



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# Workless households and educational attainment statutory indicators



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

March 2018



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## 2 Workless households and educational attainment statutory indicators

# 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 (see page 4);
- Children living in long-term workless households in England (see page 4);
- The educational attainment of children in England at the end of Key Stage 4 (see page 6);
- The educational attainment of disadvantaged children in England at the end of Key Stage 4 (see page 6).

It also specified that the report must set out how the Secretary of State has interpreted the following terms for the purposes of the report:

- (a) child;
- (b) household;
- (c) worklessness;
- (d) long-term worklessness;
- (e) educational attainment;
- (f) disadvantage.

Please see page 11 for these definitions.

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. Please see the following link for further information on the Life Chances Act 2010:

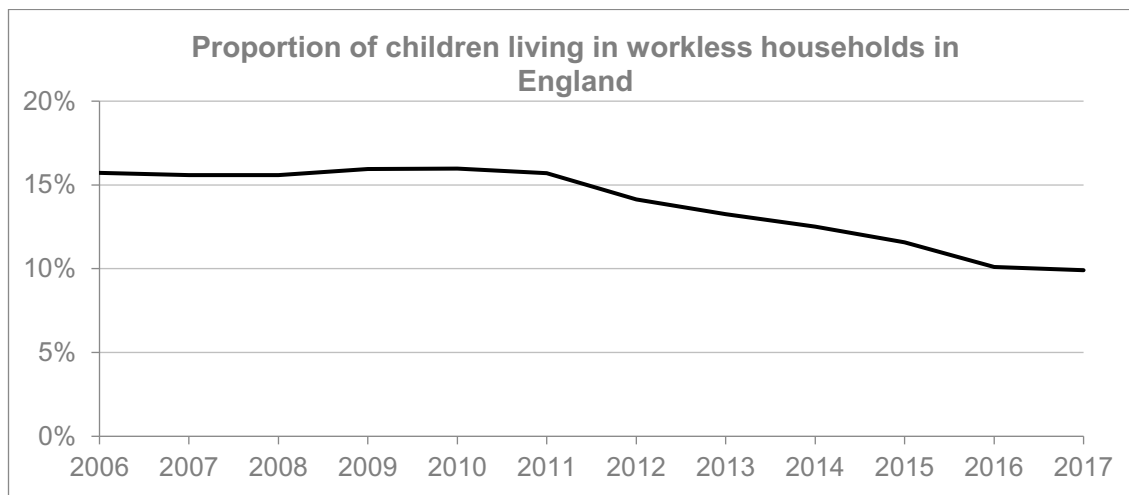
**<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/9/part/A1>**

Please refer to the Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families evidence base to view the latest available data on all nine indicators and underlying measures used to track progress in tackling the disadvantages that affect families' and children's outcomes, available from:

**<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-lives-helping-workless-families-evidence-base>**

# Parental worklessness

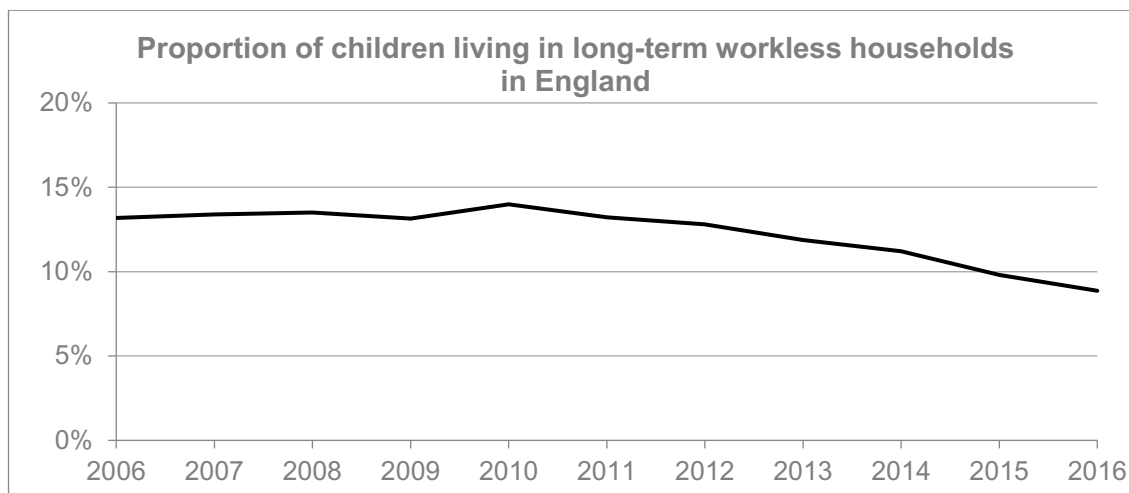
## Statutory measure 1: children living in workless households in England



