

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN AT SCHOOL



Financial support for families with children at school

If you are on a low income and have children of pre-school age or at school there are a range of potential financial supports you may be entitled to.

This leaflet provides details of the financial support which may be available to you and explains how to apply.



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N.B All benefit amounts stated in this booklet are correct as at 06/04/2022.

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Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment

The Early Learning Payment is a one-off payment of £267.65 per child to help with the costs of early learning. You can get the payment when your child is aged between 2 years old and 3 years and 6 months old. To get this payment your child does not need to go to nursery.

You can get the Early Learning Payment for multiple children, as long as each child is the right age when you apply.

Find out more and apply at [Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods - mygov.scot](#) Alternatively you can call 0800 182 2222 to apply over the phone.

Best Start Grant School Age Payment

This one-off payment of £267.65 can be paid to help with the costs of preparing for starting school at the time when your child is first old enough to start primary school.

You must be in receipt of one of the qualifying income-based benefit to get this payment:

- Universal Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Income support
- Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit

When you can apply for the School Age Payment depends on your child's date of birth and when they first become eligible to start school, even if your child's school start has been deferred to a later date.

You can get the payment for multiple children, as long as each child is the right age when you apply.

Your child's date of birth	When you can apply
1 March 2017 - 28 February 2018	Between 1 June 2022 and 28 February 2023
1 March 2018 - 28 February 2019	Between 1 June 2023 and 29 February 2024

N.B .It is not possible to apply out with this 9-month application window.

Find out more and apply at [Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods - mygov.scot](#) Alternatively you can call 0800 182 2222 to apply over the phone.

Free school meals

All Primary 1 to 5 children who reside in North Lanarkshire are automatically entitled to receive free school meals.

If your child is in Primary 6 or Primary 7 or attends secondary school you may be entitled to receive a free school meal if you are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits. You can use the eligibility table below to check if you are eligible for free school meals.

School clothing grant

If your child attends a school in North Lanarkshire you will be eligible for a clothing grant if you are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits.

The amount paid for the clothing grant for the academic session 2021- 2022 is:

- £140 for early years and primary school pupils
- £150 for secondary pupils

Only one clothing grant will be paid per pupil during a school year.

Financial support for families with children at school

The free schools meals and clothing grant application form is available at

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-meals/free-school-meals-and-clothing-grants>

The form needs to be printed out and completed and then you can email it to the Free School Meal Team at fsm@northlan.gov.uk or post it to the following address:

Free School Meals Team

Dalziel Building, Ground Floor, Scott Street, Motherwell ML1 1SH

You can check the table below to see if you are eligible for a free school meal and/or a school clothing grant:

Free school meals and clothing grant eligibility

Benefit received	Eligible for free school meals?	Eligible for school clothing grant?
Universal Credit (maximum monthly income of £625)	Yes	Yes
Income Support	Yes	Yes
Income based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)	Yes	Yes
Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	Yes	Yes
Child Tax Credit (gross annual income of less than £16,105 and no element of working tax credit)	Yes	No
Maximum child tax credit and working tax credit (gross maximum income below £7500)	Yes	No
Support under V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999	Yes	No
Housing Benefit	No	Yes
Council Tax Reduction	No	Yes

Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Child Payment is paid to help towards the costs of supporting your family and if eligible for the payment you will get £20 per week for every child you look after who is under 6 years of age.

You will qualify for this payment if the following 3 conditions are met:

1. you live in Scotland
2. you (or your partner if you have one) are the main person looking after a child under 6 years old
3. you (or your partner if you have one) are getting one or more of the *'qualifying benefits'*

The *'qualifying benefits'* are:

- Universal Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

You can apply online [How to apply - mygov.scot](https://mygov.scot) or by calling 0800 182 2222.

The opening times are Monday-Friday 8am-6pm. The Scottish Child Payment is set to increase from £20 to £25 per week by the end of 2022.

Child Disability Payment

The Child Disability Payment provides support for the extra costs that a disabled child might have.

You can apply for Child Disability Payment for a disabled child under the age of 16 and Social Security Scotland will pay Child Disability Payment until the child is 18 years old.

Any adult with parental responsibilities and rights or a guardian can apply for Child Disability Payment on behalf of the child if the child is under 16 years old and lives in Scotland.

You cannot get Child Disability Payment and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children at the same time.

Child Disability Payment is tax-free and is made up of two components – care and mobility.

The care component can be paid at one of three rates:

Care component	
Rate of payment	Weekly amount of payment (£)
Lowest rate	24.45
Middle rate	61.85
Highest rate	92.40

Mobility component	
Rate of payment	Weekly amount of payment (£)
Lowest rate	24.45
Highest rate	64.50

Your child may get both the care component and the mobility component, or they may only get one of the two components, depending on how their disability affects them.

