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Feedback is welcome

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## Page What you need to know

Despite record levels of employment, for some families, worklessness, not employment, is the norm. These families face huge barriers to entering work and taking advantage of the opportunities employment affords. Worklessness damages lives. It reduces families' income and can damage families' resilience, health, stability, and have a long-term impact on children's development. Where problems such as these combine and fuel each other, families edge further and further away from the benefits of work, and children face a greater prospect of repeating the poor outcomes of their parents.

There are 9 national indicators and underlying measures used to track progress in tackling the disadvantages that affect families and children's outcomes.

1. Parental Worklessness
2. Parental Conflict
3. Poor Parental Mental Health
4. Parental Drug and Alcohol Dependency
5. Problem Debt
6. Homelessness
7. Early Years
8. Educational Attainment
9. Youth Employment

The government has a statutory duty to report data annually to Parliament on 2 of the 9 indicators for England only:

1. Parental Worklessness
  - a. The proportion of children living in workless households
  - b. The proportion of children living in long-term workless households
2. Educational attainment at Key Stage 4

The annual update on these indicators can be found here:

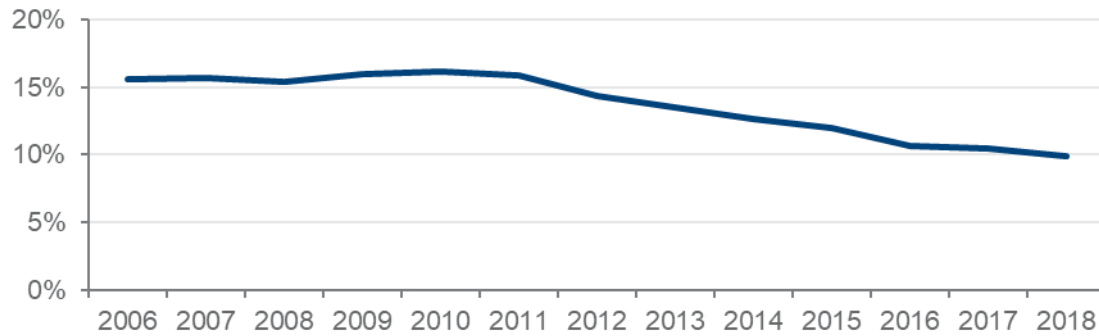
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/workless-households-and-educational-attainment-statutory-indicators>

# Indicator 1: Parental Worklessness

A **workless household** is defined as a household which has at least one adult aged 16–64 and all adults in the household, aged 16 or over, are currently economically inactive or unemployed. A **long-term workless household** is one which has at least one adult aged 16–64, and all adults in the household, aged 16 or over, are unemployed or inactive and have either been out of work for 12 months or more or have never worked in a paid job. Some adults in long-term workless households may not be long-term unemployed. They may have been out of work for 12 months or more, but had periods of inactivity such as looking after family or illness.

## 10% of all children were living in workless households between October and December 2018

Proportion of children living in workless households (UK), 2006 to 2018



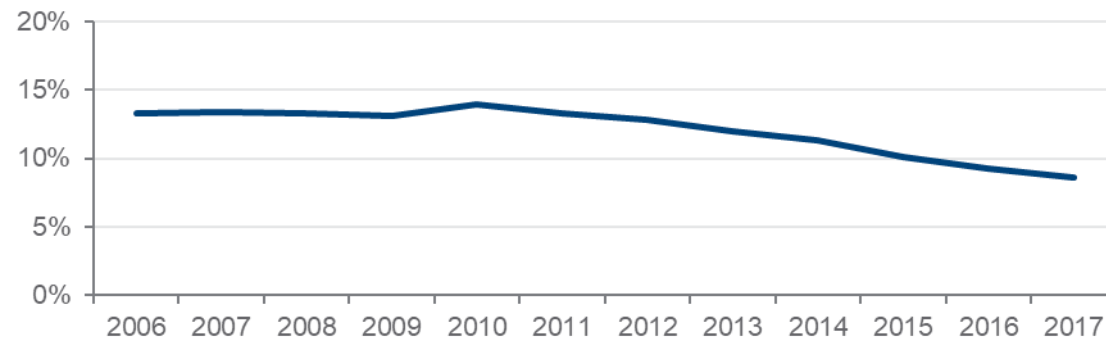
Source: Labour Force Survey, October to December 2018

**10%** of all children (around **1.2 million children**) were living in workless households in the fourth quarter of 2018. This has continued to decrease since 2010.

