

New tool for families and schools to cut stigma of child poverty

13.3.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

Support for parents and teachers to help with important conversations about poverty in schools and at home.

Parents and teachers will be supported to have important conversations with children about the challenges facing families in poverty, as the government today publishes a child-friendly version of its landmark Child Poverty Strategy.

The new tool has been designed to give children a clear, reassuring and age-appropriate explanation of what poverty means, why some families struggle, and the concrete steps the government is taking to help.

With around 10 children in a typical classroom of 30 growing up in poverty, the child friendly strategy will give children the language to make sense of their own experience and help reduce stigma by enabling them to better understand the experience of their peers.

It is intended to support teachers and parents who want to prompt those sometimes difficult conversations and encourage any child who feels worried to speak to a trusted adult.

Many schools already teach children about inequality and social justice, and this document offers a factual, accessible tool to support those conversations by:

- Setting out what all families need to be happy and healthy, like a warm home, welcoming community and healthcare.
- Listing government support to help tackle child poverty and what that will mean for children's lives.
- Prompting discussion with questions like 'what do you think families could do if they had a bit more money every week?'
- Sharing helpful definitions on child poverty and interventions, and links to further support.

The child-friendly strategy builds on the government's historic Child Poverty Strategy, published in December 2025, which set out a decade-long mission to tackle the root causes of poverty.

Early Education Minister Olivia Bailey said:

Every child deserves to understand the world around them, and this resource gives children the language to make sense of their own experiences and the confidence to know that help is there.

But words must of course be backed by real action - and I'm so proud to be able to reassure the next generation about what we are doing to make things better for their future.

By expanding free school meals to over 500,000 children, rolling out free breakfast clubs, and delivering record investment in childcare, we are determined to make sure children from all backgrounds can come to school ready to learn and thrive.

Minister for Employment, Diana Johnson, said:

No child should have their future limited by the circumstances they were born into, and our Child Poverty Strategy sets out with real ambition how we intend to change that.

By removing the two-child limit, alongside wider measures like expanded free school meals and the lowering of energy bills, we will lift 550,000 children out of poverty.

This child-friendly resource is a powerful reminder of our commitment: not just to act, but to make sure children and families understand that this government is on their side.

The strategy will lift around 550,000 children out of poverty by the final year of the parliament by cutting the cost of essentials, boosting family incomes, and improving local services so every child has the best start in life.

Central to this is the reversal of the two-child limit in Universal Credit – a failed policy experiment that punished children and has been one of the biggest drivers of hardship since its introduction in 2017.

Removing the two-child limit is the most cost-effective way to drive down child poverty rates – lifting 450,000 children out of poverty in the final year of this Parliament, rising to 550,000 alongside other measures such as the expansion of free school meals and help with energy bills.

Children growing up in poverty are more likely to not be in education, employment or training as an adult, earn less than their peers and less likely to achieve good GCSE results or do well at school. Tackling child poverty is not just a moral imperative – it is an investment in Britain's future.

The publication reflects the government's commitment to put children at the heart of policymaking.

Alongside the child-friendly strategy, a new Children's Rights Impact Assessment published today sets out that the strategy is expected to have a positive impact on children's rights.

Assessed against the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the strategy is expected to benefit children in a number of ways including across their rights to life and development, to an adequate standard of living, to health, and to education.

Dr Philip Goodwin, Chief Executive Officer of The UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) said:

Child poverty is not inevitable. Ending the two-child limit is one of the most effective ways to lift hundreds of thousands of children living in low-income households out of poverty.

Action on child poverty helps children thrive today, while strengthening the economy for everyone. Investing in families will give children the chance to grow up safe, healthy, and hopeful about their futures.

We are delighted that the Government has produced a child-friendly version of the Child Poverty Strategy to help build understanding with children on this issue that affects so many families in the UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-tool-for-families-and-schools-to-cut-stigma-of-child-poverty>