



Impact assessment

Child Poverty Strategy: Equalities Analysis

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Summary

Our overall assessment is that we anticipate the policies within the Child Poverty Strategy to either have a positive impact on groups sharing protected characteristics or to be policy impact neutral.

We know that certain characteristics are associated with a higher risk of poverty. For instance, children with a disabled family member, ethnic minority families and/or in families with younger children are more likely to experience poverty [\[footnote 1\]](#).

Poverty is multi-dimensional, meaning that many of those in poverty will be affected by one or more of characteristics, compounding the challenges faced. Reducing the

overall levels of child poverty this parliament will particularly benefit children and families with protected characteristics. Policies set out in the Child Poverty Strategy are designed to have a direct effect on reducing the impact and experience of poverty, as well as the rate of child poverty.

The impacts of policies contributing to the Child Poverty Strategy will be kept under review and monitored on an ongoing basis by departments. Individual policy areas that are being developed and delivered will be assessed by departments using their own established approaches to considerations made under the [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#). The Monitoring and Evaluation of the Child Poverty Strategy will also continue to assess the poverty risk and prevalence for groups with protected characteristics, as far as the data and evidence gathering allow.

This document summarises departments' assessments to date.

Introduction

1. We have assessed the impacts of the planned policies in the Child Poverty Strategy on children and families with protected characteristics. We provide here a high-level overview, with the policies referenced in the Child Poverty Strategy being organised thematically.
2. While this summary does not seek to replicate or replace departments' own usual processes for assessing their policies under the PSED, (found in section 149 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)), we provide here a summary analysis of the impact of the Child Poverty Strategy on those with protected characteristics.
3. In providing this summary analysis, we have approached this by considering the PSED requirement to have 'due regard' to the impacts of policy on individuals with protected characteristics. Due regard means considering whether our proposals:
 - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
4. The relevant 'protected characteristics' are:
 - a) sex
 - b) race

- c) disability
- d) religion or belief
- e) sexual orientation
- f) pregnancy and maternity
- g) marriage and civil partnership
- h) gender reassignment
- i) age

5. We know that the characteristics and circumstances of those in poverty have changed since 2010 to 2011 and will continue to do so. In delivering this strategy, government will need to consider how these changes, for instance in family composition, size and working patterns, affects the impacts of policies on those with protected characteristics or future policy development on socio-economic status.
6. The following sections offer the summarised detail of impact against protected characteristics across the Child Poverty Strategy's outcome areas. Excellent equality analysis is a continual process and PSED is an ongoing duty for individual departments on their policies. These summaries reflect the analysis undertaken to this point: work continues and the impacts on those sharing protected characteristics will be kept under review as policies are further developed and implemented.

Overall assessment of the Child Poverty Strategy's impacts

7. We have considered the following key policy themes that make up the Child Poverty Strategy, and brigaded policies together in these themes:

- Social Security Policies
- Food Security and Nutrition
- Housing and Homelessness Prevention
- Energy and Utilities
- School Costs; Transport
- Employment and Pay
- Working Conditions

- Reforming the Child Maintenance Service
- Financial Resilience
- Family and Community Services
- Healthcare and Wellbeing
- Children's Social Care
- Local Government

8. We have assessed that the planned Child Poverty Strategy policies will have an overall neutral or positive impact on groups who share relevant protected characteristics with respect to limbs (a), (b), and (c) in paragraph 3.

Table 1 outlines where the Child Poverty Strategy policy areas most impact groups who share and those who do not share protected characteristics. The impacts demonstrate effects on limbs (a) and (b); no impacts were identified for limb (c).

Across these themes, we have assessed that some constituent policies are positive and some are neutral and have shown this below, which is why some themes have both positive and neutral assessments.

Table 1: Child Poverty Strategy impact on protected characteristic groups

-	Disability	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Race
Social Security Policies	positive	positive	positive	positive
Food Security and Nutrition Policies	positive/neutral	positive/neutral	neutral	positive/neutral
Housing and Homelessness Prevention	positive/neutral	positive/neutral	neutral	positive/neutral

Energy & Utilities Policies	positive/neutral	positive/neutral	neutral	positive/neutral
Cost of the School Day Policies	positive/neutral	positive/neutral	neutral	positive/neutral
Transport Policies	positive/neutral	neutral	neutral	positive/neutral
Employment and Pay Policies	positive/neutral	positive/neutral	positive/neutral	positive/neutral
Working Conditions Policies	positive/neutral	positive/neutral	neutral	positive/neutral
Reforming the Child Maintenance Service	positive/neutral	neutral	neutral	neutral
Financial Resilience Policies	positive/neutral	neutral	positive/neutral	neutral
Healthcare and Wellbeing Policies	positive/neutral	positive	neutral	positive/neutral
Children's Social Care Policies	positive/neutral	neutral	neutral	positive/neutral
Local Government Policies	positive/neutral	positive/neutral	positive	positive/neutral

Child poverty prevalence by characteristics

9. The latest households below average income (HBAI) statistics, published in March 2025, show that 31% of children in the UK were in relative poverty after housing costs in 2023 to 2024.