The percentage of children in workless households is based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS). This is a survey conducted quarterly with a sample size of around 100,000 people. The results from October to December each year are used. Quarter-on-quarter results are not used because of seasonal fluctuations.

## 9% of all children had been living in workless households for at least 12 months in 2017

Proportion of children living in long-term workless households (UK), 2006 to 2017



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2017

**9%** of all children (around **1.1 million children**) were living in long-term workless households between 2016 and 2017. This has continued to fall since 2010.

The percentage of children in long-term workless households is based on the Annual Population Survey (APS). This is derived from a subset of interviews from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) plus a number of additional interviews to increase the sample size to around 300,000.

For more information:

- <http://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworklesshouseholds/octobertodecember2018>
- <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/childrenlivinginlongtermworklesshouseholdsintheuk/2017>

## Indicator 2: Parental Conflict

*This indicator has not been updated from the previous publication as the Understanding Society survey data for these measures is updated every two years. The next data is expected to be published in 2020.*

The parental conflict measures have been developed using Understanding Society survey data. The Understanding Society survey interviews up to 40,000 households across the UK each year. Households are interviewed once every two years.

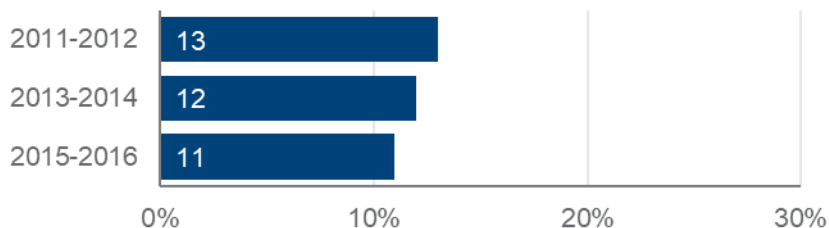
**Experiencing relationship distress** is defined as when either parent in a couple-parent family states that most or all of the time they consider divorce, regret living together, quarrel, or get on each other's nerves (in response to questions asking about their relationship with their partner).

**Regular contact with the non-resident parent** is defined as when the resident parent states that the child 'usually sees' the non-resident parent 'at least fortnightly' during term time. Regular contact between children and their parents is a positive outcome and serves as a proxy measure for reasonable quality inter-parental relationships in separated families.

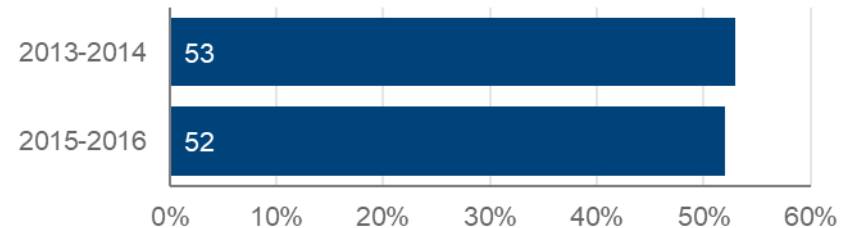
### 11% of children in couple-parent families were living with at least one parent reporting relationship distress

### 52% of children in separated families saw their non-resident parent at least fortnightly

Proportion of children in couple-parent families reporting relationship distress (UK), 2011 to 2016



Proportion of children in living in separated families who see their non-resident parents regularly (UK), 2013 to 2016



Source: Understanding Society survey, 2011-2016

This publication uses cross-sectional analysis i.e. it uses survey results where children are present in any of the surveys where the relationship and regularity of contact questions have been asked. This is different to the methodology used in the original Improving Lives Publication (2017) and means that the figures cannot be compared.

For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/parental-conflict-indicator-201112-to-201516>

## Indicator 3: Poor Parental Mental Health

The measure of Poor Parental Mental Health is based on results from the Understanding Society survey. The Understanding Society survey captures information from up to 40,000 households across the UK each year. The Poor Parental Mental Health measure comes from the 12-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) that survey respondents complete.

