



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Workless households and educational attainment statutory indicators



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Pensions

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Presented to Parliament pursuant to
Section A1A of the Life Chances Act 2010 as amended

March 2019



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Workless households and educational attainment statutory indicators

The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 reformed the Child Poverty Act 2010 and placed a statutory duty on the Secretary of State to publish and lay before Parliament a report containing data on:

- Children living in workless households in England
- Children living in long-term workless households in England
- The educational attainment of children in England at the end of Key Stage 4
- The educational attainment of disadvantaged children in England at the end of Key Stage 4

The data contained in the report, and the provision about how the terms used in it are to be interpreted, must, so far as practicable, be derived from any relevant official statistics.

The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 renamed the Child Poverty Act 2010 as the Life Chances Act 2010. For further details: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/9/part/A1>

Definition of key terms

The Life Chances Act 2010 specified that the statutory report must set out how the Secretary of State has interpreted the following terms:

1. Child
 - a. for the workless households measures: children under 16 years old¹
 - b. for the educational attainment measures: pupils in state-funded schools at the end of Key Stage 4, typically those starting the academic year aged 15
2. Household – a household is defined as a single person, or a group of people living at the same address who have the address as their only or main residence and either share one main meal a day or share living accommodation (or both), and at least one person is aged 16 to 64 years¹
3. Worklessness – where all adults aged 16 or over are either economically inactive or unemployed
4. Long-term Worklessness – where all adults, aged 16 years and over, are currently economically inactive or unemployed (workless), and these adults left their last job at least 12 months ago or have never worked (in a paid job)
5. Educational attainment – the proportion of pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English language or English literature and maths at GCSE
6. Disadvantage – pupils who meet the following criteria²:

¹ This is the definition used by the Office for National Statistics. Further details can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/childrenlivinginlongtermworklesshouseholdsintheuk/2017>

² This is the definition used by the Department for Education. Further details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-4-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised>

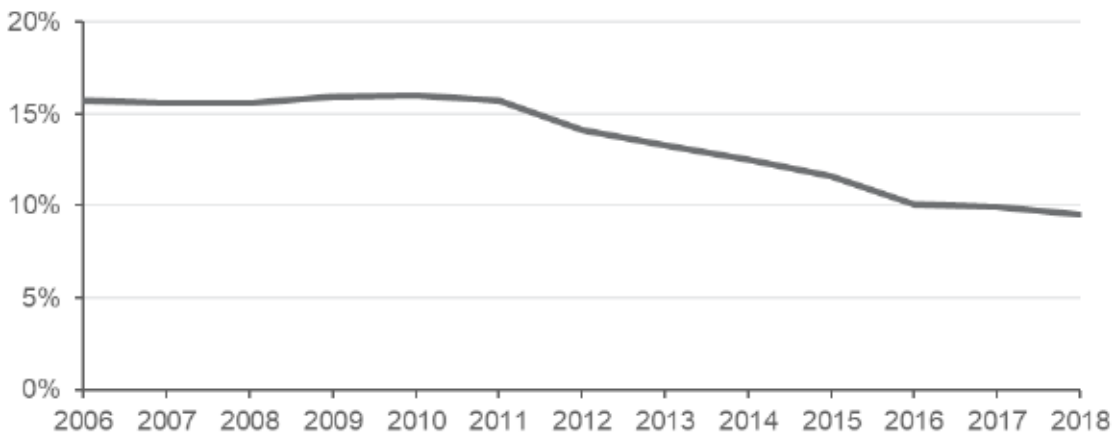
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- a. They are known to have been eligible for free school meals in the previous six years (from year 6 to year 11)
- b. They are recorded as having been looked after for at least one day during the year
- c. They are recorded as having ceased to be 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.

