



**HM Revenue
& Customs**

HM REVENUE AND CUSTOMS
Analysis Team

Child Benefit Statistics

Quarterly Statistics

February 2006



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Child Benefit

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Introduction and key figures

The following tables show the number of families in the United Kingdom in receipt of Child Benefit (CB) at 28 February 2006, and the number of children for whom the benefit was paid. The figures are estimates based on a sample of awards, and are therefore subject to sampling error - see Appendix A.

Table 1.1 shows the trend over time of the number of families claiming CB since May 2000. At the end of February 2006 there were 7.3 million families receiving CB, with 12.9 million children for whom payments were being claimed.

The number of families at February 2006 has increased compared with February 2005. The total number of children has decreased very slightly over the same period. For children under 5, there has been an increase from 3.27 million in February 2005 to 3.31 million in February 2006.

There was a slight increase in children aged 16 and over for whom CB is claimed in February 2006 compared with the previous year. Only those aged 16 and over and in full-time non advanced education or registered with the Careers Service or Connexions are entitled to CB.

Table 1.2 shows the numbers of families claiming CB by the size of family. In February 2006, 45% of CB families have 1 child and 39% have 2 children for whom the benefit was claimed, no change from the previous quarter.

A breakdown by country of residence of CB recipients is shown in Table 1.3. There was an increase of about 35 thousand claimants in England in February 2006 compared with February 2005. For Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland there was very little change over the same period.

Table 2 shows how the number of children in the family for whom CB is claimed varies between countries within the UK. 45% of families in England have 1 child, compared with 46% in Wales, 49% in Scotland and 42% in Northern Ireland.

In Table 3.1, a profile of the individual year of age of children for whom CB is claimed can be seen. There were 613 thousand children aged under 1 for whom payments were made, compared with 696 thousand for those aged 1. The number aged under 1 is particularly affected by new and revised claims that were not received and processed by the reference date but will later be backdated to before the reference date.

Table 3.2 shows the age of children at 31 August 2005, and therefore the age of children by school year. There were 695 thousand children that were under 1 at this date, slightly more than the number of those aged 1.

**Table 1.1 : Child Benefit recipients and their children, by age,
May 2000 - February 2006***Thousands*

	Recipients	Children for whom Child Benefit received, by age				
		Total	Under 5	5 to 10	11 to 15	16 and over
May 2000	7,305.3	13,252.3	3,457.4	4,573.4	3,792.1	1,429.5
August 2000	7,340.2	13,326.0	3,436.7	4,564.1	3,801.3	1,523.9
November 2000	7,216.9	13,021.0	3,428.1	4,557.2	3,805.6	1,230.1
February 2001	7,255.1	13,104.7	3,415.0	4,541.8	3,812.8	1,335.1
May 2001	7,297.5	13,198.1	3,395.8	4,520.1	3,822.7	1,459.6
August 2001	7,334.7	13,278.3	3,376.8	4,503.9	3,833.6	1,564.0
November 2001	7,207.0	12,962.5	3,367.1	4,492.8	3,845.9	1,256.8
February 2002	7,249.6	13,052.2	3,351.0	4,481.1	3,860.3	1,359.7
May 2002	7,296.7	13,154.3	3,327.8	4,468.5	3,863.3	1,494.7
August 2002	7,335.6	13,232.8	3,300.4	4,453.9	3,877.7	1,600.8
November 2002	7,203.0	12,888.5	3,292.3	4,443.0	3,881.9	1,271.3
February 2003	7,250.8	12,988.7	3,284.4	4,425.8	3,892.6	1,385.9
May 2003	7,298.1	13,091.9	3,262.9	4,404.8	3,894.8	1,529.4
August 2003	7,342.4	13,195.8	3,266.8	4,393.0	3,893.7	1,642.2
November 2003	7,206.8	12,859.6	3,262.2	4,386.3	3,892.3	1,318.6
February 2004	7,247.3	12,942.1	3,256.5	4,377.8	3,882.1	1,425.6
May 2004	7,301.3	13,062.3	3,257.0	4,365.9	3,868.6	1,570.8
August 2004	7,352.5	13,167.8	3,253.2	4,351.8	3,871.2	1,691.6
November 2004	7,195.6	12,773.2	3,271.2	4,334.3	3,877.7	1,290.0
February 2005	7,251.5	12,897.4	3,273.8	4,324.3	3,874.1	1,425.1
May 2005	7,311.4	13,025.1	3,277.5	4,304.0	3,867.3	1,576.3
August 2005	7,374.7	13,151.8	3,293.3	4,289.3	3,861.8	1,707.4
November 2005	7,220.8	12,762.9	3,314.2	4,279.7	3,864.0	1,305.0
February 2006	7,284.2	12,889.0	3,317.6	4,268.3	3,855.5	1,447.7

