

*These notes refer to the Work and Families Act 2006
(c.18) which received Royal Assent on 21 June 2006*

WORK AND FAMILIES ACT 2006

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BACKGROUND

4. In December 2004, alongside the Pre-Budget Report, the Government published the document, “*Choice for parents, the best start for children: a ten year strategy for childcare*”. This set out key principles informing Government policy in the area of work and families: to ensure every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice enabling them to balance their work and family responsibilities. It included the Government’s plans to improve the availability, quality and affordability of childcare as well as a number of commitments and goals to improve entitlements for employees with caring responsibilities. On 28th February 2005, the Department of Trade and Industry published a consultation document, “*Work and Families: Choice and Flexibility*” (available at: www.dti.gov.uk/employment/workandfamilies/work-families-history/index.html), asking for views on how the Government should meet some of the goals and commitments set out in the Ten Year Childcare Strategy. The consultation closed on 25th May 2005 and the Department of Trade and Industry subsequently published the Government’s response to the consultation in October 2005 (available at: www.dti.gov.uk/employment/workandfamilies/work-families-history/index.html).
5. The Government gave a commitment in its 2005 election manifesto to raise the weekly limit used in calculating redundancy payments.
6. The Government proposed in its 2005 election manifesto to make paid leave for bank and public holidays additional to the 4 week statutory annual leave entitlement. This right would be on a pro rata basis for those working part-time. A consultation document “*Increasing the Holiday Entitlement: An Initial Consultation*” (available at: www.dti.gov.uk/employment/holidays/index.html) was launched on 13 June 2006 (closing date 22 September 2006) and a more detailed Regulatory Impact Assessment will be produced before any regulations are made.