



Child employment, a guide from GOV.UK from GOV.UK

NOTES

1. Minimum ages children can work

Part-time work

The youngest age a child can work part-time is 13, except children involved in areas like:

- television
- theatre
- modelling

Children working in these areas will need a [performance licence](#).

Full-time work

Children can only start full-time work once they've reached the [minimum school leaving age](#) - they can then work up to a maximum of 40 hours a week.

School-aged children are not entitled to the National Minimum Wage. Young workers aged 16 to 17 are entitled to at least £3.72 per hour.

Once someone reaches 18, adult [employment rights and rules](#) then apply.

! From the summer of 2013, a young person must do some part-time education or training until they're 17.

2. Performance licences for children

Performance licences are issued by the local council.

Before giving a child a performance licence the council will talk to the headteacher of the child's school. This is to make sure the child's education won't suffer if they work in TV, theatre or modelling.

Performance producers can [apply for a performance licence](#) online.

Chaperones

A child taking part in a performance - including TV, film, theatre, paid sporting activities or modelling - has to have a chaperone with them.

You can find out about the [chaperone service for child actors](#) from your local council.

3. Restrictions on child employment

There are several restrictions on when and where children are allowed to work.

Children are not allowed to work:

- without an employment permit issued by the education department of the local council, if this is required by local bylaws
- in places like a factory or industrial site
- during school hours
- before 7am or after 7pm
- for more than one hour before school (unless local bylaws allow it)
- for more than 4 hours without taking a break of at least 1 hour
- in most jobs in pubs and betting shops and those prohibited in local bylaws
- in any work that may be harmful to their health, well-being or education
- without having a 2-week break from any work during the school holidays in each calendar year

! There are also special rules which only apply during term times and school holiday times.

Term time rules

During term time children can only work a maximum of 12 hours a week. This includes:

- a maximum of 2 hours on school days and Sundays
- a maximum of 5 hours on Saturdays for 13 to 14-year-olds, or 8 hours for 15 to 16-year-olds

School holiday rules

During school holidays 13 to 14-year-olds are only allowed to work a maximum of 25 hours a week. This includes:

- a maximum of 5 hours on weekdays and Saturdays
- a maximum of 2 hours on Sunday

During school holidays 15 to 16-year-olds can only work a maximum of 35 hours a week. This includes:

- a maximum of 8 hours on weekdays and Saturdays
- a maximum of 2 hours on Sunday

Local rules on the types of work children can do

Local bylaws list the jobs that children can't do. If a job is on this list, a child under the minimum school leaving age can't do this work.

Local bylaws may also have other restrictions on working hours, conditions of work and the type of employment.

Contact your [local council's](#) education department or education welfare service for more information.

4. Local council rules for child employment permits

Most local councils say that businesses intending to employ school-aged children must apply for a child employment permit before they can be employed.

If a child is working without a child employment permit, there's a risk that the employer won't be insured against accidents involving the child.

! Children don't need a work permit for work experience arranged by their school.

Employers should contact their [local council's](#) education department or education welfare service to find out if a child employment permit is needed.

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