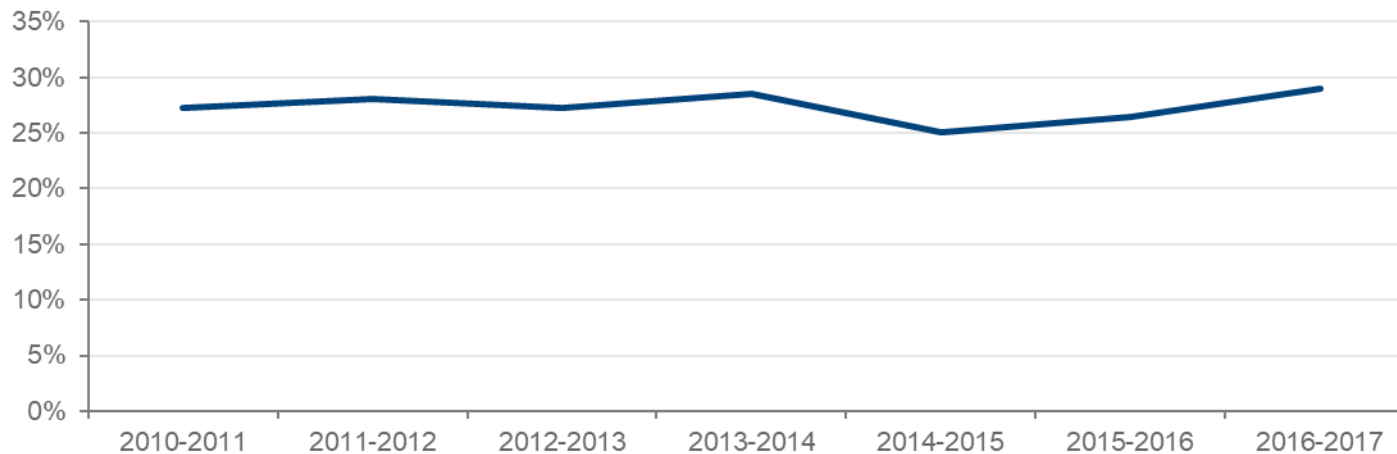
The GHQ-12 is the most widely used screening tool for common mental disorders. It asks 12 questions regarding the way an individual has been feeling over the last few weeks and includes questions on sleep, self-confidence, worries and concentration. Each question offers two negative options (where the respondent is feeling worse than usual) which are scored as 1 and two positive options (where the respondent is feeling the same or better than usual) which are scored as 0. The scores for all 12 questions are then added together to give a total score out of 12. A total score of 4 or more is defined as the **person reporting symptoms of anxiety or depression**.

This is considered a better indication of poor mental health than asking the respondent if they have been diagnosed with depression or anxiety, as asking the respondent directly is likely to under represent the level of poor mental health due to under-diagnosis and under-reporting.

*Due to a previous change in methodology, historic figures have been updated from previous publications. The proportion of children living with at least one parent reporting symptoms of anxiety and or depression has changed from 27.3% to 25.8% for 2012-2013 and 25.1% to 25.6% for 2014-2015.*

### The proportion of children living with at least one parent reporting symptoms of emotional distress was 29% in 2016-2017

Proportion of children living with at least one parent reporting symptoms of anxiety and/or depression (UK), 2010 to 2017



The proportion of children living with at least one parent reporting symptoms of emotional distress has fluctuated each year. The latest figure of **29%** in 2016-17 is similar to the proportion seen in 2013-2014 (**28.5%**).

