affordable credit	ALL	OC	★
Access to sanitary products	ALL – but especially 3+	OC	★

ACTION	Priority groups expected to benefit	Expected outcome	Status
A new Best Start Foods*	ALL - but especially 3+, <1, YM	SS	●
A new Income Supplement	ALL	SS	▲
A new Best Start Grant	ALL - but especially 3+, <1, YM	SS	★
New support for carers	ALL	SS	★
A new Job Grant	ALL	SS, EMP	●
Widened Funeral Support Payment Eligibility	ALL	SS	●
Expanded eligibility for Winter Heating Allowance*	ALL	SS	▲
New help for children's neighbourhoods	ALL	LC, EMP	●
Support for students and communities from further and higher education	ALL - but especially YM	LC, EMP	★
Making sure young people receive EMA payments	ALL - but especially YM	SS	★
Tailored learning support for Gypsy/Traveller families with children	ME	LC	●
Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences	ALL	LC	●
Action on parental imprisonment	ALL	LC	★
Increased funding for mental health	ALL	LC	★
New action on transitions	ALL	LC	▲
Action on transport strategy, policies and programmes	ALL	EMP, OC	●
Support to address bullying	ALL	LC	★
Facilitating access to music education	ALL	LC	★
Targeted opportunities for cultural participation	ALL	LC	★
Improving inclusion in sport*	ALL	LC	★
A new resource for disabled children, young people and their families	ALL	SS, LC	★

ACTION	Priority groups expected to benefit	Expected outcome	Status
Extra help for families with children's health in the early years	ALL	LC	★
A New Innovation Fund with the Hunter Foundation	ALL	LC, EMP, SS, OC	★
New priority in the Empowering Communities Fund	ALL	EMP, HC, OC, SS, LC	★
Strengthening our investment in the STV children's appeal	ALL	EMP, HC, OC, SS, LC	★
Community Wealth and Localism	ALL	EMP	●
Partnership between the Scottish Government and Glasgow City Region on inclusive growth and child poverty	ALL	EMP	▲
A National Child Poverty Co-ordinator	ALL	EMP, HC, OC, SS, LC	★
A new analytical partnership on local child poverty	ALL	EMP, HC, OC, SS, LC	★
A new Fairer Scotland duty	ALL	EMP, HC, OC, SS, LC	★
Bringing the voices of people with experience of poverty into local decision-making	ALL	EMP, HC, OC, SS, LC	★
New support from the Poverty Alliance	ALL	EMP, HC, OC, SS, LC	★
A role for the Children's Sector Strategic Forum in monitoring implementation	ALL	EMP, HC, OC, SS, LC	★

* action not previously included in 'Every Child, Every Chance'

INVESTMENTS THROUGH THE TACKLING CHILD POVERTY FUND

As outlined within 'Every Child, Every Chance', by March 2018 we had committed approximately half of the Tackling Child Poverty Fund. This was supporting key initiatives outlined in the Plan, such as intensive employment support for parents [£12 million], expansion of Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland [£2 million] and our new Innovation Fund, in partnership with the Hunter Foundation [£7.5 million].

Over the period 2018-19, we have identified further programmes which will benefit from investment from the Fund, including a new disability employment programme for parents [£6 million] and a feasibility study for a new 'Centre for Flexible Work' [£25,750].

We have still to commit around £18 million from the fund, and we will consider what existing programmes we can scale up; to maximise impact, and what further investment we can make to address child poverty.

The table below outlines provisional levels of spending over the period to 2022, all totals expressed are £0.000m:

