

Gingerbread's Handy Guide:

How to respond to the Call for Evidence on the Child Poverty Strategy

February 2026





About the Call for Evidence

In December 2025, the government released its Child Poverty Strategy, detailing plans to address the high rates of poverty among children in the UK.

The Education and Work and Pensions Committee have now launched a joint inquiry to investigate whether this strategy can meet its aims. These committees, made up of MPs from all political parties, scrutinise the work of the government Department for Education and Department for Work and Pensions, respectively. Through inquiries such as this, they are able to look deeply at specific topics and then make recommendations to government about the changes needed and how to implement them. The government must then respond to these recommendations.

This joint inquiry will investigate the measures the strategy focuses on, how effective these will be in reducing child poverty, and whether the government has the proper plans in place to meet its ambitions.

How to respond

The 'Call for Evidence', which sets out the Inquiry's questions can be found [here](#).

The deadline for submitting your answers is 23:59 on Friday 6th March 2026.

To take part, please fill in the online form [here](#). This online form asks questions about you and then gives you an opportunity to upload a document with the answers to their questions. In this guide we have listed their questions with some prompts and tips of things to think about when answering the questions.

Your submission should:

- be concise - if it's over 3,000 words you should include a short summary as well
- include an introduction to you or your organisation and your reason for submitting evidence

Your submission should not have been published anywhere already. This includes blogs, newspaper articles, websites and journals, for example.

Please note, for safeguarding reasons and to avoid identification, it is requested that you refrain from naming specific people, educational settings or children in your submission. The Education and Work and Pensions Committees are unable to publish personal testimony evidence that is submitted anonymously or contains this information. Personal testimony evidence that cannot be published will be read and summarised into an anonymised thematic note.

The Committees have discretion over which submissions they accept as evidence, and which of those they then publish on their website. If your submission is accepted by the Committees, it will usually be published online. It will then be available permanently for anyone to view and may be found online by using search engines. It cannot be changed or removed. If you have included your name or any personal information in your submission, those details will normally be published too. Please consider how much personal information you want or need to share. Your contact details will not be published.



Key points and our view

The Child Poverty Strategy and its release was a significant moment for children and families affected by poverty across the country, including single-parent families. 43% of children in single-parent families live in poverty, and these families face higher risks of food insecurity, fuel poverty, and problems with debt compared to couple-parent households.

Gingerbread campaigned extensively on many of the topics covered by the strategy ahead of its release, arguing for the inclusion of single-parent families as a specific targeted group. As a member of the End Child Poverty Coalition, we were also supportive of the [Coalition's Eight Tests](#) for a successful strategy. We were pleased to see some of these areas tackled in the government's plans, as well as some of Gingerbread's work with single parents cited in the evidence underpinning the strategy.

The strategy includes welcome changes, including the abolition of the Two-Child-Limit. However, several gaps have been identified. For single parents, this includes the retention of the Benefit Cap. Considering that almost 70% of the households affected by the cap are single parents, leaving this policy in place means that thousands of families in the deepest poverty will continue to have their income restricted.

We, alongside other charities, were also disappointed by the lack of firm, numerical targets in the strategy, which raises questions on accountability and effective success monitoring.

What you could say

Below, we've provided some suggestions and key points which you might find useful when answering the Inquiry's questions. Please note, you don't have to answer every question, and we recommend drawing on your personal experience wherever appropriate.

The Call for Evidence is split into two main sections: one on the impact of the strategy and one on monitoring and evaluating progress.

Section One: The Impacts of the Child Poverty Strategy

Question 1 asks about the ambitiousness of the strategy. Here, you could include your thoughts about the Child Poverty Strategy on a whole, what its attempting to tackle, and whether you think it is doing enough. You may also want to consider what the government's long-term aims are around child poverty are and whether there needs to be clear targets to achieve this.

Question 2 asks about the drivers and outcomes included in the strategy. Do you think the right ones were included? Will they help to address child poverty? Has something important been overlooked? If so, what?



