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Impact assessment

Child Poverty Strategy: Child Rights

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Stage 1 – Screening

1. What is the strategy?

The UK-wide [Child Poverty Strategy, Our Children, Our Future](#), was published on 5 December and sets out a comprehensive package of measures, including both immediate and longer-term action, designed to tackle child poverty and ensure children have the best possible start in life across the UK. The Child Poverty Strategy marks a significant first step in a long-term effort to end child poverty in the UK. The strategy is structured around three core themes: boosting family incomes,

driving down the cost of essentials, and strengthening local support for families.

The UK Government is committed to safeguarding and advancing children's rights. We firmly uphold the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). From the outset, development of the strategy has been guided by a children's rights approach. This has included actively engaging with children and young people, as well as organisations that represent them, to ensure their voices and lived experiences shaped policy development.

Building on the work undertaken throughout the strategy's development to engage directly with children, we will publish this Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) alongside a child-friendly version of the strategy. This version is designed to speak directly to children and explain what the government is doing to help improve their lives. We are committed to continuing this approach as the strategy is implemented, by involving children in monitoring its impact, ensuring their experiences and feedback shape how this work develops over time.

2. Will aspects of the strategy affect children up to the age of 18 either directly or indirectly?

Yes.

3. Are there particular groups of children and young people who are more likely to be affected than others?

Yes.

Stage 2 – Assessing impact

4. How may the strategy impact children and young

people?

The Child Poverty Strategy is expected to deliver meaningful improvements in the lives of children and young people experiencing or at risk of poverty by tackling both the immediate pressures and long-term drivers of poverty through coordinated, cross-government action.

5. Which UNCRC Articles are relevant to the strategy?

The UNCRC 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life. The articles are grouped below into thematic clusters. The impact of policies has been measured by considering at each of the core policy pillars present in the Child Poverty Strategy: boosting family income, driving down the costs of essentials, and strengthening local support for families.

	Boosting family income	Driving down the costs of essentials	Strengthening local support for families
General Measures of Implementation (Articles 4, 41, 42 and 44)	positive	positive	positive
Definition of a Child (Article 1)	neutral	neutral	neutral
General Principles I (Articles 2, 3, 12)	positive	positive	positive
General Principles II (Article 6)	positive	positive	positive
Civil Rights and Freedoms I (Article 7)	neutral	neutral	neutral
Civil Rights and Freedoms II (Articles 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17)	neutral	neutral	neutral
Civil Rights and Freedoms III (Article 37)	neutral	neutral	neutral

Family Environment and Alternative Care I (Articles 5, 9, 10, 18, and 27)	positive	positive	positive
Family environment and alternative care II (Articles 20, 21, 25)	positive	positive	positive
Family environment and alternative care III (Articles 11, 19 and 39)	neutral	neutral	neutral
Basic health and welfare (Articles 6, 18, 24, 26, 27)	positive	positive	positive
Children with disabilities (Article 23)	positive	positive	positive
Education, leisure and cultural activities (Article 28, 29 and 31)	positive	positive	positive
Special Protection Measures: Situations of Emergency (Article 22, 32 and 39)	neutral	neutral	neutral
Special Protection Measures: Juvenile Justice (Article 37, 39 and 40)	neutral	neutral	neutral
Special Protection Measures: Situations of Exploitation (Article 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36)	neutral	neutral	neutral
Special Protection Measures: Minority Groups (Article 30)	neutral	neutral	neutral

6. Referring back to question 3, are specific groups of children and young people more likely to be affected?

The Child Poverty Strategy aims to benefit children in poverty, although some of the policy initiatives included within the strategy are intended to benefit all children.

Some groups of children are over-represented in poverty, for example children in disabled families, single parent families, larger families, and ethnic minority groups.