Source: Labour Force Survey, Q4 2017

**10 per cent of all children in England** (around 1.1 million children) were living in workless households **in the fourth quarter of 2017**. The measure has seen a continued annual decrease since 2010.

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



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2016

**9 per cent of all children in England** (around 930,000 children) were in long-term workless households **in 2016**. The measure has seen a continued decrease since 2010.

## Details and methodology

### Children in workless households

Figures are based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS) which is conducted quarterly with a sample size of around 100,000 people. The measure is based on the fourth quarter of the Labour Force Survey data for each year, and is not comparable quarter-on-quarter because of seasonal fluctuations. The measure captures the proportion of children living in households where all adults aged 16 or over are workless.

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.

Further details can be found in the accompanying ONS publication, available here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworklesshouseholds/octobertodecember2017>

### Children in long-term workless households

Figures are based on the Annual Population Survey (APS) which boosts the quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS) sample size to around 300,000 people. The APS uses LFS waves and the Local Labour Force Survey (LLFS) samples to provide a rolling annual survey each quarter. This allows additional breakdowns, such as breakdowns by disability, ethnicity and family status. The annual survey used for this measure is based on a rolling calendar year.

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 a household 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
- never worked (in a paid job).

The definition of long-term workless households does not necessarily imply that adults within them are also long-term unemployed using the Eurostat and International Labour Organisation definition of long-term unemployment. Some adults may also have been out of work for 12 months or more, but had periods of inactivity such as looking after family and home, or illness, during that time. All these types of economic inactivity are counted as long-term worklessness.

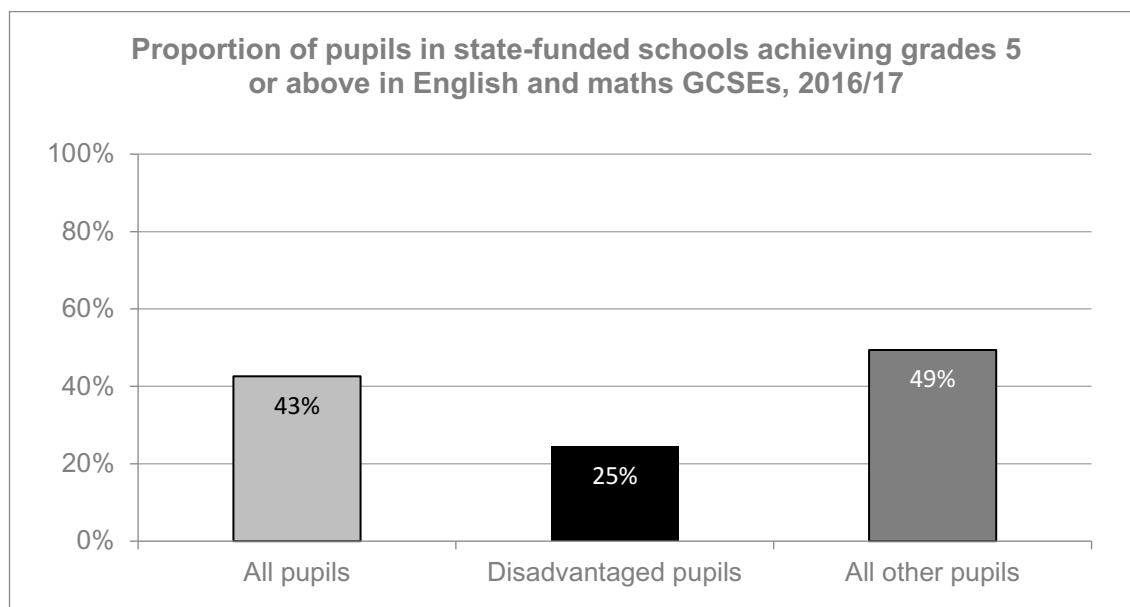
For further details, see the accompanying ONS publication, available here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/childrenlivinginlongtermworklesshouseholdsuk2016>