Source: Understanding Society survey, 2010-2017

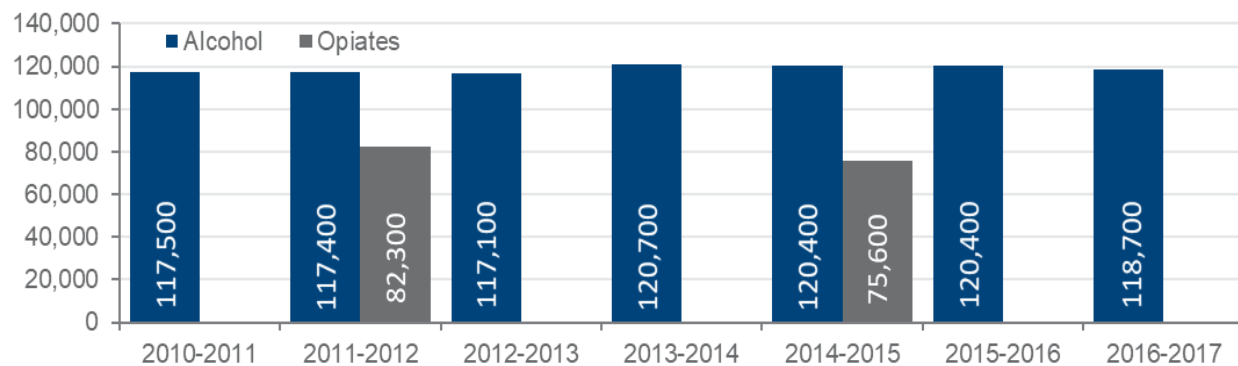
For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-living-with-parents-in-emotional-distress-2019-update>

## Indicator 4: Parental Drug and Alcohol Dependency

**Parents** are defined as individuals aged 18 and over that have children (aged under 18) living with them. The data on parents involved in treatment also includes individuals who are pregnant.

### In 2016 to 2017 around 118,700 parents were estimated to be dependent on alcohol in England

The number of parents who are opiate users or dependent on alcohol (England), 2010 to 2017



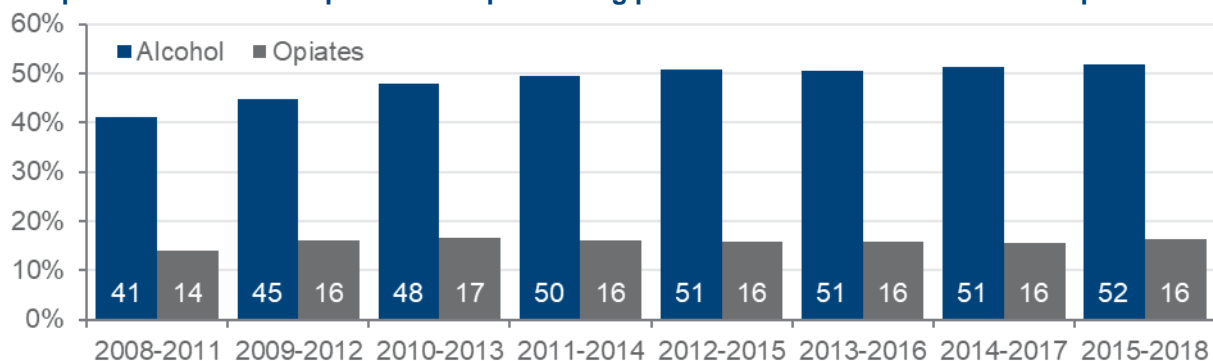
Source: Public Health England

The number of alcohol dependent parents has decreased slightly from **120,400** in 2015-2016 to **118,700** in 2016-2017, but has been broadly stable over the last 7 years. Data on the number of parents who are opiate users has not been updated from the previous publication.

The estimates of alcohol dependency are carried out by Sheffield University with support from Public Health England. They use data from the Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Study (APMS), Office for National Statistics census information and data on hospital admissions. Opiate dependency uses data from the Police National Computer, probation and prison treatment data and data from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System. They are produced by Liverpool John Moores University and Manchester University with support from Public Health England.

### In 2015 to 2018 52% of parents with alcohol dependency and 16% of opiate using parents who entered treatment, completed it and didn't return for more treatment in three years

Proportion of alcohol dependent or opiate using parents who have entered and completed treatment in the last three years (England), 2008 to 2018



Source: Public Health England

The proportion of alcohol dependent parents completing treatment successfully increased from **48%** in 2010-13 to **52%** in 2015-18. The proportion of opiate using parents completing treatment successfully has remained stable in recent years at **16%**.