Parental worklessness

Statutory measure 1: children living in workless households in England

Proportion of children living in workless households in England, 2006 to 2018

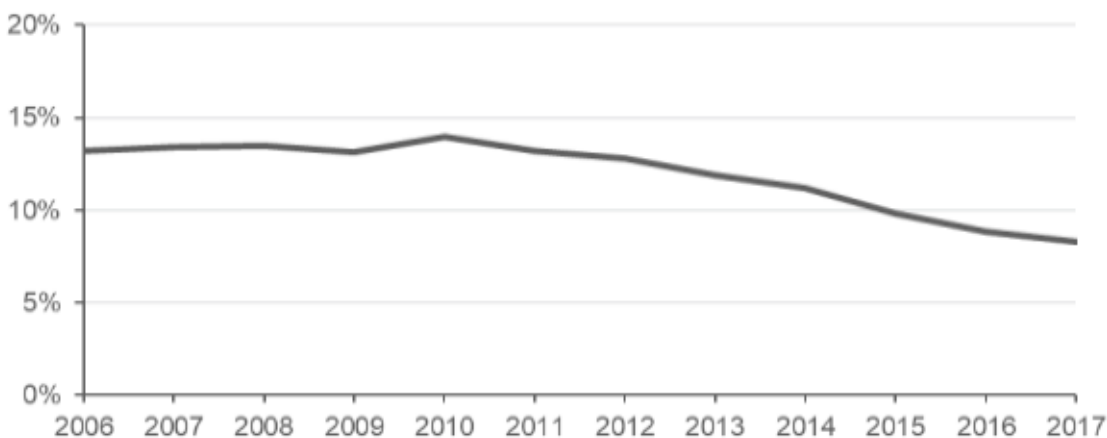


Source: Labour Force Survey, Q4 2018

9% of all children in England (around 1 million children) were living in workless households in the fourth quarter of 2018. The measure has seen a continued annual decrease since 2010 with around 600,000 fewer children living in workless households than in 2010.

Statutory measure 2: children living in long-term workless households in England

Proportion of children living in long-term workless households in England, 2006 to 2017



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2017

8% of all children in England (around 900,000 children) were in long-term workless households in 2017. The measure has seen a continued decrease since 2010 with around 500,000 fewer children living in long-term workless households than in 2010.

Details and methodology

Children in workless households

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 measure is based on the fourth quarter (October to December) for each year and captures the proportion of children living in households where all adults aged 16 or over are workless.

A workless household is defined as one 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. Economically inactive members may be unavailable to work because of family commitments, retirement or study, or unable to work through sickness or disability.

Further details can be found in the Office for National Statistics (ONS) publication on working and workless households in the UK:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworklesshouseholds/octobertodecember2018>

Children in long-term workless households

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

The measure captures the proportion of children living in households where all adults aged 16 or over have been workless for at least twelve months.

A long-term workless household is defined as one where all adults, aged 16 years and over, are currently economically inactive or unemployed (workless), and these adults left their last job at least 12 months ago or have never worked (in a paid job).

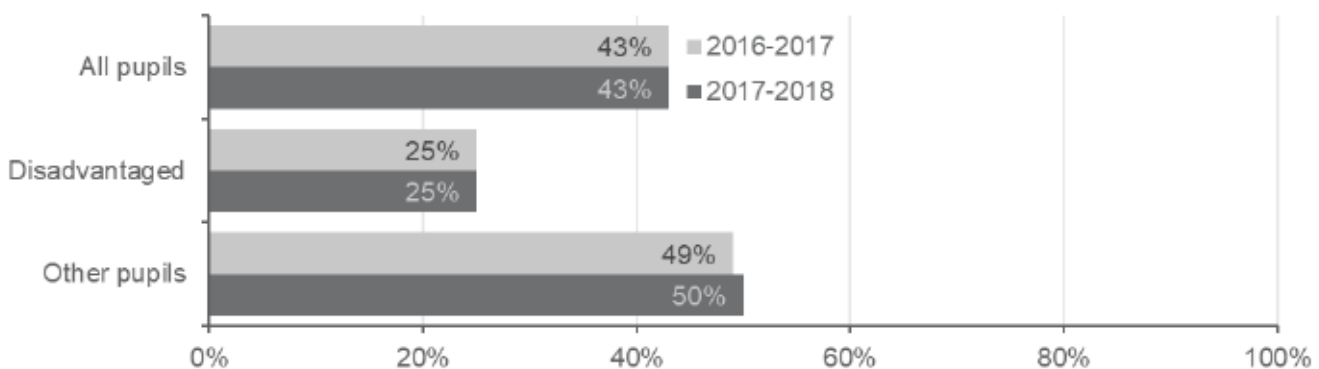
Further details can be found in the ONS publication on Children in long-term workless households:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/childrenlivinginlongtermworklesshouseholdsintheuk2017>

Educational attainment

Statutory measures 3 and 4: the educational attainment of children and disadvantaged children in England at the end of Key Stage 4

Proportion of pupils in state-funded schools achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs in England, 2016/17 to 2017/18



Source: Key Stage 4 attainment data (England)

In 2017/18, 43% of all pupils achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs. This is the same percentage as the previous year.

In 2017/18, 25% of pupils who were disadvantaged achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs. This is the same percentage as the previous year.

Reformed GCSEs in English language, English literature and maths were taught in schools in England from September 2015. The first results were issued in August 2017. Therefore, these figures are not comparable to earlier years.