Question 3 asks about measures that are not included in the strategy, specifically ones that could help in boosting family incomes, reducing costs, securing finances, and strengthening local support. Perhaps you aren't going to gain from the scrapping of the Two-Child Limit because you're still affected by the Benefit Cap. Or perhaps you know someone who struggles to work enough hours because of childcare requirements. You can find other ideas on how Universal Credit reform could impact poverty levels among single-parent families in our [Support not Punish Report](#).

You could note that, whilst the scrapping of the Two-Child Limit has the potential to lift thousands out of poverty, many families won't gain fully from this because the Benefit Cap remains, with almost 70% of households affected by the cap being single-parent families.

Questions 4 and 5 focus on the effect the strategy's measures will have on different groups of children/families across the UK. For example, do you have experience of children within the care system? or do you or your children have protected characteristics? What will the impact be on single-parent families? These questions directly links to the third and fifth of the [End Child Poverty Coalition's Eight Tests](#), and you may want to explore what has been written about the importance of these areas.

You could mention that the CMS plays an important role in tackling child poverty among children in single-parent families, and that the upcoming consolidation will improve compliance monitoring and protections for victim-survivors of abuse, meaning more children could receive the support they deserve. You could also mention that the changes to Universal Credit, including the scrapping of the Two-Child Limit, increase to the child element, and expansion of support for upfront childcare costs, could have a positive impact on children in single-parent families across the UK.

Question 6 asks about the impact of the strategy on tackling social mobility, how it could affect the education gap or systemic poverty. If your family has lived experience of any of these topics, you could share whether you think that the Child Poverty Strategy and its measures will tackle these issues.





Section Two: Monitoring and Evaluating Progress

Questions 7, 8 and 9 invites views on whether there should be measurable targets and interim targets and how the government should work with the devolved nations. You may want to consider how the strategy, and the topic of child poverty, cuts across the nations of the UK and any existing plans actions to tackle child poverty within these nations. You can familiarise yourself with the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework that the government laid out to accompany the strategy. These areas are the focus of the first and second of the End Child Poverty Coalition's Eight Tests, you may want to explore what has been written about the importance of these areas.

You could suggest that a lack of firm targets raises questions around government accountability for delivering the strategy and ensuring that actions are successful in reducing child poverty. You could also mention that firm targets help show that the government is committed to supporting the specific groups identified in the strategy, including single-parent families.

Question 10 focuses on the planned baseline report this summer, the first annual report that the government plans to produce on the progress made through the measures of the Child Poverty Strategy. You may want to think about what success would mean for the strategy and what information would be most useful or telling for the government to report on.

You could mention that it would be useful to have information on how the measures included in the strategy have affected different household types, including single-parent families, to ensure that this critical group isn't being left behind.

Questions 11, 12 and 13 ask about the data necessary, as well as the data needed, to properly evaluate success in terms of alleviating child poverty at a local level and judging this progress at an international level. You may want to consider what the markers of child poverty are and who or what organisation/system may collect this.

Question 14 focuses on the long term vision for the strategy, and how its successes and focuses could be secured into the future. One key question to consider is, who is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Child Poverty Strategy in the future? Whilst the Child Poverty Taskforce, a cross-governmental working group, was founded to develop the strategy, responsibility for implementing the strategy will now sit with the Department for Work and Pensions (alongside support from the Cabinet Office). This area is the major focus of the first and fourth of the End Child Poverty Coalition's Eight Tests, you may want to explore what has been written about the importance of these areas.

You could speak about how firm aims to tackle child poverty across government departments and functions need to be enforced and supported by a cross-departmental force.



Writing your own submission to the Inquiry's call for evidence will make a huge difference, showing that the Child Poverty Strategy is important to a wide variety of people across the UK, and helping make the case for urgent reforms. This is a key opportunity to make our collective voice heard.

Share this document, and the Call for Evidence, with your colleagues, friends, and family.

Together, we can make single parent voices heard.



Gingerbread*