The proportion of alcohol dependent parents or opiate using parents completing treatment successfully uses information collected through the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System and analysed by Public Health England. For parents to be counted they must have entered, completed and not returned for treatment in the three-year period. Opiate users leaving treatment successfully must not be receiving any substitute medication at the time of exit.

For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/alcohol-and-drug-misuse-and-treatment-statistics>

## Indicator 5: Problem Debt

*This indicator has not been updated from the previous publication as the data underpinning the measures will not be updated until 2020. However, historic data has changed from previous publications due to a change in the methodology used by the Office for National Statistics. This has led to a slight fall in the number and percentage of children living in households with problem debt each year apart from in 2015-2016 where the percentage of children living in households with problem debt was not affected by the change in methodology. Due to the methodological change, the number of children living in households experiencing persistent problem debt recorded in previous years has increased, however this has been offset by an increase in the estimates of total dependent children. This results in a small change to the percentage of children living in households in persistent problem debt.*

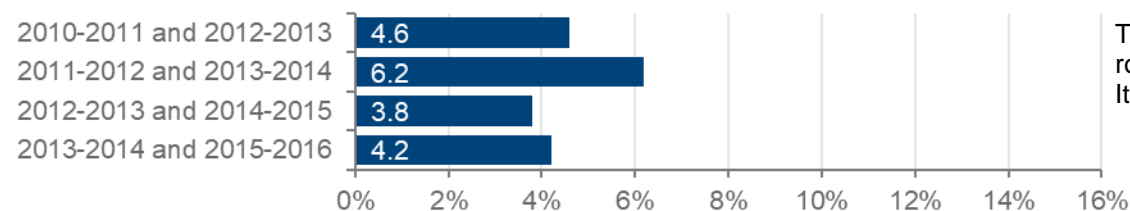
Under this indicator, a household is considered as being in **problem debt** if it falls into any of the following groups:

- At least one adult reports falling behind with bills or credit commitments and the household's debt repayments are at least 25% of the household's net monthly income.
- At least one adult reports falling behind with bills or credit commitments and at least one adult is currently in two or more consecutive months' arrears on bills or credit commitments.
- At least one adult considers debt a heavy burden and the household's debt represents at least 20% of the household's net annual income.

**Persistent problem debt** is based on whether children are in a household in problem debt in two consecutive waves of the Wealth and Assets Survey (WAS).

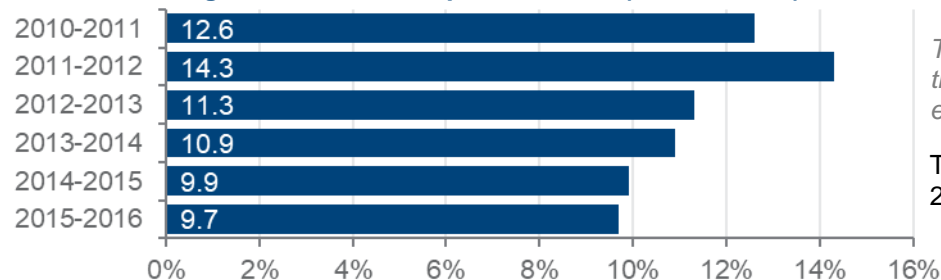
### The most recent data shows just over 4% (around 470,000) of all children in Great Britain were living in households in persistent problem debt

#### Proportion of all children living in households in persistent problem debt (Great Britain), 2010 to 2016



The proportion of children living in households in persistent problem debt rose to **4.2%** from **3.8%** in the most recent two-year period we have data for. It is still well below its peak of **6.2%** in 2011-2012 and 2013-2014.

#### Proportion of all children living in households in problem debt (Great Britain), 2010 to 2016



*The proportion of children living in households in problem debt is not one of the measures for the Problem Debt Indicator but it provides important evidence to support the main measure.*

The proportion of children living in households in problem debt is **9.7%** in 2015-2016. This is its lowest level since 2010-2011.

