

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT – THE LAW

This section contains general guidelines covering the main legislation affecting the employment of under 18 year olds. It is a general outline only and should not be regarded as a complete or authoritative statement of the law. For detailed guidance employers should contact the organisations listed.

General guidance on all issues relating to the employment and training of young adults can be obtained from the Connexions Careers Centre.

<http://www.centrallondonconnexions.org.uk/connexions/nearyou.asp>

Child or Young Adult?

The law treats these two groups differently:

- Children are those who have not yet reached their statutory school leaving date - even if they have stopped attending school. [Employment of Children](#)
- Young adults are those who have passed their statutory school leaving date - even if they have chosen to remain in education after that date. [Employment of Young Adults](#)

A child may not legally leave school until the last Friday in June of the school year during which they reach the age 16, or if his or her birthday falls after that date, but before the start of the next school year.

This means that if a child's 16th birthday falls on or before the last Friday in June, they can leave school on that day. They can also leave school on that day if their 16th birthday falls during the summer holidays.

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