**Table 1.2 : Child Benefit recipients by size of family,
May 2000 - February 2006**

Thousands

	Total	Number of children for whom Child Benefit received					Ave number of children per family
		1	2	3	4	5 or more	
May 2000	7,305.3	3,118.4	2,881.8	970.3	250.4	84.4	1.81
August 2000	7,340.2	3,127.8	2,898.1	977.4	251.3	85.6	1.82
November 2000	7,216.9	3,116.0	2,833.5	945.0	242.2	80.3	1.80
February 2001	7,255.1	3,123.6	2,854.1	951.9	244.1	81.4	1.81
May 2001	7,297.5	3,133.3	2,873.4	962.3	245.5	82.9	1.81
August 2001	7,334.7	3,143.1	2,890.7	969.6	246.8	84.4	1.81
November 2001	7,207.0	3,128.1	2,828.7	935.9	235.5	78.9	1.80
February 2002	7,249.6	3,140.4	2,848.0	943.2	237.6	80.4	1.80
May 2002	7,296.7	3,152.4	2,870.5	951.0	240.8	82.1	1.80
August 2002	7,335.6	3,162.0	2,893.6	954.4	242.4	83.1	1.80
November 2002	7,203.0	3,157.1	2,820.9	917.8	230.7	76.4	1.79
February 2003	7,250.8	3,171.1	2,843.0	925.3	233.4	77.9	1.79
May 2003	7,298.1	3,184.1	2,863.2	935.0	236.1	79.8	1.79
August 2003	7,342.4	3,189.2	2,890.4	942.1	238.8	81.9	1.80
November 2003	7,206.8	3,176.8	2,819.7	906.0	228.1	76.1	1.78
February 2004	7,247.3	3,191.5	2,836.0	911.5	230.5	77.8	1.79
May 2004	7,301.3	3,202.5	2,863.2	922.8	232.9	79.9	1.79
August 2004	7,352.5	3,218.9	2,885.4	931.3	235.4	81.5	1.79
November 2004	7,195.6	3,205.5	2,804.7	889.7	220.7	74.9	1.78
February 2005	7,251.5	3,220.0	2,829.5	899.8	224.9	77.3	1.78
May 2005	7,311.4	3,238.1	2,854.2	911.3	228.8	79.1	1.78
August 2005	7,374.7	3,259.8	2,881.5	920.3	232.7	80.3	1.78
November 2005	7,220.8	3,252.3	2,795.4	879.7	218.8	74.6	1.77
February 2006	7,284.2	3,276.5	2,818.1	891.4	222.5	75.7	1.77

Table 1.3 Child Benefit recipients and children, by country, May 2000 - February 2006