# Educational attainment

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



Source: *Key Stage 4 attainment data (England)*

In 2016/17, 43 per cent of all pupils achieved grades 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs. In the same period, 25 per cent of disadvantaged pupils and 49 per cent of all other pupils achieved grades 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs.

## Details and methodology

### Trends

**In 2016/17, 49 per cent of pupils in state-funded schools who were not disadvantaged achieved this threshold compared to 25 per cent of disadvantaged pupils.**<sup>1</sup> Owing to system reform, the figures are not comparable to earlier years. Around 27 per cent of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 (KS4) in 2016/17 were defined as disadvantaged.

### Further detail

In 2017, pupils sat reformed GCSEs in English language, English literature and maths for the first time, graded on a 9 to 1 scale, rather than A\*–G. As part of the drive to raise standards in schools, the Department for Education introduced a higher threshold for attainment in English and maths in 2017. When measuring school performance, the Department now reports the proportion of pupils achieving a 'strong pass' or grade 5 or above in English and maths. The Department for Education also reports the proportion of pupils achieving a 'standard pass' or grade 4 or above in English and maths. This is comparable with those achieving a grade C or higher under the old system.

Information on attainment at the end of KS4 is derived from school census records, qualification entries and results collected from awarding organisations. Information on attainment is presented for pupils in state-funded schools who have reached the end of KS4 study in the academic year, and may include qualifications obtained in previous years. A strong pass is currently defined as attainment in English and maths at grade 5 or above. GCSEs and certain approved equivalent qualifications are included. Further information on the data sources, their coverage, the quality and how the data is validated and processed can be found in the quality and methodology information document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2016-to-2017>

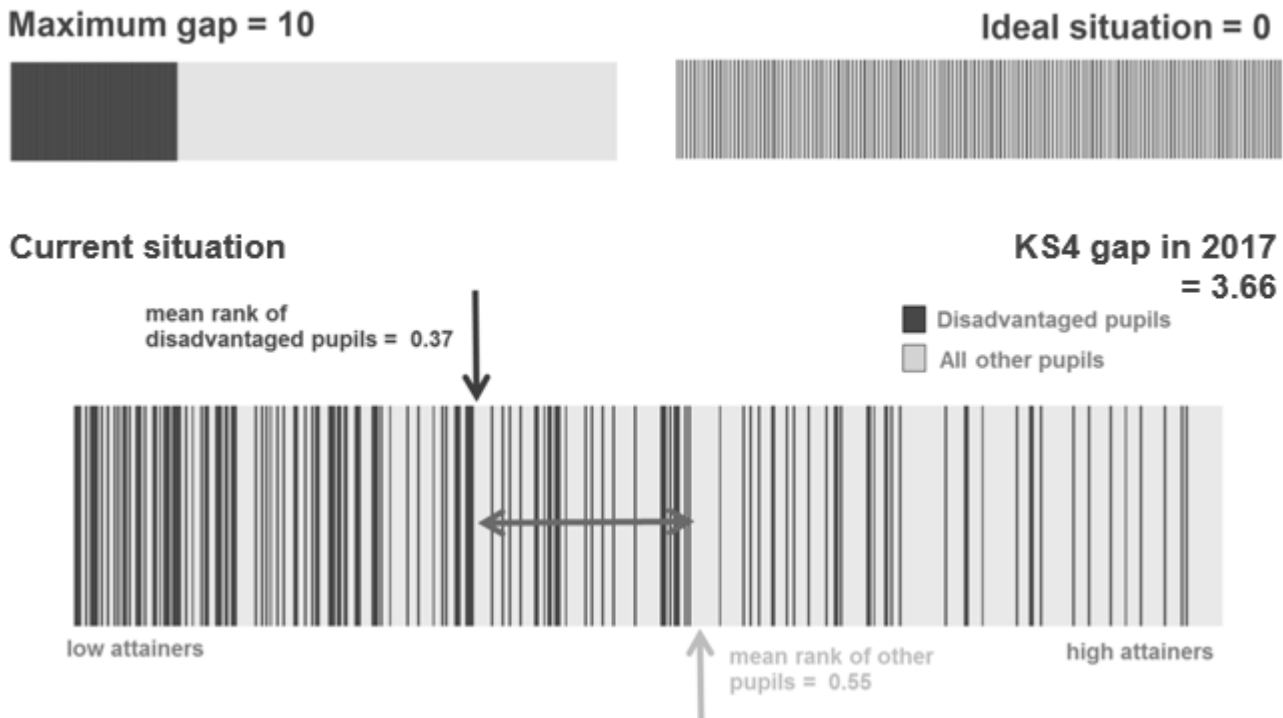
## Gap index (attainment of disadvantaged pupils relative to others)

