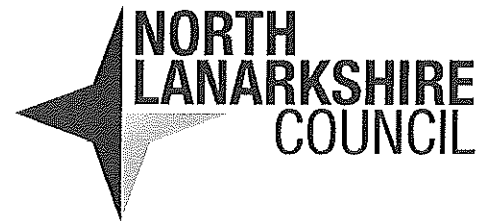


Our Ref:  
Your Ref:  
Contact:  
Tel:  
Fax:  
E-mail:  
Date: 14<sup>th</sup> August 2019



**Education and Families**

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Dear Parent/Carer

**Best Start Grant – School Age Payment**

The School Age Payment is the third Best Start Grant package of payments that is providing extra money to families in Scotland who are on a low income to help support their child during their early years.

The Best Start Grant does not replace the Clothing Grant offered by North Lanarkshire Council.

The Best Start Grant - School Age Payment from Social Security Scotland is a one off payment of £250 available around the time a child would normally start Primary 1.

The first application window for the School Age Payment will run from 3 June 2019 to 29 Feb 2020 for children who were born from 1 March 2014 to 28 Feb 2015, inclusive will be the right age for their parent/carers to claim.

An information leaflet is attached and further information may be obtained by calling 0800 182 2222 or by visiting [www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant](http://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant).

Yours sincerely

Anne Munro  
Head of Education & Families (South)



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# School Age Payment

## What is the Best Start Grant?

It is a package of three payments that will give extra money to parents and carers during the early years of a child's life.

## What is the School Age Payment?

It is a £250 payment made around the time a child normally starts Primary 1 to help with the costs of a child starting school.

## Who can get it?

You can apply for the School Age Payment if you live in Scotland whether you are in work or not.

You may be eligible if you are the parent or carer of the child, and you get certain benefits or tax credits.\*

\*Universal Credit (UC), Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income related Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit (CTC) and Working Tax Credit.

To check if you are entitled to any of these benefits, call Citizens Advice Scotland on 0800 085 7145 for a free Financial Health Check.

If you are under 18 you are automatically eligible and don't have to be on a qualifying benefit.

You would also be eligible if you are 18 or 19, in full time education or training and dependent on someone else like a parent or carer who is claiming child benefit, child tax credit, pension credit or universal credit for you.

## How many children qualify for Best Start Grant School Age Payment in each family?

Every child in a qualifying family will get a payment.

## How do you apply?

For children who would normally start school this August you can apply from 3 June 2019 to 29 February 2020. We will be taking applications via our freephone helpline on 0800 182 2222, by post or online at [mygov.scot/schoolbsg](https://mygov.scot/schoolbsg).



**What age must a child be to qualify for the School Age Payment?**

You can apply if your child was born between 1 March 2014 and 28 Feb 2015.

**Should parents who have deferred entry to August 2020 still apply?**

Even if you are deferring entry you should still apply between 3 June 2019 and 29 February 2020. If you wait until after then it will be too late and you will miss out on your payment.

**How long after applying will people have to wait to get their payment?**

It can take between 14 to 21 days to receive a payment. If we need any more information or supportive evidence to check eligibility it could take longer.

**What evidence will be required?**

Most people will be able to apply without sending any evidence. This is because we check with the Department for Work and Pensions and HMRC that you are on a qualifying benefit. One of the ways we can check responsibility for a child is by checking if you are on Child Benefit.\*\*

In some cases we will need to ask you to send us more information to process your application.\*\*\*

\*\*Child Benefit is only checked for evidence of responsibility – you will not get a payment if you don't get one of the other qualifying benefits.

\*\*\*For example a legal order from a court or children's hearing, evidence of address i.e. utility or Council Tax bill.

**Do I need my partner's information?**

Yes if you live in the same household and are:

- married to each other
- civil partners of each other
- living together as if you are married.

**How will I be paid?**

You will be paid in cash in to your chosen account. You do not need to pay the money back.

**What can use the money for?**

It is up to you how you decide to use this money. You can use it for anything from can be used for anything from school bags, shoes, a warm coat, after school clubs, books or days out. You do not need to keep receipts.

**Does it affect other benefits?**

No, the School Age Payment does not have an impact on any other benefits or tax credits.