

Scottish Child Payment and Best Start (2025-26)

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

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



Who can apply for SCP?

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

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

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

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

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

What information is needed to apply?

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

How can I apply for Scottish Child Payment?

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



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

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

What is available from Best Start?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

