

Table of Manifesto pledges relating to school age childcare

	Specific commitment to school age childcare
Conservative	After school activities also provide essential childcare for working parents. We would introduce free wraparound childcare for children in Primary 1-3, equivalent to five hours a week, and work with schools and local community groups to build capacity and create choice for parents.
Green	
Labour	
Lib Dem	
SNP	And we'll go even further, by building a system of 'wraparound' childcare – providing care before and after school, all year round. Those on the lowest incomes will pay nothing, and others will make fair and affordable contributions.
Specific pledge on holiday care/provision	
Conservative	
Green	
Labour	We would give every young person a Summer Comeback Pass to provide free access to sport, transport, outdoor activities, and culture.
Lib Dem	We will extend holiday clubs and activities to meet the needs of eligible children during the holidays
SNP	We will deliver a programme of activities for children and young people over the summer, backed by £20 million investment, to help them socialise, play, and reconnect
Raise school starting age	
Conservative	
Green	Raise the school starting age to seven and introduce a kindergarten stage for three- to six-year-olds. Scotland has an unusually early starting age for primary school, often pushing young children into a formal learning environment before they are ready. Raising the school starting age to seven will bring Scotland in line with countries like Finland, where attainment and wellbeing are higher. A play-based Kindergarten stage will prioritise physical activity, outdoor experiences, and building social skills. This will be led by qualified kindergarten teachers.
Labour	Scottish Labour wants to see the current compulsory school starting age of four or five years old retained, but there is a need for our early learning and childcare provision to be more about learning and play. For early years, Scottish Labour favours a shift to more blended provision within the current school hours, with increased play-based learning and free-play, including outdoor play, and then more formal schooling from the age of six or seven.
Lib Dem	We will help more children get off to a good start at school by using play-based learning until the age of 7. Our plans will help children acquire important learning and social skills before formal schooling.

SNP	
Free School Meals	
Conservative	we would deliver free school lunches and breakfasts for all children in primary school, ensuring that they get a decent meal twice per day.
Green	<p>Deliver free school meals all year round for all pupils. The Scottish Greens have already secured funding for free school meals for low support other measures, such as free school meals, as part of a programme to end child poverty, children during the holidays and the expansion of free school meals for all primary children. We will further expand this to secondary pupils.</p> <p>Introduce universal breakfast clubs. All schools will be supported to provide a free breakfast to those who want or need it.</p>
Labour	As part of our wider anti-poverty policies, we will develop and properly fund free school meal provision, including the use of breakfast clubs, and seek to extend the current universal provision of free school meals to include all primary school years. We will also establish summer catch up clubs during the summer holidays with activities and free meals for both primary and secondary pupils so young people can catch up with their friends.
Lib Dem	support other measures, such as free school meals, as part of a programme to end child poverty
SNP	We will provide free school breakfasts and lunches to every primary school pupil in Scotland, all year round, and for all children in state-funded special schools in Scotland. Looking longer term, we will pilot the provision of free nutritious school breakfasts in secondary schools, and, based on the findings of the pilot project, explore the feasibility of universal breakfast provision in secondary schools.
Outdoor Residential/ School trips	
Conservative	we will ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in at least one week of residential outdoor education in their school career. These experiences have proven to be life-changing in terms of building confidence and self-esteem.
Green	<p>Guarantee every primary and secondary pupil at least one one-week residential outdoor experience.</p> <p>Remove financial barriers from residential trips. We will establish a fund to assist families with the costs of going on primary school residential trips to ensure that no child is excluded due to their family income.</p>
Labour	There should be resources for school trips to outdoor activity centres for all young people over the coming two years and, following this summer, we will also guarantee that every primary and secondary school pupil has at least one week away at an outdoor centre.

Lib Dem	Guarantee that every primary and secondary school pupil has at least one week away at an outdoor centre, as well as taking regular classroom lessons outdoors. This will play an important part in helping young people relate to nature and each other, and to understand and respect their access rights and responsibilities.
SNP	
	Scottish Child payment/ Universal Credit
Conservative	In addition, we would complete the rollout of the Scottish Child Payment and increase payments to £20 per week by the end of the Parliament.
Green	Double the Scottish Child Payment to at least £20, lifting 50,000 children out of poverty. Increase all Best Start Grants and the School Clothing Grant by £100, worth an extra £400 to some of our poorest families.
Labour	Scottish Labour will automate the Scottish Child Payment, double it to £20 a week and accelerate the roll out for six- to 16-year-olds. We will work with UK colleagues to fight for the maintenance of the Universal Credit uplift
Lib Dem	We will double the Scottish Child Payment. We will continue to call on the UK Government to make permanent the £20 uplift in Universal Credit introduced during the pandemic to address child poverty.
SNP	If re-elected, we will go further – doubling the Scottish Child Payment to £20 by the end of parliament to lift thousands of families and children out of poverty. To bridge the gap until the Scottish Child Payment is fully rolled out, we will provide a cash grant of £520, paid across four quarterly instalments, for every family with children in receipt of free school meals
	Expansion support for youngest children
Conservative	
Green	
Labour	Scottish Labour supports a flexible, all-age, all-year, wrap-around affordable early years' service centred on the needs of the child. Childcare should be considered a key growth sector in Scotland, so we also want to see a year-on-year expansion of the hours available, with the eventual ambition of offering 50 hours a week for every child
Lib Dem	We will increase the 1140 hours entitlement to cover all two-year olds. We will go further still to introduce an ambition to extend funded early education and childcare hours to one year olds
SNP	We will also expand free early years education to all 1- and 2-year-olds, starting with children from low-income households. We will continue to provide Baby Boxes for all of Scotland's new children, ensuring every baby born in Scotland has an equal start in life.