	<i>Thousands</i>					
	United Kingdom ¹	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Overseas
Recipients						
May 2000	7,305.3	6,096.3	358.5	608.7	231.5	10.2
August 2000	7,341.2	6,127.1	359.8	610.5	232.9	9.8
November 2000	7,216.9	6,025.9	354.0	598.5	228.8	9.8
February 2001	7,255.1	6,057.5	356.5	600.5	230.5	10.0
May 2001	7,297.5	6,092.1	359.0	604.1	232.1	10.2
August 2001	7,334.7	6,122.9	361.1	607.3	232.5	10.9
November 2001	7,207.0	6,015.6	355.4	596.8	228.1	11.2
February 2002	7,249.6	6,054.4	356.2	598.7	229.5	10.9
May 2002	7,296.7	6,093.8	358.7	602.6	230.8	10.7
August 2002	7,335.6	6,126.3	360.9	605.8	231.7	10.8
November 2002	7,203.0	6,016.7	353.8	594.7	227.3	10.5
February 2003	7,250.8	6,056.6	356.0	598.3	229.0	10.8
May 2003	7,298.1	6,096.1	358.2	602.6	230.2	11.0
August 2003	7,342.4	6,132.6	360.5	607.2	231.3	10.7
November 2003	7,206.8	6,020.7	352.7	596.3	226.6	10.4
February 2004	7,247.3	6,058.8	354.6	595.3	228.4	10.0
May 2004	7,301.3	6,105.3	357.1	599.7	229.8	9.4
August 2004	7,352.5	6,149.7	359.6	603.3	230.3	9.6
November 2004	7,195.6	6,022.4	351.5	587.4	225.2	9.0
February 2005	7,251.5	6,070.9	353.6	590.0	227.3	9.7
May 2005	7,311.4	6,121.9	355.9	595.2	229.0	9.4
August 2005	7,374.7	6,176.7	358.4	600.3	230.0	9.3
November 2005	7,220.8	6,050.8	349.6	585.7	225.5	9.1
February 2006	7,284.2	6,106.0	352.7	588.6	227.9	9.0
Total number of children for whom Child Benefit received						
May 2000	13,252.3	11,079.0	644.7	1,053.2	457.8	17.7
August 2000	13,326.0	11,143.6	648.3	1,057.2	460.2	16.8
November 2000	13,021.0	10,892.1	634.0	1,030.8	447.0	17.1
February 2001	13,104.7	10,963.4	639.0	1,033.5	451.2	17.5
May 2001	13,198.1	11,040.6	643.9	1,040.7	454.9	18.0
August 2001	13,278.3	11,105.4	649.2	1,047.7	456.3	19.8
November 2001	12,962.5	10,841.9	635.4	1,022.1	443.4	19.8
February 2002	13,052.2	10,924.2	637.0	1,025.1	446.9	19.0
May 2002	13,154.3	11,010.5	641.9	1,032.8	450.2	18.9
August 2002	13,232.8	11,076.4	645.8	1,039.1	452.3	19.3
November 2002	12,888.5	10,790.9	628.5	1,012.5	438.2	18.4
February 2003	12,988.7	10,877.6	633.5	1,016.6	442.0	19.1
May 2003	13,091.9	10,966.0	636.9	1,024.8	444.6	19.6
August 2003	13,195.8	11,053.4	642.1	1,034.2	446.9	19.2
November 2003	12,859.6	10,777.0	623.6	1,008.7	432.0	18.2
February 2004	12,942.1	10,855.8	626.3	1,005.4	437.0	17.6
May 2004	13,062.3	10,958.8	632.1	1,014.6	440.3	16.5
August 2004	13,167.8	11,052.0	636.6	1,020.5	441.9	16.8
November 2004	12,773.2	10,727.9	616.9	986.6	425.8	15.9
February 2005	12,897.4	10,835.6	621.9	991.5	431.5	16.8
May 2005	13,025.1	10,944.4	626.8	1,002.0	435.3	16.6
August 2005	13,151.8	11,053.9	631.5	1,012.2	437.5	16.7
November 2005	12,762.9	10,732.9	610.8	978.9	423.6	16.7
February 2006	12,889.0	10,845.3	616.2	982.9	428.4	16.2

¹ Including overseas

Table 2 **Child Benefit recipients by size of family and country, February 2006**

Thousands

	United Kingdom ¹	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Overseas
Number of children in family for whom Child Benefit is received						
All families	7,284.2	6,106.0	352.7	588.6	227.9	9.0
1	3,276.5	2,725.8	161.7	289.9	95.7	3.4
2	2,818.1	2,372.1	136.3	222.6	82.8	4.3
3	891.4	753.8	41.0	60.5	35.0	1.0
4	222.5	188.2	10.6	12.4	11.0	-
5	53.0	45.7	2.2	2.7	2.4	-
6	15.5	14.0	0.5	-	0.6	-
7	4.5	4.1	-	-	-	-
8	1.7	1.4	-	-	-	-
9 or more	1.0	0.9	-	-	-	-
 Average number of children in family	 1.77	 1.78	 1.75	 1.67	 1.88	 1.81

¹ Including overseas

Chart 1 **Children in families of Child Benefit recipients, by age at 28 February 2006**