Source: *Wealth and Assets Survey (Great Britain)*

For more information:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/debt/adhocs/008224problemdebtgreatbritainjuly2010tojune2016>

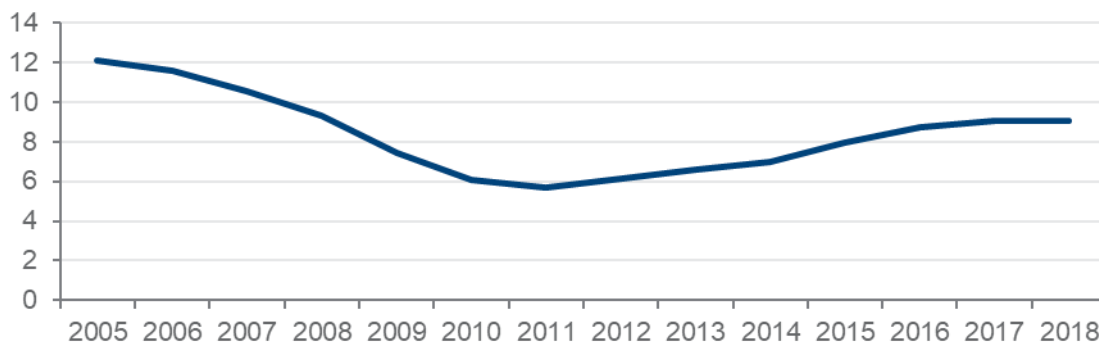
## Indicator 6: Homelessness

The term 'homelessness' is often considered to apply only to people 'sleeping rough'. For this indicator **homelessness** relates to **statutory homelessness**, which refers to households for whom a main homelessness duty has been accepted by a local authority. A **main homelessness duty** is where a local authority is satisfied that the household is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a specified priority need group e.g. they have dependent children. Where a main duty is owed, the local authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and their household. This often involves placing the household in temporary accommodation until a settled housing solution becomes available for them, or until some other circumstance brings the duty to an end.

Households can also be provided with temporary accommodation until a decision is made on their homelessness application, until a review or appeal of their decision has been made or for households found to be intentionally homeless and in priority need who are accommodated to give them a reasonable opportunity to find accommodation for themselves.

### Around 9 in every 1,000 households in England with dependent children (around 61,000 households) were living in temporary accommodation at the end of June 2018

Households with dependent children living in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households (England), 2005 to 2018



The number of households in every 1,000 with dependent children living in temporary accommodation remains flat at **9 in every 1,000 (61,000 households)**. The latest data remains below the peak of **12 in every 1,000 (73,000 households)** in the same quarter in 2005.

Source: Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government Homelessness Statistics and Household Projections

The number of households with dependent children living in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households combines statistics on dependent children in temporary accommodation and projections of the number of households with dependent children from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Information on the number of households in temporary accommodation is collected from local authorities on the last day of each quarter.

For more information:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/2014-based-household-projections-detailed-data-for-modelling-and-analytical-purposes>

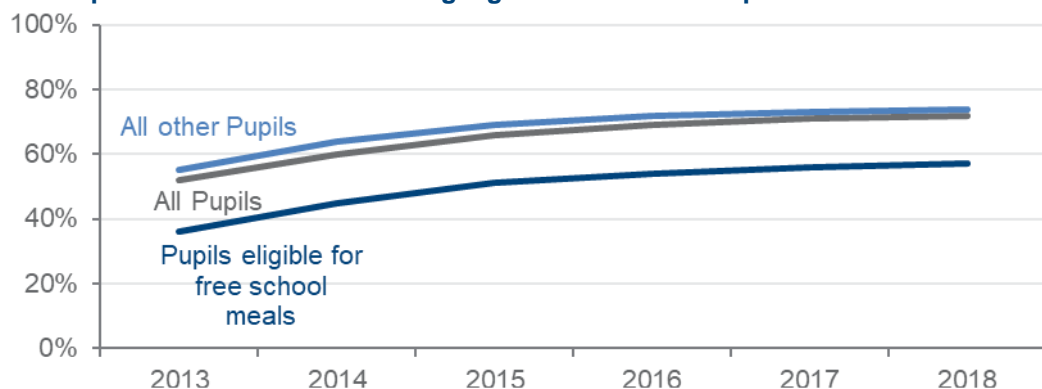
## Indicator 7: Early Years

In England, children in state-funded early years' education have their development assessed against 17 early learning goals. This is known as the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) and teachers assess children through classroom observations throughout the academic year in which the child turns five. A **good level of development** is achieving at least the expected level in communication and language, physical development, personal, social and emotional development, literacy and mathematics.

