

## Financial help for new parents and help with childcare costs

Here is a brief introduction to the financial help that parents may be able to receive:

- All/new parents
- Working parents Students
- Low income and NEET parents

(Not in education, employment or training)

For more information contact:

**Vale Family Information Service**

01446 704704

[fis@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:fis@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

[www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis)

Facebook [@VOGFIS](https://www.facebook.com/VOGFIS)

Twitter [@VALEFIS](https://twitter.com/VALEFIS)

### **All/new parents**

#### **Child Benefit**

You get Child Benefit if you're responsible for bringing up a child who is under 16 or under 20 (if they stay in approved education or training). Only one person can get Child Benefit for a child. It's paid every 4 weeks and there's no limit to how many children you can claim for.

By claiming Child Benefit you can get National Insurance credits which count towards your State Pension, your child will automatically get a National Insurance number when they're 16 years old. If you choose not to get Child Benefit payments, you should still fill in and send off the claim form.

If you or your partner earn over £50,000 you may have to pay back some of your Child Benefit in tax if your (or your partner's) individual income is over £50,000.

You can claim Child Benefit as soon as you've registered the birth of your child, or they come to live with you.

To read more and find out how to apply visit: <https://www.gov.uk/child-benefit>

#### **Maternity Pay**

**Statutory Maternity Pay** (SMP) is paid for up to 39 weeks. You get: 90% of your average weekly earnings (before tax) for the first 6 weeks and £151.20 or 90% of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower) for the next 33 weeks. SMP is paid in the same way as your wages (for example monthly or weekly). Tax and National Insurance will be deducted.

Use the maternity pay calculator to work out how much you could get and find out more information here:

<https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave>

More information: <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/maternity-pay-and-leave#>

If you can't get Statutory Maternity Pay, you may be entitled to another benefit called **Maternity Allowance**. Maternity Allowance is a benefit paid by the government to pregnant women who don't qualify for [Statutory Maternity Pay](#).

To find out whether you qualify for Maternity Allowance, [use the GOV.UK calculator](#).

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More information: <https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/maternity-allowance>

### **Paternity Pay**

Paternity Leave is when you take time off because your partner's having a baby, adopting a child or having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement and you might be [eligible](#) for:

- 1 or 2 weeks' paid Paternity Leave
- Paternity Pay
- [Shared Parental Leave and Pay](#)

The statutory weekly rate of Paternity Pay is £151.20, or 90% of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower). Any money you get is paid in the same way as your wages, for example monthly or weekly. Tax and National Insurance will be deducted.

The money is usually paid while you're on leave. Your employer must confirm the start and end dates for your Paternity Pay when you claim it. To change the start date you must give your employer 28 days' notice. You could get more pay if your employer has a company paternity scheme; they cannot offer you less than the statutory amounts. To find out more please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave>

### **Shared Parental Pay**

You and your partner may be able to get Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) if you're having a baby or adopting a child. You can share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay between you. You need to share the pay and leave in the first year after your child is born or placed with your family.

You can use SPL to take leave in blocks separated by periods of work, or take it all in one go. You can also choose to be off work together or to stagger the leave and pay. To get SPL and ShPP, you and your partner need to meet the eligibility criteria - there's different criteria for birth parents and adoptive parents and give notice to your employers.

ShPP is paid at the rate of £151.20 a week or 90% of your average weekly earnings, whichever is lower. This is the same as Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) except that during the first 6 weeks SMP is paid at 90% of whatever you earn (with no maximum).

To find out more please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay>

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## **Working parents**

Check what help you could get with childcare costs:

Use this calculator to find out how much you could get towards [approved childcare](#):

<https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>

### **Tax Free Childcare Scheme**

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the costs of childcare. This goes up to £1,000 every 3 months if a child is disabled (up to £4,000 a year).

If you get Tax-Free Childcare, you'll set up an online childcare account for your child. For every £8 you pay into this account, the government will pay in £2 to use to pay your provider. You can get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 30 hours free childcare if you're eligible for both.

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You can usually get Tax-Free Childcare if you (and your partner, if you have one) are in work, on sick leave or annual leave, on shared parental, maternity, paternity or adoption leave. If you're on adoption leave, you cannot apply for the child you're on leave for unless you're going back to work within 31 days of the date you first applied.

If your [working pattern has changed because of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare), you may still be able to get Tax-Free Childcare. To check you're eligible and to apply please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>

### **Childcare Offer for Wales**

A maximum 30 hours of combined education and childcare will be offered to eligible working parents of 3 to 4 year olds for up to 48 weeks of the year.

The 30 hours will consist of a combination of the existing Foundation Phase Nursery (12.5 hours) open to all 3 and 4 year olds and the additional funded childcare (17.5 hours) for eligible families. During the school holidays it will just consist of 30 hours funded childcare, for 3 weeks per term (9 weeks in total for the year).

In order to apply you must earn at least the National Minimum Wage or living Wage for 16 hours a week on average. In two-parent families both parents must be working and each parent must earn less than £100,000 per year.

For more information please visit: <https://gov.wales/childcare-3-and-4-year-olds> and the Vale of Glamorgan Childcare Offer web page: [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/childcareoffer](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/childcareoffer)

**Help to save** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/savers-to-earn-50p-for-every-1-saved-thanks-to-help-to-save>

Working parents on low incomes are set to benefit from a new government savings account that offers a 50% bonus. Help to Save will reward savers with an extra 50p for every £1 saved, meaning over 4 years a maximum saving of £2,400 would result in an overall bonus of £1,200.

