

# Press release: More support for non-parental carers

Secretary of State Esther McVey has announced to Parliament today (27 April 2018) that support for children who may otherwise be in local authority care is to be extended in Universal Credit and Child Tax Credit.

Currently, the policy provides support in Universal Credit and Child Tax Credit for a maximum of 2 children in a household unless exceptions apply, to ensure parents in receipt of benefits face the same choices as those supporting themselves solely through work. Child Benefit continues to be paid regardless of family size.

The government recognises that in some situations parents cannot make the same choices about the number of children in their household. We have introduced a number of exceptions for third or subsequent children in those cases, for example multiple births, adoption and children who would otherwise be taken into care but instead are looked after by a non-parental carer. This may be where a family member has stepped in to care for children.

For these children who may otherwise be taken into local authority care, the exceptions will be extended to provide support for them regardless of the order in which they entered the household.

Secretary of State Esther McVey said:

I have been reviewing this issue carefully since becoming Secretary of State a few months ago.

Adoptive parents and non-parental carers, known as 'kinship carers', have often stepped in to help a family member or close friend in times of need. They have provided support and provided a home for a child in need. It is therefore right that Government supports them in doing so. That is why today I am extending the existing support for children and families in these circumstances.

The role these parents play in helping to bring up these children is invaluable, and I want to reassure such parents that this change ensures support will be made available to you, and this government is backing you.

Universal Credit is a brand new benefit, that is flexible and responsive, so as we begin to deliver it across the country we are taking a test and learn approach, and if need be, adapting where necessary. This is precisely what we have done here to make sure there is support given where it is needed most.

The government welcomed last week's High Court judgment that overall the

policy to provide support for a maximum of 2 children was lawful, and said it was carefully considering it. This change goes further than the court's judgment to include adopted children as well as children who are in non-parental caring arrangements.

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