7. What other evidence is there to support the assessment of the impact on children's rights?

The [Evidence Pack](#) published alongside the Child Poverty Strategy set out the many ways child poverty impacts children which the Child Poverty Strategy will seek to address. This is a comprehensive document drawing together extensive published research and statistics, both external from academia and other organisations and from inside government, including new research commissioned for the Child Poverty Strategy. The development of the Evidence Pack was overseen by the independent analytical expert reference group supporting the development of the Child Poverty Strategy.

We have published an [analytical assessment of the poverty impacts](#) of the measures in the Child Poverty Strategy which directly impact children's measurable incomes and a summary [equalities analysis](#) alongside the Child Poverty Strategy.

The impact assessment shows that policies in the Child Poverty Strategy will reduce poverty, therefore we assume that it will have a positive impact on rights of children, particularly in relation to Articles 6 (right to life, survival and development), 24 (health and health services), 27 (adequate standard of living), and 28 (education).

8. Have any modifications been made to the strategy to address any negative impacts?

Not applicable.

9. Were there any alternative options to the proposal considered? What would their projected impacts on children's rights be?

In developing the Child Poverty Strategy, the Ministerial Taskforce on Child Poverty played a central role by bringing together expertise from across and beyond government to consider all available policy levers and consider a range of short- and long-term actions to reduce child poverty.

10. Does the strategy address any of the recommendations put forward by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in its Concluding Observations on the UK?

The strategy takes action to make progress towards the following recommendations made by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in its 2023 Concluding Observations.

Respect for the views of the child

23. (b) Strengthen measures to promote the meaningful participation of children in family, community and school settings and in policymaking at the local and national levels, including on so-called reserved matters, and develop mechanisms to ensure that the outcomes of children's and youth parliaments are systematically fed into public decision-making.

Access to appropriate information

29. (a) Continue to improve digital inclusion for children in disadvantaged situations and in the overseas territories, including by means of accessible and affordable online services and connectivity, while ensuring that public services remain accessible to children who do not use or have access to digital technologies.

Family Environment

36. (a) Strengthen measures to enable working parents and caregivers to balance their professional and family responsibilities, including by allocating sufficient resources for childcare services, encouraging parents to take parental leave and ensuring access to affordable childcare options for socioeconomically disadvantaged families, families in rural and remote areas and families with irregular work schedules.

(b) Expand eligibility criteria for State-subsidized childcare, such as the Childcare Offer and Flying Start childcare initiatives in Wales, and establish childcare strategies in Northern Ireland, the overseas territories and the Crown dependencies, where such a strategy is not in place, to ensure that all children in socioeconomically

disadvantaged situations have access to free childcare.

Health and health services

41. (e) Strengthen measures to address child malnutrition, food insecurity and growing trends in overweight and obesity, including by:

(i) ensuring all children's access to nutritious foods and reducing their reliance on food banks, regardless of their or their parents' migration status

(ii) expanding the free school meals programme to all children in disadvantaged situations, including children whose parents receive Universal Credit

(iii) addressing the root causes of food insecurity, including poverty

(iv) providing nutrition services in schools and communities

(v) promoting healthy lifestyles and physical activity

Mental health

43. (c) Develop or strengthen strategies, with sufficient resources, to ensure the availability of community-based therapeutic mental health services and programmes for children of all ages and to promote comprehensive mental health services, screening for mental health issues and early intervention services in schools.

Standard of living

46. (a) Develop or strengthen existing policies, with clear targets, measurable indicators and robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms, to end child poverty and ensure that all children have an adequate standard of living, including by increasing social benefits to reflect the rising cost of living and abolishing the two-child limit and benefit cap for social security benefits.

46. (b) Address the root causes of homelessness among children, strengthen measures to phase out temporary and contingency accommodation schemes and significantly increase the availability of adequate and long-term social housing for families in need, with a view to ensuring that all children have access to affordable, quality housing.