PROGRAMME	YEAR				Total (m)*
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	
Parent Employment Programme	£0.050	£2.000	£5.100	£5.050	£12.200
Disability Employment Programme for parents	0	0	£3.000	£3.000	£6.000
Timewise	0	£0.026	0	0	£0.026
Out of School Care Fund**	0	0	£1.500	£1.500	£3.000
Food Insecurity	£0.100	£0.500	0	0	£0.600
Healthier Wealthier Children	£0.250	£0.250	0	0	£0.500
New support for affordable credit - help with marketing	£0.080	0	£0.080	0	£0.160
Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland	£0.250	£0.374	£0.818	£0.828	£2.270
Preventative work for low income young people at college	£0.242	£0.308	£0.400	£0.400	£1.350
Gypsy/Traveller	0	£0.100	£0.200	£0.200	£0.500
New Innovation Fund with The Hunter Foundation	£1.100	£1.250	£1.400	£1.250	£5.000
National Child Poverty Coordinator	£0.069	£0.069	£0.070	£0.070	£0.278
Local analytical partnership	£0.020	£0.020	£0.020	0	£0.060
Local support - first year reporting	£0.190	0	0	0	£0.190
TOTAL INVESTMENT	£2.35m	£4.9m	£12.6m	£12.3m	£32.1m

*totals may not sum due to rounding

** In year investment subject to change

INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT CHILDREN IN POVERTY

We are clear that significant investment is required in order to meet our ambitious targets. But we are also clear that there is no easy route to solve child poverty and we have to invest across a wide range of programmes and national outcomes in order to make a long term sustainable difference.

Part of our investment is, and will continue to be, specifically directed to low income children and their families. The following table shows that nearly £302 million was invested in this way in 2018-19. Part of our investment will also be related to a broader range of programmes that have positive impacts for low income households, many of whom will be parents. The table also shows that over £225 million is estimated to have been invested through this route: in total this means a direct investment of over £527 million in 2018-19.

However, this investment is not the full picture. Scotland is choosing a different path, one where we understand that dignity and respect is important to everyone. Key to this is a commitment to a social contract where services are delivered that help individuals within a supportive structure. As such, it would be incorrect to measure child poverty investment solely on funding targeted at low income children, but to also recognise the multi-billion pound package of investment in key areas that aim to change structures and remove barriers so that all children and all parents, whether low income or not, can realise their potential and contribute to society. Key spend items include the multi-year funding package which will see annual revenue investment in early learning and childcare reach nearly £1 billion by 2021-22; the

£301 million budgeted in 2018-19 for free university tuition fees alongside substantial apprenticeship programmes; and investment in developing a strong inclusive and environmentally sustainable economy based on fair work.

Coming into force in April 2018, our progressive changes to income tax are supporting these investments and see 55% of Scottish taxpayers, on lower incomes, pay less income tax than if they lived elsewhere in the UK. Through this change we are raising around £500 million in additional revenue in 2019-20, compared to UK Government proposals. This is helping us to invest in our public services, support our economy and drive action to reduce child poverty.

To make a lasting difference investment has to go far beyond headline actions, with all areas of government contributing to tackling and reducing child poverty. We are confident that this approach will have the long term impacts that we require, but it does make it challenging to provide the budgetary analysis that stakeholders understandably would like to see. Over the next year we will work to improve our budgetary analysis to be able to present a better understanding of investment in child poverty and in our broader social contract.

The table following provides a breakdown of estimated spend on policies which are targeted at children in low income households, at all people in low income, or at all children. These figures come from a variety of sources in addition to the draft 2018-19 budget documents and represents a mixture of committed, estimated, and outturn spend, depending on the latest available data. We have excluded admin costs where possible.

For policies targeted at all people in low income, we have used the proportion of people in poverty who are children to derive an estimated spend on children in poverty (23%). For Council Tax Reduction (CTR), estimated spend is based on total CTR income foregone from households with children as at March 2019, adjusted by the estimated proportion of children in CTR households in poverty (AHC).

The table shows that the total estimated spend on children in poverty in 2018-19 was over £527 million. The true figure will be significantly higher as this excludes core universal services such as education and health, which also benefit children in poverty.