The EYFSP was reviewed and changed in 2012 with greater emphasis placed on communication and language and physical, personal, social and emotional development. As a result, comparisons cannot be made with pre-2013 EYFSP results.

### 57% of pupils eligible for free school meals in 2018 achieved a good level of development on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

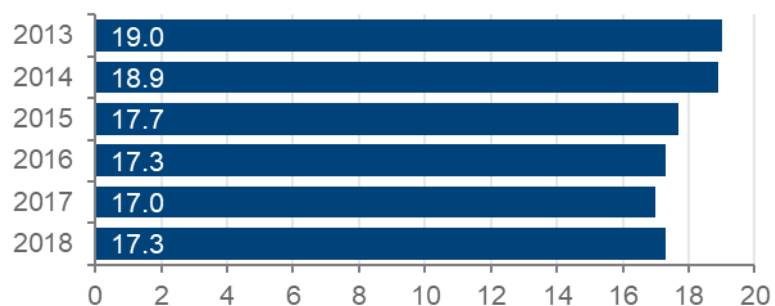
Proportion of children achieving a good level of development on the EYFSP at age five (England), 2013 to 2018



In 2018, **57%** of pupils eligible for free school meals achieved a good level of development on the EYFSP, this compares to **74%** of all other pupils and **72%** of all pupils.

The percentage of pupils in all three groups achieving a good level of development continues to increase each year.

Attainment gap for "Good level of development" between pupils eligible for free school meals and all other pupils (England), 2013 to 2018



*The attainment gap for "Good level of development" between pupils eligible for free school meals and all other pupils is not a key measure for the Early Years indicator but provides supporting evidence to the main measure. The good level of development attainment gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development from the percentage of all other pupils achieving the same.*

In 2018, the good level of development attainment gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and all other pupils increased slightly to **17.3** from **17** percentage points.

Source: National pupil database

For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-results-2017-to-2018>



## Indicator 8: Educational Attainment

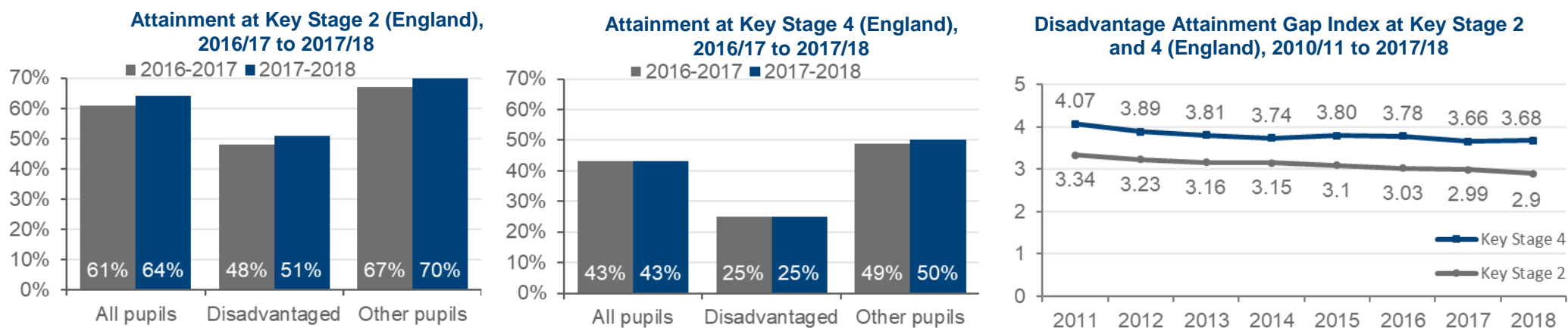
In 2018, **31%** of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were classed as disadvantaged and **27%** of pupils in state funded schools at the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils are defined as disadvantaged if they meet any of the following criteria:

- They are known to have been eligible for free school meals in the previous six years.
- They are recorded as having been looked after for at least one day during the year.
- They are recorded as having ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England or Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order.

