

Teenager turning 16? Don't miss out on Child Benefit

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Parents of teenagers starting qualifying further education or training courses must extend their Child Benefit claim by 31 August.

- About 1.5 million parents of 16-19 year-olds are to receive reminder letters in coming weeks.
- The quickest and easiest way to extend is via the HMRC app or online at GOV.UK.

Parents of 16-19 year-olds are reminded to extend their Child Benefit claim if their teenager is staying in certain types of education or training after their GCSEs or National 5s.

Child Benefit will automatically stop on 31 August on or after a child's 16th birthday unless parents confirm their teenager's plans. Around 1.5 million reminder letters will be sent from late April, with most landing on doorsteps in early May.

Parents don't need to wait for their letter. HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) digital service for extending opened on 1 April, so those who already know their teenager's plans can act today.

Claim extensions can be made on the HMRC app or online at GOV.UK. The letters also include a QR code linking directly to the digital service.

Child Benefit is worth £27.05 a week – or £1,406.60 a year – for the eldest or only child and £17.90 a week for each additional child. Last year, 874,000 parents extended their claim, with more than half doing so online or through the HMRC app.

Myrtle Lloyd, HMRC's Chief Customer Officer, said:

Child Benefit is a real financial boost for families, so if your teenager already knows they're staying in education or training after their GCSEs or National 5s, you don't need to wait for our letter.

You can extend your Child Benefit claim today in minutes via the HMRC app or online at GOV.UK.

Child Benefit can continue for teenagers studying full time in non-advanced education, or on unpaid approved training courses. Visit GOV.UK for the full list of eligible courses.

If a Child Benefit claimant or their partner has an individual income of between £60,000 and £80,000, the higher earner may be liable for the High Income Child Benefit Charge (HICBC). Use the Child Benefit tax calculator on GOV.UK for an estimate. Parents can pay the charge through their PAYE tax code using the HICBC digital service, or through Self Assessment.

Further information

More information on Child Benefit for 16-19-year-olds.

Around 1.5 million letters will be sent to parents of 16-19-year-olds from late April 2026. Letters are expected to arrive from 8 May.

Parents do not need to wait for their letter. The digital service is open now at GOV.UK and on the HMRC app.

Parents only need to act if their teenager is starting a new course or qualifying training in September. Those already partway through a course previously notified to HMRC do not need to contact us.

Full-time education means more than an average of 12 hours a week of supervised study or course-related work experience. This includes home schooling. If a child has an illness or disability, they may be able to do fewer hours where this is appropriate for them.

Child Benefit cannot be claimed if a teenager's course is part of a job contract.

Parents can view and manage their claim via the HMRC app, including viewing payment information, proof of entitlement, and adding children.

QR codes in HMRC letters will always direct to GOV.UK or the HMRC app. Report suspicious emails with QR codes to phishing@hmrc.gov.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/teenager-turning-16-dont-miss-out-on-child-benefit>