

Opportunity for every child Thurrock Council Child Poverty Plan 2015-2020

Further information about this strategy, including how to become involved in ending child poverty in Thurrock, can be accessed at <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/strategies/key-strategies-and-policies/child-poverty>



Thurrock Council – Key Objectives

Create a place for learning and opportunity

Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity

Build pride, responsibility and respect to create safer opportunities

Improve health and well-being

Protect and promote our clean and green environment

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Introduction

Thurrock wants every child to enjoy the best opportunities and is firmly committed to ending child poverty. This strategy and action plan updates and builds upon the Thurrock Child Poverty Strategy 2011-2014, which set the following strategic priorities:

- To increase parental employment and skills by providing access to adult training and skills development through the Wishes adult skills Programme and progression to adult learning opportunities.
- To increase benefit take-up by improving high quality advice and guidance targeted to areas where there is a high prevalence of poverty and workless households.
- To reduce attainment gaps between children living in poverty and those who don't by targeting school improvement to those areas and supporting parents to be able to support their children through, for example, adult learning opportunities.
- To reduce the health inequalities faced by some families by developing a targeted, integrated approach to local delivery of services.
- To support the need to prevent homelessness from occurring by addressing the underlying causes of homelessness through effective partnerships, collaboration and the coordination of services.

Since 2011, real progress has been achieved through partnership between professionals working with the whole community, but there is much more which still needs to be done.

Our vision

We want Thurrock to be a place where every child has the same chance to achieve his or her potential; where no child lacks food or the basic necessities of family life, or lives in poor housing, or in families where parents are unable to work; where every child attends a good school; and where every child has ready access to a range of leisure, cultural and sporting opportunities.

Strategic principles

The plan is based on the following principles:

- Child poverty is the responsibility of the whole community and we invite employers, faith groups, community and voluntary organisations and local residents to work with us to achieve our vision.
- Deeply embedded inequalities exist in our communities and this plan complements and builds on the work of Thurrock Fairness Review, aiming to reduce inequality and create social mobility.
- Children live in families and we will listen to families about what they need.
- Employment is a main route out of poverty but in order to address the growing issue of in-work poverty we need to ensure that parents receive at least a living wage and have the support to increase their skills.
- Every Council service should have ending child poverty as a key priority and all services should understand their role and contribution to the aims of the plan. Excellence in delivery will be achieved and maintained.

Resources

The strategy and plan must be cost-effective, sustainable and affordable. The main support will come from public resources for children, families and communities, but a key aim will be to mobilise further resources, including resources in kind, from all sources and sectors across the borough.

National Context

The government's approach is set out in the Child Poverty 2014-2017 strategy.¹ It seeks to reduce and end child poverty by:

- supporting families into work and increasing their earnings;
- improving living standards; and
- preventing poor children becoming poor adults through raising their educational attainment.

To enable more parents to move into employment, the government proposes to improve the qualifications of parents through Adult Apprenticeships; offer tailored support to lone parents to move into work; encourage flexible working and support skills needs so that parents of larger families can have work which fits with their childcare responsibilities.

There are also commitments in the strategy to tackling low pay, through the minimum wage and by reducing the tax burden on poorer families; and to reducing living costs through caps on water and energy bills, free school meals for all infant school pupils, breakfast clubs in deprived areas, free fruit and vegetables at school for children aged four to six, free home to school transport, a freeze on fuel duty and the building of new houses.

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/177031/CM-8061.pdf

Child Poverty Targets

The Child Poverty Act 2010 sets three income-related targets to be met by 2020. These are:

1. Relative low income target of less than 10 per cent Before Housing Costs (BHC), by 2020/21
2. Absolute low income target of less than 5 per cent BHC by 2020/21
3. Combined low income and material deprivation target of less than 5 percent by 2020/21.
4. Persistent poverty target of less than 7 per cent of children living in households in relative low income for at least three out of the last four years by 2020/21.²

The Households Below Average Income (HBAI) publication provides the definitive national measure of relative child poverty as set out in the Child Poverty Act 2010. HBAI is based on data from the Family Resources Survey meaning that the sample sizes are insufficient for analysis at the local level. The proxy measure for local areas is the Children in low-income families local measure - the proportion of children living in families that are either in receipt of out-of-work benefits or in receipt of tax credits with a reported income which is less than 60 per cent of national median income.

Child Poverty in Thurrock – needs assessment

A full needs assessment has been undertaken in Thurrock and can be seen at <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/strategies/key-strategies-and-policies/child-poverty/needs-analysis>.

In summary, the key findings³ are:

- A fifth of children in Thurrock live in relative poverty. 7955 children live in families with an income less than 60% of national median income. In broad terms, child poverty has remained at much the same level since 2008.
- The majority, 7210, were aged 0-16, 5435 were aged 0-10; 2760 were aged 0-4.
- Child poverty is slightly above the national average (18.6%) and significantly above the level for Eastern region (15.1%).