Policy	Total 2018-19 spend (£m)	Estimated spend on children in poverty (£m)
Targeted at low income households with children		
Attainment Scotland Fund ¹	184.00	184.00
Free School Meals - P4+	74.69	74.69
Education Maintenance Allowance	24.38	24.38
Healthy Start vouchers	3.71	3.71
School Clothing Grant	6.00	6.00
Inspiring 14:19 Fund	2.50	2.50
Financial Health Check	1.80	1.80
Best Start Grant ¹	3.50	3.50
STV Children's Appeal	1.00	1.00
Healthier Wealthier Children	0.25	0.25
<i>Total</i>	<i>301.83</i>	<i>301.83</i>
Targeted at low income households - not necessarily with children		
Affordable Homes	522.60	120.20
Council Tax Reduction ³	351.00	50.76
Fuel Poverty / Energy Efficiency	84.30	19.39
Discretionary Housing Payments	61.70	14.19
Scottish Welfare Fund	33.00	7.59
Empowering Communities Fund ⁴	35.25	8.11
Fair Start Scotland	15.70	3.61
Advice Services	3.30	0.76
Fair Food Fund	1.50	0.35
Affordable Credit Loan Fund	1.00	0.23
Social Innovation Partnership	0.82	0.19
UC Scottish Choices	0.08	0.02
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,110.25</i>	<i>225.39</i>
TOTAL⁵	1,412.08	527.22

1 Including Pupil Equity Fund.

2 Spend from 10 Dec 2018 - 28 Feb 2019.

3 Funding provided to Local Authorities.

4 Including Aspiring Communities Fund and Social Economy Growth Fund.

5 Total does not include universal entitlements, e.g. ELC, Free School Meals p1-p3.

CHILD POVERTY (SCOTLAND) ACT 2017 REQUIREMENTS

Section 10 of the Child Poverty Act sets out a range of requirements around progress reports. This table explains how we have met those requirements, with directions to the relevant sections or specific pages within the Plan.

<p>The Scottish Ministers must, before the end of the period of three months beginning with the last day of each reporting year, prepare a report (a “progress report”) on the progress made during the year–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • towards meeting the child poverty targets, and • in implementing the relevant delivery plan. 	<p>This is the first progress report due under the Child Poverty Act.</p> <p>Section 2 outlines our approach to assessing progress toward meeting the targets. It presents the most recent data for the four targets. The most recent child poverty statistics available describe the situation in 2017-18, which covers the period before publication of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan. These statistics provide the baseline for future progress. Statistics covering 2018-19 will be published in spring 2020.</p> <p>Progress in implementing the delivery plan (2018-22) is set out in section 3.</p>
<p>A progress report must in particular describe–</p>	
<p>The measures taken by the Scottish Ministers in accordance with that delivery plan.</p>	<p>Section 3 contains an update on each action committed.</p>
<p>The effect of those measures on progress towards meeting the child poverty targets.</p>	<p>Section 2 sets out plans for evaluation in the longer term.</p> <p>Impact assessments are noted within section 3 of the published delivery plan.</p>
<p>The effect of those measures on reducing the number of children living in single-parent households against each of the four targets.</p>	<p>Section 2 presents the most recent child poverty statistics for the six priority families identified in ‘Every Child, Every Chance’ – including children living in single parent households. These cover the period before publication of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, and provide the baseline for future progress.</p> <p>Section 4 sets out which of the actions in the Delivery Plan are intended to benefit these children.</p>

<p>The effect of those measures on children living in households whose income is adversely affected, or whose expenditure is increased, because a member of the household has one or more protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Section 2 presents the most recent child poverty statistics for the six priority families identified in 'Every Child, Every Chance' – including children living in families that include a disabled adult or child, minority ethnic families, families with a child under one year old, and families where the mother is under 25 years of age. These cover the period before publication of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, and provide the baseline for future progress.</p> <p>Section 4 sets out which of the actions in the Delivery Plan are intended to benefit these children.</p>
<p>If, in preparing a progress report -</p>	
<p>Scottish Ministers consider that the measures taken in accordance with the relevant delivery plan have not delivered sufficient progress towards meeting the child poverty targets, the progress report must describe how the Scottish Ministers propose to ensure sufficient progress is delivered in the future.</p>	<p>The single-year statistics published in March 2019 cover the period 2017-18. This date range predates the publication of the delivery plan.</p> <p>Therefore it is too early to determine whether progress is sufficient. Clearly, a number of significant actions were taken forward in 2018-19 and more are planned for 2019-20, We would expect these, once fully in place, to start to shift the curve on child poverty.</p>
<p>In preparing a progress report, the Scottish Ministers must –</p>	
<p>consult the Commission on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the progress made during the reporting year towards meeting the child poverty targets, • whether it appears to the Commission that such progress is sufficient to meet the child poverty targets, • what further progress the Commission considers is required to meet the child poverty targets. <p>And, include any comments or recommendations made by the Commission on the matters mentioned above.</p>	<p>In April 2019, the Cabinet Secretary wrote to the Chair of the Poverty and Inequality Commission to request advice on the report, providing detail of progress to date.</p> <p>The advice received will be published by the Commission on 26 June.</p> <p>We have set out throughout the document where and how we have taken account of the Commission's recommendations and comments.</p> <p>Further detail is provided below.</p>