- a) **Age** – In 2023 to 2024, of children in families with a youngest child under 5 years old, 36% (2.2 million) were in relative low income AHC. This compares to 27% (2.3 million) of children in families with a youngest child over the age of 5.
- b) **Age** – In the three-year period 2021/2022 to 2023/2024, of children in families with young parents (under the age of 25), 64% (0.1 million) were in relative low income AHC. This compares to 29% (4.2 million) of children not in families with young parents.
- c) **Race** – In the three-year period 2021/2022 to 2023/2024, the rates of relative low income after housing costs (AHC) were highest among Bangladeshi (65%) and Pakistani (59%) ethnic groups and lowest among White (24%) and Indian (30%) ethnic groups.
- d) **Sex or family composition** – In 2023 to 2024, of children in families where the head was a single female, 45% (1.4 million) were in relative low income AHC. This compares to 32% (0.1 million) of children in families where the head was a single male.
- e) **Sex or family composition** – In 2023 to 2024, of children in families where the head was female in a couple, 30% (1.0 million) were in relative low income AHC. This compares to 25% (2.0 million) of children in families where the head was male in a couple.

10. The latest statistics on deep material poverty (DMP), published with the Child Poverty Strategy, show that 14% (2.0 million) of children in the UK were in deep material poverty in 2023 to 2024.

- a) **Race** – In 2023 to 2024, of children in ethnic minority families, 22% (0.7 million) were in deep material poverty; this compares to 12% (1.3 million) in white families.
- b) **Disability** – 22% of children with a disabled family member were in deep material poverty in 2023 to 2024, compared with 8% of children with no disabled family members.

c) **Age** – In 2023 to 2024, of children in families with a youngest child under 5 years old, 15% (0.9 million) were in deep material poverty. This compares to 13% (1.2 million) of children in families with a youngest child over the age of 5.

d) **Sex or family composition** – In 2023 to 2024, of children in families where the head was a single female, 29% (0.9 million) were in deep material poverty. This compares to 20% (0.1 million) of children in families where the head was a single male.

e) **Sex or family composition** – In 2023 to 2024, of children in families where the head was female in a couple, 14% (0.4 million) were in deep material poverty. This compares to 8% (0.6 million) of children in families where the head was male in a couple.

Pregnancy and Maternity

11. Women living in poverty can face barriers to accessing healthcare and social and support services. We believe the strategy will help ensure that those who are pregnant, and up to 26 weeks after having a baby, are better supported through a range of policies, including those in the Child Poverty Strategy.

Overall Equalities Analysis

12. Bringing these impacts together across all policy areas, and considering impacts on individual protected characteristics, we consider there to be no negative impacts on any of the groups affected by the policies across the Child Poverty Strategy.

13. We consider the main groups positively affected by the policies across the Child Poverty Strategy to be:

- age
- disability
- race
- sex
- pregnancy and maternity

14. After evaluating the policies which formulate the Child Poverty Strategy, we consider the impact to be largely neutral for the following protected characteristics:

- marriage or civil partnership
- religion or other belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment

Monitoring and Evaluation

15. The Public Sector Equality Duty is a continuing duty, and the public authority is required to keep the equalities impacts of any policy proposal under review. Accordingly, this equalities analysis will be reviewed regularly and each of the policies within it monitored over time for impact on any of the protected characteristics that was not originally anticipated.

16. Individual policy areas that are being developed and delivered will be assessed by departments using their own established approaches to considerations made under the PSED and updated accordingly.

17. Through the Monitoring and Evaluation of the Child Poverty Strategy, we will also continue to assess the poverty risk and prevalence for groups with protected characteristics, as far as the data and evidence gathering allow to understand the impacts of the Strategy on different groups.

1. For more information, see [Households below average income \(HBAI\) statistics](#) and [Child Poverty Strategy: Evidence Pack](#). ↪

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