46. (d) Ensure that measures to combat poverty comply with a child rights-based approach and include a particular focus on children in disadvantaged situations, especially children of single parents, children with disabilities, Roma, gypsy and traveller children and children belonging to other minority groups, asylum-seeking and refugee children, children in large families and children leaving care.

11. What steps have been taken to directly or indirectly gather the views of children and young people and how have these been taken into account?

The development of the Child Poverty Strategy has been underpinned by a strong commitment to listening to the voices of children, young people, and families with lived experiences of poverty. A bespoke programme of research and engagement was designed to ensure their perspectives directly informed the strategy's priorities and design.

Key steps taken included:

- commissioning the Children's Commissioner's Office in England to conduct dedicated research with children and young people across England, and to gather secondary evidence from the Children's Commissioners in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. This ensured a UK-wide understanding of children's experiences of poverty
- engaging directly with children and young people through trusted partners such as Save the Children, Barnardo's, and the National Children's Bureau. These organisations facilitated safe and meaningful conversations with children, ensuring their voices were heard and respected
- establishing a dedicated forum of parents and carers with direct experience of poverty to provide insights into the broader family context, challenges in managing essential costs, and poverty impacts. This was instrumental in shaping the Strategy's focus areas, particularly in identifying what would have the greatest impact on families' day-to-day lives
- working closely with the Changing Realities project, a participatory research initiative involving over 200 parents from all four nations of the UK. This collaboration provided rich, real-time insights into the daily realities of families living in poverty
- ensuring inclusivity by designing the engagement approach to reflect the experiences of a broad range of children and families, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and additional learning or support needs.

Additionally, as part of our ongoing commitment to engaging directly with children, this CRIA is being published alongside a child-friendly version of the strategy.

12. Has there been any public or stakeholder consultation on the strategy?

The development of the Child Poverty Strategy built on a substantial body of existing evidence and expertise that reflects the full breadth of the drivers and impacts of child poverty.

Stakeholders have been meaningfully engaged on strategy substance throughout strategy development. In particular, we have undertaken meaningful and structured engagement with children and their families, actively listening to their voices and building our strategy around their insights and experiences. Since the inception of the taskforce, we have engaged with children and parents, civil society, faith organisations, trade unions, business, frontline organisations, local and strategic authorities, parliamentarians, academics, and children and families. This has seen 230 engagements with more than 180 organisations, which have in part been delivered through our close partnerships with Changing Realities, Save the Children, Child Poverty Action Group, Citizen's Advice, Institute for Public Policy Research and National Children's Bureau. This has taken place across all four nations of the United Kingdom.

This included drawing on cross-departmental insights, as reflected in the broad membership of the Ministerial Taskforce.

In addition to existing evidence, we undertook targeted engagement to ensure the voices of those with lived experience and frontline expertise were central to the strategy's development, as described above.

Stage 3 – Summary and monitoring

13. Overall conclusions

The Child Poverty Strategy is expected to have an overall positive impact on children's rights, particularly in relation to Articles 6 (right to life, survival and development), 26 (social security) and 27 (adequate standard of living). The strategy takes a comprehensive, cross-government approach to addressing both the

immediate effects and structural drivers of child poverty, with a strong emphasis on improving incomes, reducing essential costs, and bettering local support.

14. How will the strategy's impact be monitored?

The Child Poverty Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Framework was published alongside the Strategy in December 2025, committing to follow with more detail in a baseline report in Summer 2026 and with annual reporting thereafter. Success will be tracked against two headline child poverty metrics of relative low income (after housing costs) and deep material poverty, in addition to a programme of research and analysis focussing on the underlying drivers of child poverty and the impact of specific interventions.

The monitoring and evaluation framework builds on the successful and collaborative approach taken to strategy development. A crucial part of this is our continued emphasis on hearing directly from children and families to inform the ongoing delivery and evaluation of the strategy.

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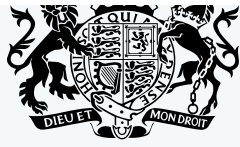
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