

Child benefit cuts will result in a worse deal for the ...

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[Child benefit cuts will result in a worse deal for the poor | Left Foot Forward.](#)

Richard Excell of the TUC explains why ending a universal benefit makes it much easier to make the poor worse off.

As he says:

The advantage of universal benefits is that they build up a common interest in the benefits system. As research for the [Fabian Society](#) has shown, there is widespread support for a welfare state built on reciprocity.

Political generosity is at its highest when the system offers something for everyone — and weakened when we divide society into those who pay for welfare and those who receive it. A means-tested benefit system will always be meagre and grudging, because the middle classes will be tempted to believe the worst of those who claim the benefits they are paying for. Far from being a progressive step, taking benefits from the middle classes will result in a worse deal for the poor.

I am sure that is true.

Which leaves open the question whether the ConDems are doing this by accident or design.