Responding to the advice and comments of the Poverty and Inequality Commission:

In relation to whether progress is sufficient to meet the targets:	
The Commission considers that within existing budget resources, it will be almost impossible for the Scottish Government to meet the targets. Meeting the targets will require significant reallocation of resource from other areas or the raising of additional revenue.	<p>Section 3 sets out plans for new investment through the Scottish Child Payment.</p> <p>Section 4 sets out an estimate of wider investment to tackle child poverty and current revenue raised through devolved tax.</p>
The Commission provided 6 core recommendations in relation to further progress required to meet the child poverty targets:	
Action should be taken to speed up delivery of the Income Supplement.	Section 3 sets out plans for the new Scottish Child Payment.
The Scottish Government should focus its efforts on those actions that are likely to have the biggest impact on the child poverty targets	Section 3 sets out the range of action planned, aligned to the three key drivers of child poverty reduction.
The Scottish Government should estimate/model the number of children it expects to be lifted out of poverty by the key actions in its Delivery Plan.	Section 2 sets out our plans for evaluation of key programmes to tackle child poverty. Estimates of cumulative impact are not possible at this stage
The Scottish Government should identify opportunities to involve children and families in the development and delivery of the actions in the Delivery Plan.	<p>We undertook engagement with the Children's Parliament on the overall package of support to families.</p> <p>Children and young people have been involved in a range of engagement on key programmes including the Best Start Grant.</p>
The Scottish Government should have a greater focus on creating and improving jobs in relation to child poverty and should take account of the Commission's research on inclusive growth.	Section 3, sections A and E, sets out our plans for a fair work future and to promote Inclusive Growth through Regional Economic Partnerships.
In its progress report, the Scottish Government should set out how much of the Tackling Child Poverty Fund has been spent or committed so far.	Section 4 sets out investment totals from the Tackling Child Poverty Fund.
The Commission made broader comments and recommendations:	

<p>The Scottish Government should set out safeguards on evaluation for Fair Start Scotland, Early Learning and Childcare and housing as they do not have reducing child poverty as their primary objective.</p>	<p>Section 2 sets out our general plans for evaluation.</p> <p>Section 3 sets out plans in relation to these policies.</p>
<p>Commit to evaluate Parental Employment Support Fund and Income Supplement</p>	<p>Section 2 confirms we will evaluate these policies.</p>
<p>Early Learning and Childcare modelling should be carried out if it has not been done already.</p>	<p>Section 3 confirms plans to evaluate the impact of Early Learning and Childcare.</p>
<p>The progress report should -</p> <p>focus on the core actions that are likely to have the biggest impact on reaching the child poverty targets and explain the scale of impact that they are expected to have and the timescales for that impact.</p> <p>clearly set out the money spent so far and plans for future spend to tackle child poverty.</p> <p>set out monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the core actions and any data currently available.</p>	<p>Section 3 provides detailed updates for actions likely to have the biggest impact on the child poverty targets. Estimates on the impact are included for these actions.</p> <p>Section 4 sets out investment in 2018-19 to tackle child poverty - future investment is noted against each action where appropriate in Section 3.</p> <p>Section 2 sets out plans for monitoring and evaluation.</p>



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