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## **Students**

### **Student Finance Wales – Childcare Grant**

Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to receive extra help towards the cost of registered or approved childcare.

Childcare Grant (CCG) helps with childcare costs if you have dependent children aged under 15 (or under 17 if they have special educational needs) in registered or approved childcare.

You must be studying at a course intensity of at least 50% to qualify for CCG. You won't qualify for this grant if either you or your partner claims the childcare element of Working Tax Credits, Universal Credit, NHS-funded childcare grants or Tax-Free Childcare from HMRC.

Please find more information here: <https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/undergraduate-students/parttime-students/new-students/childcare-grant.aspx>

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**Discretionary Learner Fund** If you're aged 19 or over, on a further education course and facing financial hardship, you could get Learner Support. You apply to your learning provider (for example your college) for Learner Support, how much you get depends on your circumstances.

The money can help pay for things like accommodation and travel, course materials and equipment and childcare; you must be 20 or over to get help with childcare costs.

For more information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/learner-support>

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## **Low income and NEET parents**

Check what help you could get with childcare costs:

Use this calculator to find out how much you could get towards [approved childcare](#):  
<https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>

### **Universal Credit**

Universal Credit is a payment to help with your living costs. You may be able to get it if you're on a low income, out of work or you cannot work.

You may be able to claim back up to 85% of your childcare costs if you're eligible for Universal Credit; this is referred to as the 'childcare element' of Universal Credit, in order to be eligible you (and your partner if you live with them) will usually need to either be working - it does not matter how many hours you or your partner work or have a job offer.

To find out more please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/universal-credit>

### **Child Tax Credit**

Child Tax Credit is a benefit that helps with the costs of raising a child if you are on a low income, however Child Tax Credit has been replaced by Universal Credit for most people.

You can only make a new claim for Child Tax Credit if you get the severe disability premium, or are entitled to it, got or were entitled to the severe disability premium in the last month, and you're still eligible for it. If your child is 16, you can claim up until 31 August after their 16th birthday. If they are in approved education or training, you can claim until their 20th birthday. If you cannot make a new claim for Child Tax Credit, you may be able to apply for Universal Credit (or Pension Credit if you and your partner are State Pension age or over).

The amount you can get depends on how many children you've got and whether you're making a new claim for Child Tax Credit or are already claiming Child Tax Credit. Child Tax Credit will not affect your Child Benefit and you can only claim Child Tax Credit for children you're responsible for.

To find out more visit: <https://www.gov.uk/child-tax-credit>

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### **Working Tax Credit**

Working Tax Credit is designed to top up your earnings if you work and are on a low income. If you work a certain number of hours you may be able to claim an extra amount to help cover the costs of approved childcare, this is referred to as the 'childcare element' of working tax credits.

Working Tax Credit has been replaced by Universal Credit for most people. You can only make a new claim for Working Tax Credit if you get the severe disability premium, or are entitled to it got or were entitled to the severe disability premium in the last month, and you're still eligible for it. If you cannot make a new claim for Working Tax Credit, you may be able to apply for Universal Credit (or Pension Credit if you and your partner are State Pension age or over).

To find out more please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit>

### **Parents, Childcare and Employment (PaCE)**

The PaCE project aims to help improve employment prospects for parents where childcare is their main barrier to accessing training or job opportunities.

PaCE will cover the cost of childcare while parents undertake training, work experience or volunteering and gain the skills they need to get a job. PaCE can help parents aged 25 and over not in employment and young parents (16-24) not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET).

For more information and how to apply please visit: <https://gov.wales/parents-childcare-and-employmentpace-project>

### **Healthy Start Vouchers**

With Healthy Start, parents get free vouchers every week to spend on milk, plain fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, and infant formula milk. They can also get free vitamins. Women who are pregnant or families with a child under four years old and who are on certain benefits qualify for Healthy Start. All pregnant women under the age of 18 qualify– whether or not they are on benefits.

**From April 2021 the voucher value has increased to £4.25 a week and a pre-paid card scheme is being introduced.** As of May 2021 nationally only 64% of those eligible accessed Healthy Start vouchers across Wales; take-up was lowest in the Vale of Glamorgan at 57% but is steadily increasing. Eligible families could be missing out on over **£1,000**.

You can apply online: [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)

### **Sure Start Maternity Grant**

Women could get a **one-off payment of £500** to help towards the costs of having a child. You usually qualify for the grant if both of the following apply:

1. you're expecting your first child, or you're expecting a multiple birth (such as twins) and have children already
2. you or your partner already get certain benefits

The grant must be claimed within 11 weeks of the baby's due date or within 3 months after the baby's birth.

To find out more visit: <https://www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant>

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## **Useful Links**

**Money Advice Help with Childcare Costs -**

**<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/helpwith-childcare-costs>**

**Money Advice Service Having a Baby -**

**<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/categories/having-a-baby>**

**GOV.UK Financial Help Children - <https://www.gov.uk/browse/childcare-parenting/financial-helpchildren>**

**GOV.UK Childcare Costs Calculator - <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>**

**GOV.UK Childcare Choices - <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> (click on Wales not England)**

**Childcare Offer in the Vale of Glamorgan – [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/childcareoffer](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/childcareoffer) [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis) **Vale Family Information Service - [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis)****

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