**Attainment at Key Stage 2** is measured by the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths. **Attainment at Key Stage 4** is measured by the proportion of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs.

*The Disadvantage Attainment Gap Index for Key Stage 2 and 4 is not one of the key measures for the Educational Attainment indicator but it shows whether disadvantaged pupils are catching up or getting left behind. A disadvantage attainment gap of zero indicates that disadvantaged pupils are performing as well as all other pupils. The maximum possible gap is 10 (or -10 if disadvantaged pupils perform better than all other pupils).*

**The most recent data shows at Key Stage 2, 51% of disadvantaged pupils and 64% of all pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths. At Key Stage 4, 25% of disadvantaged pupils and 43% of all pupils achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs**



Source: National pupil database and Key Stage 4 attainment data

The data is created from school census records, qualification entries, attainment data, data returns from local authorities and results collected from awarding organisations. The data includes pupils in state-funded schools who have reached the end of KS2 or KS4 in the academic year.

For more information:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-2-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-4-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/measuring-disadvantaged-pupils-attainment-gaps-over-time>

## Indicator 9: Youth Employment

### Around 11% (788,000) of young people aged 16 to 24 are not in education, employment or training

#### Proportion of young people (aged 16 to 24) who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (UK), 2007 to 2018



Source: Labour Force Survey

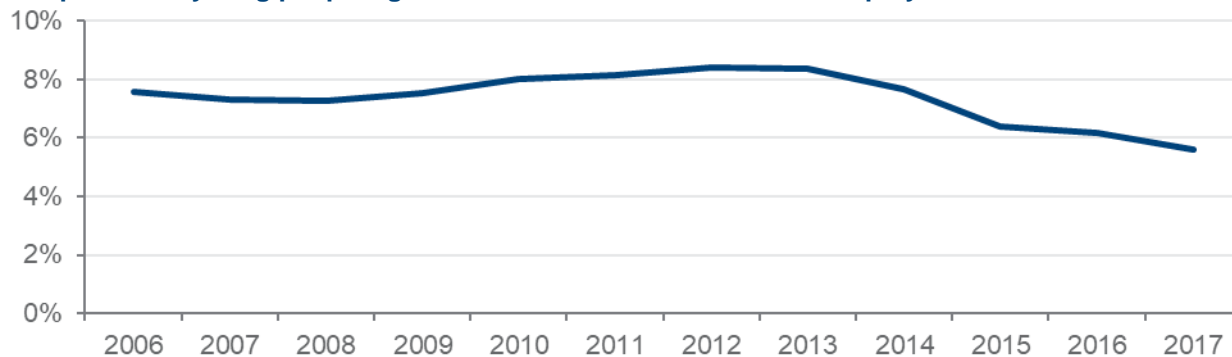
The proportion of young people (aged 16 to 24) who are not in education, employment or training in October to December 2018 is **11.3%**, this has increased by **0.1 percentage points** since last year. This is **5.6 percentage points** lower than the peak of **16.9%** in July to September 2011.

The data comes from the Labour Force Survey which is a household survey with a sample of around 90,000 individuals. The NEET estimates are seasonally adjusted and are produced on a quarterly basis.

The Government increased the age to which all young people in England are required to continue in education or training, from 16 to 18 between 2013 and 2015. This will have decreased the proportion of 16 to 17 year olds who were not in education, employment or training in 2015 and early 2016.

### Almost 6% of young people aged 18 to 24 haven't been in employment or full-time education for two years

#### Proportion of young people aged 18 to 24 who have not been in employment or full-time education for two years or more (UK), 2006 to 2017



Source: Annual Population Survey

The proportion of young people (aged 18 to 24) who have not been in employment or full-time education for two years or more is at its lowest since 2010.

The data comes from the Annual Population Survey (APS). This is derived from a subset of interviews from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) plus a number of additional interviews to increase the sample size. A two-year threshold was chosen to discount those voluntarily spending time out of the labour market e.g. those on a gap year.

For more information:

- <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/youngpeoplenotineducationemploymentortrainingneet/february2019>
- <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/adhocs/009668youngpeoplewhoarelongtermworklessuk2006to2017>