**This measure assesses the relative difference in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and others. It compares ordering of scores in English and maths assessments to overcome changes to grading and expected standards between years. But unlike the headline measures, it cannot tell us whether more pupils are reaching the expected standard.** The gap index measure is based on the same assessments as the headline education performance measures at KS4.

<sup>1</sup> Pupils are defined as disadvantaged if they are known to have been eligible for free school meals in the past six years (from year 6 to year 11), if they are recorded as having been looked after for at least one day or if they are recorded as having been adopted from care or ceased to be looked after because of a special guardianship order, a child arrangement order or a residence order. These measures contain only those pupils who are defined as being at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2016/17.

## The disadvantaged gap index

Bars illustrate how disadvantaged (dark bars) and other pupils (light bars) would line up in order of their average English and maths scores:



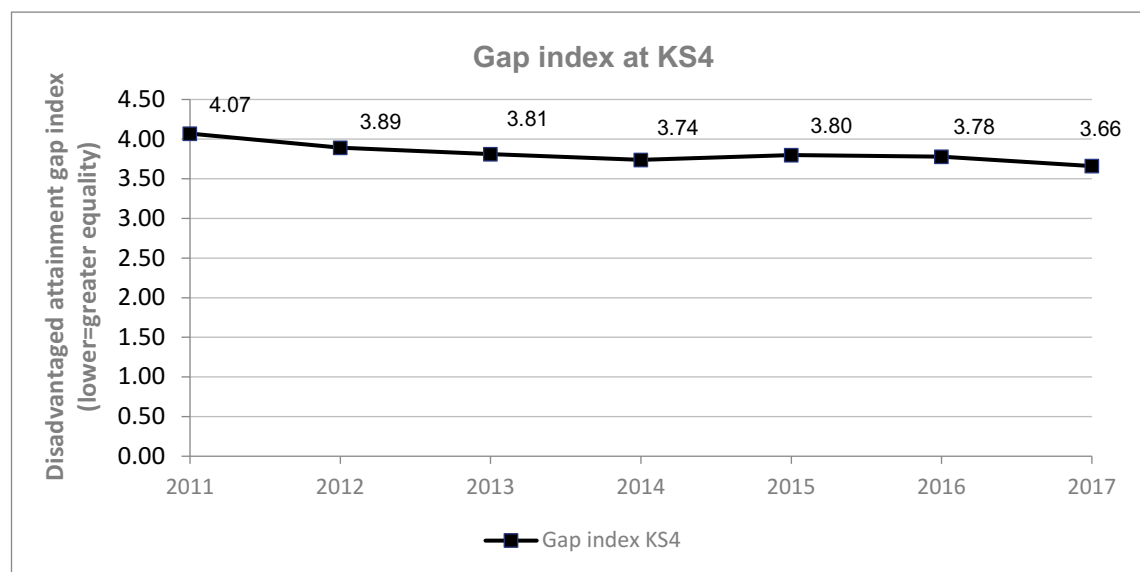
Pupils' average point scores are ranked. The mean rank for disadvantaged pupils was 0.37, meaning the average pupil was just over a third of the way up the distribution, while that of other pupils was 0.55, more than halfway up the distribution. The disadvantaged pupils' attainment gap index multiplies the difference between these by 20:  $(0.54979 - 0.36676) \times 20 = 3.66$

