



Children Act 1989

1989 CHAPTER 41

An Act to reform the law relating to children; to provide for local authority services for children in need and others; to amend the law with respect to children's homes, community homes, voluntary homes and voluntary organisations; to make provision with respect to fostering, child minding and day care for young children and adoption; and for connected purposes. [16th November 1989]

Be it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

Extent Information

E1 For the extent of the provisions of this Act please see [section 108\(10\)-\(12\)](#).

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** Act amended by [Army Act 1955 \(c. 18\)](#), [Sch. 5A para. 7\(3\)-\(4\)](#) (as substituted by Children Act 1989 (c. 41 SIF 20), s. 108(4)(6), Sch. 12 para. 8(2), Sch. 14 para. 27(4))
- C2** Act amended (*1.11.1994*) by [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 \(c. 37, SIF 83:1\)](#), [ss. 30\(8\)\(a\)](#), [39\(3\)](#), [43\(2\)](#); S.I. 1994/1776, [art. 2\(2\)](#)
- C3** Act modified (1.6.1996) by [Armed Forces Act 1991 \(c. 62, SIF 7:1\)](#), [s. 21\(4\)\(b\)](#); S.I. 1996/1173, [art. 2](#)
- C4** Act modified (14.10.1991) by S.I. 1991/2032, [art. 3\(1\)](#).
Act modified (14.10.1991) by S.I. 1991/2032, [art. 7\(1\)](#).
Act (except for s. 41(8)) amended (01.01.1992) by S.I. 1991/2684, [arts. 2\(1\)](#), [4](#), [Sch. 1](#)
Act extended (E.W.)(30.9.1998) by [1998 c. 37, s. 11\(6\)](#); S.I. 1998/2327, [art.2\(1\)\(c\)](#) (subject to [arts. 5-8](#)).
Act: transfer of functions (1.7.1999) by S.I. 1999/672, [art. 2](#), [Sch. 1](#) as amended (7.11.2003) by [2002 c. 38, ss. 145\(1\)](#), [148](#) (with Sch. 4 paras. 6-8)
- C5** By [Criminal Justice Act 1991 \(c. 53, SIF 39:1\)](#), [s. 101\(1\)](#), [Sch. 12 para. 23](#); S.I. 1991/2208, [art. 2\(1\)](#), [Sch.1](#) it is provided (14.10.1991) that in relation to any time before the commencement of s. 70 of that 1991 Act (which came into force on 1.10.1992 by S.I. 1992/333, [art. 2\(2\)](#), [Sch. 2](#)) references in any enactment amended by that 1991 Act, to youth courts shall be construed as references to juvenile courts.

Changes to legislation: Children Act 1989, Introductory Text is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 20 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- C6** Power to modify Act conferred (12.12.1996 for certain purposes and 1.4.1997 otherwise) by 1995 c. 36, **ss. 33(5)(b)**(with ss. 90, 103(1)); S.I. 1996/3201, **art. 3(1)**
- C7** Act definition of "parental responsibility" extended (E.W.S.) with modification (7.10.1996) by S.I. 1996/207, **reg. 57(3)**
Act definition of "Voluntary organisation" extended (7.10.1996) by S.I. 1996/207, **reg. 78(9)(c)**
- C8** Act applied (with modifications) (E.W.S) (1.10.2010) by The Employment and Support Allowance (Transitional Provisions, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit) (Existing Awards) (No. 2) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 2010/1907), **reg. 16**, Sch. 2 (as amended by S.I. 2010/2430, **regs. 15, 17**)
- C9** Act modified (26.4.2010) by The Isles of Scilly (Children Act 1989) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/1116), **art. 2**
- C10** Act applied (24.6.2013) by The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (Consequential and Transitional Provisions and Savings) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/1465), **art. 13(2)-(4)**

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 4(1A)(aa) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 21(3)
- s. 4(1C) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 21(4)
- s. 4ZA(2)(aa) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 22(3)
- s. 4ZA(3A) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 22(4)
- s. 8(4)(k) inserted by 2021 c. 17 s. 52(1)
- s. 31A(4A) inserted by 2014 c. 6 s. 15(2)(b)