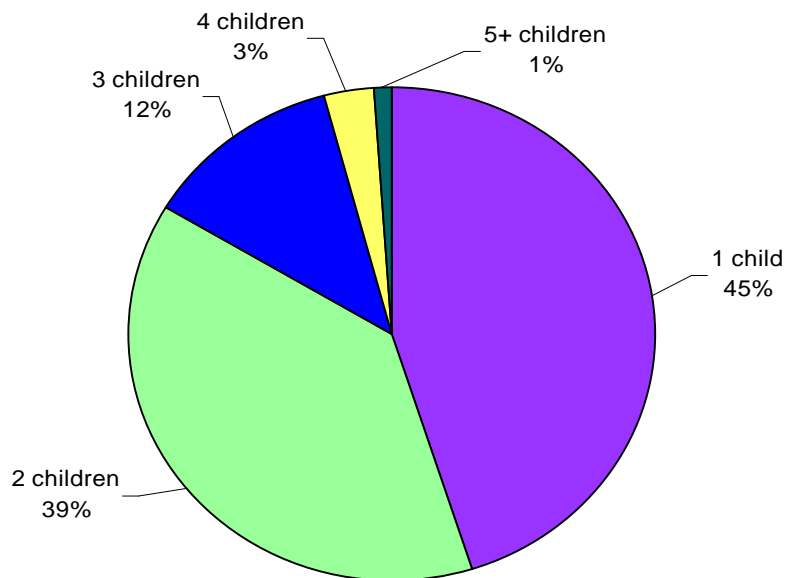


Table 3.1 Children in families of Child Benefit recipients, by age and country, February 2006

Thousands

	United Kingdom ¹	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Overseas
All children for whom Child Benefit received	12,889.0	10,845.3	616.2	982.9	428.4	16.2
Age at 30 November 2005:						
Under 1 ²	612.7	518.1	28.1	46.8	19.1	0.5
1	695.6	588.6	31.6	51.6	23.0	0.9
2	687.1	581.5	30.7	52.3	21.4	1.1
3	662.8	559.7	30.6	50.5	21.2	0.8
4	659.3	555.5	30.5	49.5	22.6	1.2
5	670.3	565.5	31.1	50.6	22.0	1.0
6	698.2	587.9	32.3	53.7	23.3	1.0
7	712.0	598.6	33.7	54.8	23.9	1.0
8	724.9	607.6	34.3	57.9	23.9	1.1
9	732.3	614.1	35.6	57.3	24.2	1.0
10	730.6	613.3	35.8	57.6	23.1	0.7
11	744.3	622.1	36.3	60.9	23.6	1.3
12	762.8	639.8	36.6	60.9	24.6	0.9
13	765.5	637.2	37.1	63.8	26.4	1.0
14	788.7	656.6	39.0	66.6	25.5	0.9
15	794.3	667.2	39.3	61.0	26.0	0.8
16	664.5	560.9	32.9	45.7	24.4	0.5
17	516.2	435.9	26.4	35.7	18.0	-
18	267.0	235.1	14.1	5.7	11.9	-
Under 16	11,441.4	9,613.4	542.8	895.9	374.0	15.3
16 and over	1,447.7	1,231.9	73.4	87.1	54.3	1.0

¹ Including overseas

² The number of children aged under 1 will be underestimated as these children will be particularly affected by new and revised claims that were not received by the reference date. They will later be backdated to before the reference date.

Chart 2 Children in families of Child Benefit recipients, by age at 28 February 2006, United Kingdom

