

## Background Quality Report: Child Benefit annual geographical/LSOA

Dimension	Assessment by the author
Introduction	<p data-bbox="499 300 919 338"><b><i>Context for the quality report.</i></b></p> <p data-bbox="499 371 1362 506">Previously and up until April 2003, Child Benefit was administered by the Department of Social Security (now the Department for Work and Pensions), statistics for previous years are available on the DWP website:</p> <p data-bbox="499 539 903 577"><a href="#">Child Benefit statistics at DWP</a></p> <p data-bbox="499 611 1362 745">Child Benefit is a tax-free payment that you can claim for your child. It is usually paid every four weeks but in some cases can be paid weekly. The payment can be claimed by anyone who qualifies, whatever their income or savings.</p> <p data-bbox="499 779 1362 853">Child Benefit is paid to those responsible for children (aged under 16) or qualifying young people. The latter includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="499 887 1347 1050">a) those in full-time non-advanced education or (from April 2006) on certain approved vocational training courses and who are under 19, or are aged 19 and have been on the same course since their 19th birthdays. (Note: those reaching 19 up to 9 April 2006 ceased to qualify on their 19th birthdays);</li> <li data-bbox="499 1055 1331 1218">b) those entered for future external examinations, or are in the period between leaving education (or exams finishing) and the week containing the first Monday in September (or similar dates after Easter and in early January, if earlier), and are not in work (there are slight variations for Scotland);</li> <li data-bbox="499 1223 1362 1319">c) those 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.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="499 1352 1331 1449">There are two separate amounts, with a higher amount for your eldest (or only) child and a lower amount for each of your other children.</p> <p data-bbox="499 1482 1315 1556">For further information about who can claim please refer to the HMRC website:</p> <p data-bbox="499 1590 919 1628"><a href="#">Who Qualifies for Child Benefit?</a></p> <p data-bbox="499 1662 1362 1861">This publication includes details of the number of families claiming Child Benefit as at 31<sup>st</sup> August each year, the number and ages of children within those families and their geographical location. Population counts at Country and English Region level are shown, as well as by Local Authority and Parliamentary Constituency (Westminster and Scottish) in the United Kingdom.</p> <p data-bbox="499 1895 1347 2022">We also publish detailed small area statistics for Great Britain, at Lower Layer Super Out Area (LSOA) for England and Wales, Data Zone for Scotland and Electoral wards for the United Kingdom. These statistics are based on the same source data</p>

	<p>and totals for higher level geographies will match up. The statistics are available with the National Statistics release of these statistics.</p> <p>Currently the small area data is not badged as National Statistics and appears on the HMRC website and on the Neighbourhood Statistics website. Further geographical statistics, down to Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) in England and Wales, Data Zones in Scotland and Output Areas in Northern Ireland are available from the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Office for National Statistics: Neighbourhood Statistics</li> <li>● Scottish Government: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics</li> <li>● Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA): Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service</li> </ul> <p><b>iii) Data source and how the data were collected</b></p> <p>The tables are based on an extract from the Child Benefit Computer System taken on 31<sup>st</sup> August each year and supplemented with additional cases as identified from a further extract on 30th November. This identifies new claims that started between 31st August and 30th November but are in relation to a child born prior to 31st August. Claimants are also required to inform HMRC if there are changes to their circumstances in the intervening period. KAI received this data from a scan of the Child Benefit system, and it is delivered via the Worthing data warehouse.</p> <p>The data extract is 100% of administrative data which we receive each quarter, but only the August and November extracts (as mentioned above) are used for these publications.</p>
<p><b>Relevance</b></p>	<p><b><i>The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.</i></b></p> <p>The statistics are as close to real-time as possible and represent the complete picture as at the 31st August, including back-dated awards from the end of November. Publication takes place during the following February. The main geographical Child Benefit publication is classified as National Statistics and therefore the date of publication is pre-announced a year ahead in the previous publication.</p> <p>The statistics contained in this publication will be of interest for anyone that is looking for the latest possible data on Child Benefit and children. Specifically, there are statistics on the number of children, by age band, in each geographical area. The user consultation showed that these statistics are used mainly by Local Government followed by Central Government and Academics. There are a variety of uses for Child Benefit statistics including identifying specific child populations by age for schools entry analysis or wider issues such as comparing the statistics to comparable Tax Credits statistics and other data sources designing benefit systems.</p>