You should claim as soon as possible if you think your child may be entitled to child disability payment as it cannot be backdated.

You can apply online for Child Disability Payment [How to apply - mygov.scot](https://mygov.scot) or you can call Social Security Scotland on 0800 182 2222 to start an application for a child. Lines are open 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

If you are unsure about your entitlement to anything you have read about in this booklet you can contact the Tackling Poverty Team by emailing TPteam@northlan.gov.uk or by calling the team on 01698 332551.



Staying on at school

If your child stays on at secondary school after reaching the age of 16 you can still receive free school meals and a clothing grant for them providing you continue to meet the qualifying criteria (i.e. you remain in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits and you remain the main carer for the young person.)

Clothing grant payments will not be made until pupils over the age of 16 have returned to school in the new session and this has been confirmed by the school.

If you have any enquiries please contact the School Meals and Clothing Grant Team on 01698 403203 or email fsm@northlan.gov.uk

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is an allowance of £30 per week and it is paid on a 2-weekly basis, throughout the school year (term time).

A young person can apply for EMA if they are staying on in education after reaching the age of 16 years and attending either a North Lanarkshire School or a Community Learning and Development HUB for a minimum of 21 guided learning hours per week.

There is also an attendance requirement of 100% although some sickness absence during the academic session is allowable.

You can find out more about this online by visiting [Education Maintenance Allowance | North Lanarkshire Council](#).

A young person will only qualify for EMA if the annual household income is below the relevant threshold:

Gross taxable income	Number of dependent children in the household	Award
Up to £24,421	1	£30
Up to £26,884	2	£30

The deadline date for EMA applications to be submitted for academic session 2021-22 was 31 March 2022. Any applications submitted for the current academic session after this date will not be accepted.

You can apply for the next academic session by downloading the form [Education Maintenance Allowance | North Lanarkshire Council](#).

You must then email the completed form to ef.emamailbox@northlan.gov.uk



Young Carers Grant

The Young Carer Grant is a yearly payment of £326.65 for young carers in Scotland.

To get a Young Carer Grant all of the following must apply:

- you must be aged 16, 17 or 18 years old
- you must have been caring for 1,2 or 3 people for an average of 16 hours per week for at least the last 3 months (if you care for more than 1 person, you can combine the hours of the people you care for to average 16 hours per week)
- the person or people you care for must certain disability benefits
- you must not be getting paid to care for someone you will use in your application as part of your job
- you must not be helping care for the people you apply for as a volunteer, for example as part of a care group or charity
- you must not already be in receipt of Carer's Allowance paid from the Department for Work and Pension

A qualifying young person can get the Young Carer Grant once a year, up until they turn 19 but it is necessary to submit a new application form each year. How the grant is spent is up to the Young Carer.

The application is online at [How to apply - mygov.scot](#) or call 0800 182 2222 to apply over the phone (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm).

If you are unsure of your entitlement to any of these benefits you can contact the Tackling Poverty Team by emailing us at TPteam@northlan.gov.uk or calling the team on 01698 332551.

Continuing to receive benefits when your child stays on at school after turning 16 years old

Child Benefit and the child element within either Universal Credit or Child Tax Credit normally stop on the 31st of August following a young person's 16th birthday. However, it can continue to be paid for a young person who stays in approved non advance education or training (studying at Scottish Higher level or below) and their education is considered to be full-time (i.e. more than an average of 12 hours week of supervised study or course-related work experience).

You will need to inform Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for Universal Credit that your child is staying in approved education or training for your entitlement to continue.

You should also notify these agencies when your child leaves approved education or training.

How to contact the relevant agencies is detailed below:

- For Child Benefit go online to report changes at www.gov.uk/report-changes-child-benefit or phone 0300 200 3100
- For Child Tax Credit go online www.gov.uk/changes-affect-tax-credits to report changes or phone 0345 300 3900
- For Universal Credit notify your work coach through your online journal

Free bus travel

Free bus travel is now available to all 5 to 21-year-olds living in Scotland. You will need to apply for a **National Entitlement or Young Scot Card** for your child to benefit from free bus travel. This may help you reduced your outgoings if you normally pay bus fares for your child. The Young Scot Card also offers a number of discounts which might help you make some further savings.

Help to Save

You may be able to get help with saving money through the UK Government's Help to Save Scheme.

Help to Save allows people who are entitled to Working Tax Credit or receiving Universal Credit to get a bonus of 50p for every £1 saved over a 4 year period.