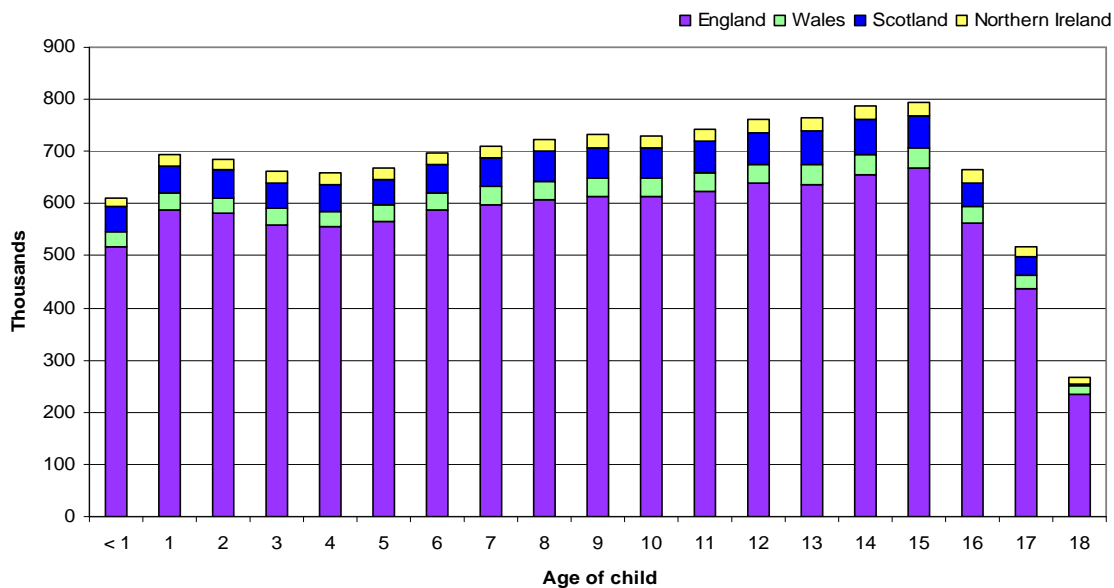
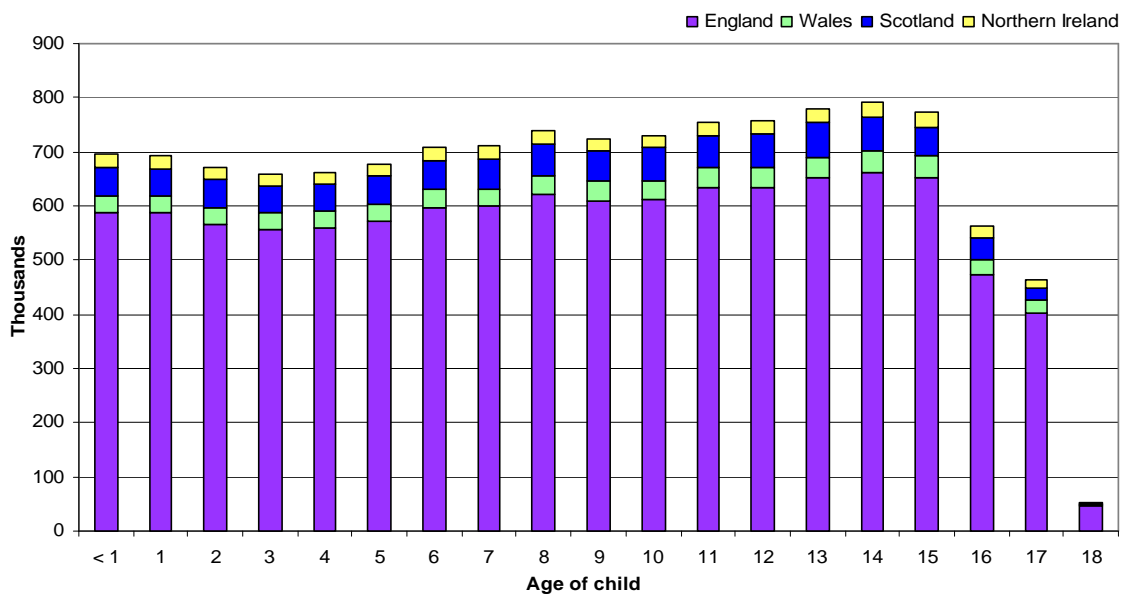


Table 3.2 Children in families of Child Benefit recipients, by age at 28 February 2006 and country

	<i>Thousands</i>					
	United Kingdom ¹	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Overseas
All children for whom Child Benefit received	12,889.0	10,845.3	616.2	982.9	428.4	16.2
Born between 1 September 2005 and 28 February 2006	263.9	223.5	11.8	20.2	8.3	-
Age at 31 August 2005:						
Under 1	695.4	587.1	31.8	53.3	22.4	0.9
1	692.3	587.5	31.3	50.0	22.6	1.0
2	672.2	567.2	31.0	52.2	20.9	0.9
3	659.5	556.3	30.2	50.3	21.9	0.8
4	663.8	559.5	30.8	50.0	22.3	1.2
5	678.9	571.7	31.8	52.0	22.4	1.1
6	709.1	597.8	33.1	53.9	23.2	1.1
7	713.0	598.5	33.2	55.9	24.4	1.0
8	740.1	620.2	35.7	58.9	24.2	1.1
9	726.1	610.6	35.4	55.8	23.5	0.9
10	732.0	610.9	37.0	60.1	23.1	1.0
11	756.1	635.5	34.9	60.1	24.5	1.1
12	758.9	632.6	37.4	62.9	25.3	0.8
13	781.9	652.4	37.6	65.4	25.2	1.1
14	792.0	661.2	39.5	63.6	27.0	0.7
15	773.2	653.9	38.5	53.8	26.2	0.7
16	562.2	472.2	28.4	41.3	20.0	-
17	464.5	401.8	24.4	21.6	16.6	-
18	53.6	45.2	2.5	1.7	4.3	-
Under 16	11,808.7	9,926.1	561.0	918.4	387.6	15.7
16 and over	1,080.4	919.2	55.2	64.5	40.8	0.6