Details and methodology

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 (from year 6 to year 11)
- 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.

The data is created from:

- School census records
- Qualification entries
- Results collected from awarding organisations

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The data includes pupils in state-funded schools who have reached the end of Key Stage 4 (KS4) studies in the academic year.

KS4 is the legal term for the two years of school education which incorporate GCSEs, and other examinations when pupils are typically aged between 14 and 16. In 2016/17, pupils first sat reformed GCSEs in English language, English literature and maths. These were graded on a scale of 9 to 1, rather than A* to G to allow more differentiation between grades and more clearly recognise the achievements of high-attaining students.

The Department for Education recognises the proportion of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths as a 'strong pass' for the purposes of school accountability. This is part of their measures to improve standards in schools and is used as the headline measure of KS4 attainment for children and disadvantaged children in England.

Further details can be found in the Department for Education's publication on Key Stage 4 and multi-academy trust performance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-gcses-key-stage-4>

The disadvantage gap index: the attainment of disadvantaged pupils relative to others

New GCSEs in English and maths were first sat by pupils in 2016/17 and these cannot be compared to historic results. Therefore, the disadvantage gap index is used as a supplementary measure at KS4 to assess how disadvantaged pupils are achieving in comparison to other pupils, and if the difference between the two groups of pupils is narrowing. Because it relies on ranked data and not actual grades, the measure can be calculated in the same way while GCSEs are being reformed and enables consistent comparisons over time.

The disadvantage gap index ranks all pupils' attainment in English and maths GCSEs and shows whether disadvantaged pupils typically rank lower than other pupils. The lower the disadvantage gap the smaller the difference in performance between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and all other pupils. A disadvantage gap of zero would indicate that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds perform as well as other pupils. The maximum possible gap is 10 (or -10 if disadvantaged pupils perform better than other pupils).

Disadvantage attainment gap index for England, 2011 to 2018



Source: Key Stage 4 attainment data (England).

At KS4, the gap between disadvantaged and all other pupils has remained broadly stable between 2017 and 2018 (increasing by 0.6%). Since 2011 the gap has narrowed by 9.5%.

Details and methodology

The disadvantage gap index summarises the relative attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils. The gap index is more resilient to changes to grading systems and accountability measures so offers greater comparability between years.

The average scores in English and maths GCSEs for all pupils are ranked. The ranks are then separated into those for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and all other pupils. The mean of the ranks for the disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils is found. These two mean ranks are then divided by the total number of pupils and are subtracted before being multiplied by 20 to create the disadvantage gap index.

$$\text{Disadvantage Gap Index} = \left(\frac{\text{Mean rank}_{\text{all other pupils}}}{\text{total pupils}} - \frac{\text{Mean rank}_{\text{disadvantaged pupils}}}{\text{total pupils}} \right) \times 20$$

For further details, see the accompanying methodology for the gap index:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/measuring-disadvantaged-pupils-attainment-gaps-over-time>

How educational attainment at KS4 will continue to be reported

Due to the ongoing reforms of GCSEs, 2019 is the first year that statutory measures 3 and 4 can be compared over time. As the reforms continue the statutory measures will evolve to include eight qualifications and not just English language, literature and maths. This is known as 'Attainment 8' and measures a pupil's average grade across eight subjects. The eight subjects fit into three groups:

1. English and maths - Maths is double-weighted, which means it counts twice. English is also double weighted if both English language and literature are taken.
2. English Baccalaureate (EBacc) - The three highest scores from the English Baccalaureate (combined science, single sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages) are counted.
3. Open - The three highest scores from further qualifications which could be GCSEs (including English language or literature (if not counted in the English slot)), further GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other technical awards from the Department for Education approved list.

Full details of Attainment 8 can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>

Financial year	Publication date	Exams taken	KS4 education indicator	Gap index
2018/19	KS4: Jan 2019	Summer 2018	% pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs for disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils	Yes
2019/20	KS4: Jan 2020	Summer 2019	% pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs for disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils	Review use at KS4
2020/21	KS4: Jan 2021	Summer 2020	Attainment 8 for disadvantaged and all other pupils	To be confirmed

References

Parental worklessness

Office for National Statistics (2019) *Statistical Bulletin, Working and workless households in the UK: Oct to Dec 2018*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworklesshouseholds/octobertodecember2018>

Office for National Statistics (2018) *Children living in long-term workless households in the UK: 2017*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/childrenlivinginlongtermworklesshouseholdsintheuk2017>

Educational attainment

Department for Education (2019) *Key stage 4 and multi-academy trust performance, 2018 (revised)*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-4-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised>