<b>Accuracy and Reliability</b>	<p><b><i>The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.</i></b></p> <p><b>Rounding</b> The figures have been independently rounded to the nearest 5. This can lead to components as shown not summing to totals as shown. All data used is based on 100% scans of the administrative Child Benefit system.</p>
<b>Timeliness and Punctuality</b>	<p><b><i>Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.</i></b></p> <p>The publication dates are published in the preceding publication and produced in order to give us enough time to produce the analysis, quality assure it and to get it into the right format for publication. It is down to KAI to agree an appropriate publication date.</p> <p>All publications have been published on the pre-announced date.</p>
<b>Accessibility and Clarity</b>	<p><b><i>Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.</i></b></p> <p>The Child Benefit publication is released through UK National Statistics publication Hub which is a gateway to all UK National Statistics.</p> <p>The statistics are available to download in both PDF and Excel formats directly from our website. The Excel version is available so that people can directly access the statistics and incorporate them in to their analysis or reports.</p> <p>The low level LSOA data is also made available through the Neighbourhood Statistics website to ensure that it reaches the widest audience possible.</p> <p>The HMRC website conforms to a number of accessibility criteria – more information can be found on the website itself:</p> <p><a href="#">HMRC Accessibility</a></p> <p>The statistics themselves are only available in either Excel or PDF versions, but also information is provided over the telephone when customers contact us about the statistics.</p> <p>There is also an accessibility statement on the Neighbourhood Statistics website:</p> <p><a href="#">Neighbourhood Statistics Accessibility</a></p>

<p><b>Coherence and Comparability</b></p>	<p><b><i>Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.</i></b></p> <p>One of the recommendations that arose from the UKSA review was that further explanation was needed as to the purpose of each of our similar publications, and who would benefit most from each one. We extended the introductions to include details of why each one was different, and how they could be most beneficial to users.</p>
<p><b>Trade-offs between Output Quality Components</b></p>	<p><b><i>Trade-offs are the extent to which different aspects of quality are balanced against each other.</i></b></p> <p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions</b></p>	<p><b><i>The processes for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.</i></b></p> <p>A formal review of our National and Official Statistics publications was held between May and August 2011. Over 130 responses were received from a broad range of users. A report summarising the responses received was published in January 2012, with a summary of the results presented <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p><u>User Consultations:</u> HMRC recognises the importance of consulting on policy, legislative and operational change and has set out its approach on its website. When it is appropriate to run a formal, public, written consultation exercise, HMRC Child Benefit Statistics do so in accordance with the Cabinet Office guidelines. Informal consultation, surveys and reviews are also conducted periodically.</p> <p>We also maintain a spreadsheet containing every request we receive from users, which include the general public, Parliamentary Questions, OGD's, Local Councils, etc.</p>
<p><b>Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden</b></p>	<p><b><i>The effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output.</i></b></p> <p>The Child Benefit Data are derived from quarterly scans from our live Child Benefit system based in Telford. The operational cost of producing each scan is minimal after the initial cost of setting up the regular scan. These scans are needed for other purposes aside from the production of National Statistics and for this reason need to be viewed as on-going operational costs.</p> <p>The internal time spent (staff resource time) producing the statistics is approximately 50-100 hours work over two different grades</p>

	<p>It should be noted that as there is no burden on the respondent (survey time) for the production of these statistics, it would be plausible to assume that the resource allocation would be lower than for comparable published statistics produced by other government departments. However, there is no data available to support this claim.</p>
<p><b>Confidentiality, Transparency and Security</b></p>	<p><b><i>The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.</i></b></p>
	<p>HMRC records management is designed to ensure HMRC compliance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA);</li> <li>▪ the Public Records Act 1967 (PRA);</li> <li>▪ the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) (in particular the <u>Code of Practice on Records Management issued under s46 FOI</u> which requires that public authorities have effective record-keeping arrangements in place); and</li> <li>▪ HMRC's own policies for the efficient management of its information.</li> </ul> <p>Controlled Access Folders (CAFS) are used for the working production of the Child Benefit Statistics. Housekeeping checks are performed on the folder to ensure clarity of ordering and naming conventions. Information retrieved and published is for anonymised counts.</p> <p>With regard to Confidentiality, prior to the date and time of publication, the data is classified as restricted and is only made known to those involved in the publication process. As part of the Ministerial Submission Process, designated individual would have access to the published version twenty-four hours before the release of the publication.</p>