Because it relies on ranked data, not actual grades achieved, the measure can be calculated in the same way during a period of GCSE reform to enable consistent comparisons over time. The minimum possible gap is 0 while the maximum gap is 10 (or -10 if disadvantaged pupils were ahead).

More details of the methodology for the gap index is available here:

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

## Current trends



Source: National pupil database and Key Stage 4 attainment data (England).

At KS4, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others decreased in all but one year since 2011, decreasing by 10 per cent overall.

This measure shows whether disadvantaged pupils are catching up or getting left behind. It cannot tell us whether more pupils are reaching the expected standard, or whether average attainment is improving, just that the **average positions** of 'disadvantaged' and 'other' pupils in the distribution have become closer together.

## How educational attainment at KS4 will be reported in future years

Continuing important reforms to strengthen accountability, qualifications and the curriculum mean that year-on-year comparability of the headline KS4 indicator will not be possible until 2019 onwards. Given the range of reforms that are taking effect, the gap index will be used 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 improving. We will review the use of the interim gap index measure as part of the indicator suite once meaningful comparisons over time on the headline KS4 indicator are possible. This is summarised in the table below.

Financial year	Publication date	Exams taken	KS4 education indicator	Gap index
2017/18	KS4: Jan 2018	Summer 2017	% pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs for disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils	Yes
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	Attainment 8 <sup>2</sup> for disadvantaged 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

<sup>2</sup> Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including:

- maths (double weighted) and English (double weighted, if both English language and English literature are entered)
- 3 qualifications that count towards the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)
- 3 further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or technical awards from the DfE approved list

See link below for full details

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

# 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 terms in the report. See a full list of defined terms used for each statutory indicator:

- (a) Child – child is defined as:
- for the purpose of the workless households measures, children under 16 years old;<sup>3</sup>
  - for the purposes of the educational attainment measures, pupils in state-funded schools at the end of Key Stage 4, typically those starting the academic year aged 15;<sup>4</sup>
- (b) Household – households where at least one person is aged 16–64;<sup>5</sup>
- (c) Worklessness – all adults aged 16 or over who are either economically inactive or unemployed;<sup>6</sup>
- (d) Long-term worklessness – all adults aged 16 or over who are either unemployed or economically inactive and have either been out of work for 12 months or more, or never worked (in a paid job);<sup>7</sup>
- (e) Educational attainment – proportion of pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths at GCSE;<sup>8</sup>
- (f) Disadvantage – pupils are defined as disadvantaged if they are known to have been eligible for free school meals in the past six years (from year 6 to year 11), if they are recorded as having been looked after for at least one day or if they are recorded as having been adopted from care or ceased to be looked after because of a special guardianship order, a child arrangement order or a residence order.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This is the ONS definition. For more information, the Working and Workless Households publication can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworkless-households/octobertodecember2017>

<sup>4</sup> This is in accordance with the Department for Education's definition. For more information, the Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England, 2016 to 2017, publication can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2016-to-2017>

<sup>5</sup> This is the ONS definition. For more information, the Working and Workless Households publication can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworkless-households/octobertodecember2017>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> This is the ONS definition. For more information, the Children Living in Long-term Workless Households publication can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/childrenlivinginlongtermworklesshouseholdsuk2016>

<sup>8</sup> This is in accordance with the Department for Education's headline accountability measures for schools. For more information, the Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England, 2016 to 2017, publication can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2016-to-2017>

<sup>9</sup> This is in accordance with the Department for Education's definition. For more information, the Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England, 2016 to 2017, publication can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2016-to-2017>

# References

## Parental worklessness – statistics

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## Educational attainment – statistics

Department for Education (2018) Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2016 to 2017. SRF 01/2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2016-to-2017>