¹ Including overseas

Chart 3 Children in families of Child Benefit recipients, by age at 31 August 2005, United Kingdom



Technical note

Child Benefit is paid to those responsible for children. Here "children" includes all those aged under 16. It also includes young people aged under 19 who are in full-time non-advanced education, or are entered for future external examinations, or are in the period between leaving (or exams finishing) and the week containing the first Monday in September (or similar dates after Easter and in early January, if earlier) and not in work. Additionally, it includes young people aged under 18 who have moved directly from full-time education to being registered for work or training with the Careers service or with Connexions. Awards are also subject to residence criteria being satisfied.

The numbers shown in the tables are estimates based on a random 5 per cent sample of awards current at the reference date. The extract was taken on the reference date. The figures therefore take no account of new claims, or revisions to claims, that were received or processed after the reference date, even if they are backdated to start before the reference date. Figures based on fewer than 25 cases are shown as "-".

The data extracted for each sample family include details of each child in the family for whom Child Benefit was paid at the extract date. This yields estimates of the total number of children in families receiving Child Benefit, and their characteristics.

There are around 9,000 families allocated to "Abroad". Investigations indicate that the vast majority of these are for families of armed forces or other crown servants serving overseas.

The figures are subject to sampling error - see Appendix A.

Appendix A: Sampling error

The figures in the tables are based on a random 5 per cent sample of families with claims for Child Benefit fully processed by the reference date. The sampling method ensures that the sample cases are representative of all such families on the computer system. The data for the children in these families also comprise a 5 per cent sample of children.

The figures in the tables are therefore estimates, but we know how accurate they are. For example, suppose that there are 100,000 families or children with a particular characteristic (but this number is not known), and that each is sampled with a probability of 0.2. Statistical theory says that there is a 95 per cent probability that the number sampled will lie between 19,752 and 20,248. If we were estimating the total number with the characteristic from the number in the sample, there is therefore a 95 per cent probability that our estimate will lie between 98,760 and 101,240. Approximately, we can then say that, where an estimate of 100,000 is derived from the sample, the true figure lies within 1,240 of the estimate, with a 95 per cent probability. That is, the width of the "95 per cent confidence interval" for the estimate is 1,240, or 1.2 per cent, of the estimate itself.

The width of the confidence interval varies with the size of the estimate, as shown in the table below.

Confidence interval widths for estimates

Estimated value	<u>95% confidence interval</u>	<u>Confidence interval as % of the estimate</u>
'000	'000	
1	± 0.3	± 27%
2	± 0.4	± 19%
5	± 0.6	± 12%
10	± 0.9	± 9%
25	± 1.4	± 5%
50	± 1.9	± 3.8%
100	± 2.7	± 2.7%
250	± 4.3	± 1.7%
500	± 6.0	± 1.2%
1,000	± 8.5	± 0.9%

Appendix B: Rates of Child Benefit, 1992-93 to 2005-06

	£ per week		
	Eldest child	Subsequent children	Lone parent ¹
April 1992	9.65	7.80	15.50
April 1993	10.00	8.10	16.05
April 1994	10.20	8.25	16.35
April 1995	10.40	8.45	16.70
April 1996	10.80	8.80	17.10
April 1997	11.05	9.00	17.10
April 1998	11.45	9.30	17.10
April 1999	14.40	9.60	17.10
April 2000	15.00	10.00	17.55
April 2001	15.50	10.35	17.55
April 2002	15.75	10.55	17.55
April 2003	16.05	10.75	17.55
April 2004	16.50	11.05	17.55
April 2005	17.00	11.40	17.55

Notes:

1. This was payable instead of the standard eldest child rate to most people bringing up children on their own until 6 July 1998. From that date it has continued to be payable to recipients at that date. It is also payable to lone parents who were receive