

# **Scottish Labour want the Scottish Child Payment quadrupled in the new parliamentary session**

**Scottish Labour Leader, Anas Sarwar, has demanded The Scottish Government commits to quadrupling the value of the Scottish Child Payment to tackle child poverty and meet statutory targets.**

The Glasgow MSP says The Scottish Government is currently set to miss these targets by some margin.

Ahead of the forthcoming Programme for Government, Mr Sarwar said that the payment should be doubled immediately and then doubled again next year if the government is serious about tackling poverty.

Scottish Labour say that their analysis shows that a £40 per week Scottish Child Payment would lead to child poverty reduction targets being met with to up to 80,000 children being lifted out of poverty – slashing child poverty by nearly a third in one move.

The party also points out that in 2017, Holyrood agreed the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act, which mandates that by 2023/24 fewer than 18% of children should be in relative poverty, and that by 2030/31 it should be fewer than 10%.

However, child poverty in Scotland has been rising and currently sits at 26% – equivalent to 1 in 4 children. Forecasts by Scottish Labour indicate that, as it stands, The Scottish Government is likely to miss their interim child poverty target by six percentage points – leaving an extra 50,000 children in poverty. The need for the SNP to use all the powers available to the Scottish Government is, the party suggests, all the more urgent given the decision of the UK Government to cut the £20 uplift to Universal Credit, introduced during the pandemic.

At the election Scottish Labour called for the immediate doubling of the Scottish Child Payment to tackle poverty. This call has been backed in recent weeks by over 100 leading poverty organisations and faith groups in an open letter to the First Minister who has said she wants the driving mission of the Parliament to be ending child poverty. Now Labour is calling on the SNP get back on track to meet child poverty reduction targets by immediately doubling the Scottish Child Payment and commit to raising it to £40 per week in 2022/23.

Mr Sarwar said: “It is Scotland’s shame that one in four children here are living in poverty.

“One child living in poverty is one too many. One night a child spends in poverty is one night too many.

“It simply beggars belief that the SNP doesn’t seem to recognise the urgency.

“And the Tories must also reconsider their dangerous cut to Universal Credit which will deepen the poverty we see in Scotland.

“We need to listen to the urgent calls and double the Scottish Child Payment and commit to doubling it again the following year.

“This simple act would cut child poverty by nearly a third,

transforming 80,000 lives.

“This is our best chance to meet our legal Child Poverty targets – but more importantly it is an opportunity to make a real difference to these children’s lives.

“Tackling child poverty is not an abstract aim – it is a moral obligation, and it is our duty to end it as soon as possible.

“We don’t have the luxury of wasting more time. We can act now to tackle the scourge of child poverty – let’s make it happen.”



Scottish Labour leader, Anas Sarwar. Photo: © 2021 Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)