You are entitled to open a Help to Save account if any of the following apply:

- you are receiving Working Tax Credit
- you are entitled to Working Tax Credit and receiving Child Tax Credit
- you are claiming Universal Credit and you (with your partner if it's a joint claim) earned £658.64 or more from paid work in your last monthly assessment period

You need a Government Gateway user ID and password to apply. If you do not have a user ID, you can create one when you apply. You need to apply online. [**Get help with savings if you're on a low income \(Help to Save\): How to apply - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)**](#)

Debt Advice

If you are worried about debt or struggling to manage your money the Tackling Poverty Team can help as they provide a free and confidential debt advice service to all North Lanarkshire residents. They can help you take the first steps in gaining control of your finances by providing advice on reducing outgoings and maximising income. This could help you avoid debt, reduce the risk of unexpected costs and perhaps even have some money left to save. The team offer advice and assistance with all debt matters including rent and mortgage arrears, council tax arrears, gas and electricity arrears and, general debts including credit cards. The team can alleviate the stress of dealing with your creditors and they also provide budgeting advice to help with managing your money.

For further tips on managing your money please visit [**Managing your money | North Lanarkshire Council**](#)

Unsure if you are eligible or need help to apply?

If you are unsure if you are eligible for anything you have read about in this leaflet or need help completing an application form then please do not hesitate to contact the Tackling Poverty Team for free and confidential advice.

The team can be contacted via email at TPteam@northlan.gov.uk or by calling 01698 332551 (Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 4.45pm and Friday 8.45am to 4.15pm).

Index Of Benefits Available

- Our index lists the range of benefits which you may be eligible to apply for.
- These have been set out to show what is potentially available if you have a child of pre-school age, a child at primary school or a child at secondary school.
- If you have more than one child you should check the index table below for the relevant stage of each child to ensure you are not missing out on applying for any of the benefits available.

Pre School Benefit Entitlement: if you are unsure of your entitlement to any of the benefits below, you can contact the Tackling Poverty Team who will be able to advise and assist you with any claims

UK Government		Scottish Social Security Benefit		North Lanarkshire Council	
Child Benefit	✓	Baby Box	✓	Free Meals for 2-4 year olds	✓
Child Tax Credit	✓	Best Start Grant	✓	Clothing Grants for 2-4 year olds	✓
Universal Credit Child Element	✓	Best Start Food	✓	Council Nursery Placement	✓
Universal Credit Disabled Child Element	✓	Early Learning Payment	✓		
Universal Credit Child Care Costs	✓	Funded Early Learning & Child Care Payment	✓		
Disability Living Allowance	✓	Child Disability Payment	✓		
		Scottish Child Payment	✓		
		Tax Free Child Care	✓		
		Child Winter Heating Assistance	✓		

Primary School Aged Benefits: if you are unsure of your entitlement to any of the benefits below, you can contact the Tackling Poverty Team who will be able to advise and assist you with any claims

UK Government		Scottish Social Security Benefit		North Lanarkshire Council	
Child Benefit	✓	Child Disability Payment	✓	Free School Meals	✓
Child Tax Credit	✓	Scottish Child Payment	✓	Clothing Grant	✓
Universal Credit Child Element	✓	Tax Free Child Care	✓	Club 365	✓
Universal Credit Disabled Child Element	✓	Child Winter Heating Assistance	✓	Young Persons National Entitlement Card	✓
Universal Credit Child Care Costs	✓	Free Bus Travel	✓	Free Bus Travel	✓
Disability Living Allowance	✓				

Secondary School Aged Benefits: if you are unsure of your entitlement to any of the benefits below, you can contact the Tackling Poverty Team who will be able to advise and assist you with any claims

UK Government		Scottish Social Security Benefit		North Lanarkshire Council	
Child Benefit	✓	Child Disability Payment	✓	Free School Meals	✓
Child Tax Credit	✓	Tax Free Child Care	✓	Clothing Grant	✓
Universal Credit Child Element	✓	Free Bus Travel	✓	Young Persons National Entitlement Card	✓
Universal Credit Disabled Child Element	✓			Free Bus Travel	✓
Universal Credit Child Care Costs	✓				
Disability Living Allowance	✓				

This document can be made available in a range of languages and formats, including large print, braille, audio, electronic and accessible formats.

To make a request, please contact Corporate Communications at: corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk

'S urrainn dhuinn an sgrìobhadh seo a chur ann an diofar chànanan agus chruthan, a' gabhail a-steach clò mòr, braille, cruth claisneachd agus cruthan dealanach agus ruigsinneach.

Gus iarrtas a dhèanamh, cuir fios gu Conaltradh Corporra aig: corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk

Niniejszy dokument można otrzymać w wielu różnych językach i formatach, w tym również dużym drukiem, alfabetem Braille'a, w wersji dźwiękowej, elektronicznej i w innych dostępnych formatach.

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此文件可以多种不同语言和格式提供, 包括大字体、点字、音频、电子和易读格式。

如想提出请求, 请联系企业传讯部: corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk

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