A child's legal rights
At a glance

What is a child?

In England, Northern Ireland and Wales, a child is someone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Once they turn 18, they are legally an adult.

In most situations in Scotland, a child is defined as someone who is under 18. But in some contexts, for example in some parts of the child...
A child is defined as a person under 16 years of age.

There are also different laws across the UK that specify age limits for young people in different circumstances. These include leaving school; leaving care; the age of consent; and the age of criminal responsibility.
Information and guidance on children sharing bedrooms and legislation on what age a child can leave home.

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