To meet the 2020 target of less than 10 per cent of children living in relative poverty we would have to reduce this category in Thurrock, by at least 4,000 children - more to take account of population growth.

² For an explanation of income targets see Annex A

³ HMRC 2014: Children in Low Income Families Local measure for child poverty, snapshot at 31st August 2012

Drivers of child poverty

Unemployment: 86 per cent of children in poverty in Thurrock are living in families in receipt of Income Support or Job seekers Allowance.

Low pay: Average weekly earnings in Thurrock are below that for England. There is a gender pay gap.

Family structure: Three-quarters of poor children live in one-parent families and 43 per cent live in families with 3 or more children. Lone parents and parents with larger families face particular barriers in obtaining and sustaining employment.

Qualifications: Children in families where adults have no qualifications are twice as likely to be in poverty as children overall.⁴ More than a quarter of adult residents in Thurrock have no academic or vocational qualifications.

Disability: Children in families with a disabled adult are over a third more likely to be in poverty than children in families with no disabled adult.⁵ Parents of children with disabilities also face barriers to employment. There are more than 3,000 households in Thurrock with dependent children and at least one person with a long term health problem or disability.

Local distribution of child poverty

Child poverty exists everywhere in Thurrock but is more concentrated in some wards and in particular neighbourhoods (LSOAs).

Six wards account for more than half of all children living in poverty in Thurrock. Child poverty is highest in Tilbury St Chads; Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park; Chadwell St Marys; West Thurrock and South Stifford; Belhus; and Grays Riverside.

Ward	Children in poverty	% rate
Tilbury St Chads	635	33.9%
Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park	760	33.6%
Chadwell St Marys	740	30.5%
West Thurrock and South Stifford	815	25.7%
Belhus	630	23.2%
Grays Riverside	710	23.1% ⁶

⁴ Households Below Average Income, An analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 – 2012/13, Department for Work and Pensions, 2013 DWP 2014

⁵ Ibid

⁶ HMRC Children in low-income families local measure

Child poverty by lower super output area

Wards within Thurrock can be split down into smaller areas – Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAS). Thurrock has 98 LSOAS but just 12 LSOAS account for 31 per cent of all children living in poverty in Thurrock.

The worst affected LSOA, in Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, has 30 times the numbers of poor children in poverty as the lowest LSOA in Corringham and Fobbing.

Inequality

Those LSOAs with the highest levels of child poverty share a number of common characteristics, including lower average household incomes; higher levels of unemployment; lower skills; poorer health; more one-parent families; more large families; and fewer households with cars.

These structural inequalities, together with the impact of the recession and cuts in public spending, have exacerbated difficulties for families on the lowest incomes.

Some Thurrock families now make use of food banks in order to eat.

Among families which have had their benefits capped, 96 per cent were families with three or more children and two-thirds were lone parents

Data on fuel poverty at parliamentary constituency level show that an estimated 3410 households in Thurrock are fuel poor, with 2637 households in the constituency of South Basildon and East Thurrock.

Effects of living in poverty

There is a clear link between poor health and disadvantage leading to significantly lower life expectancy in deprived areas. Child health in Thurrock is relatively good in relation to a number of national indicators but health is poorer in more disadvantaged wards and LSOAs in relation to:

- Life expectancy at birth
- Infant mortality
- Breastfeeding rates
- Teenage pregnancies
- Childhood obesity

School Attainment

Education is one of the main routes out of poverty and how well poor children do at school has the biggest impact on their future incomes. Thurrock has successfully raised attainment at all key stages and narrowed the gap between disadvantaged children and the rest, but further progress needs to be made and not all children yet go to a good early education and care provider or a good school.

Ofsted, in 2014, noted that in Eastern Region, a child in the most deprived area is three times more likely than a child in the least deprived area to go to a school that is less than good.

Housing

Affordable housing is a challenge for many Thurrock residents and within the housing market there has been a growth in private rental accommodation. A national report by Shelter in 2011 found that close to a third of private rented homes contained children, and more than half lived in households falling below the poverty line, after housing costs.⁷

Family Well-being

In 2012 a joint report by Action for Children, The Children's Society and the NSPCC warned that the most vulnerable families with children were being disproportionately affected by tax and benefit changes and significantly affected by other cuts in spending. The report highlighted a projected doubling of the number of children living in extremely vulnerable families by 2015.⁸

Thurrock has a high rate of children subject to child protection plans, and it has increased by 41 per cent since 2012/13. The number of Looked After Children in Thurrock has been increasing over recent years and is projected to increase further.

Social Mobility

In England, in 2010/11, 35 per cent of young people entered higher education by age 19. In Thurrock, the figure was one of the lowest in England – 23 per cent. Only 5 per cent of disadvantaged young people enter higher education by age 19.

⁷ Shelter Report: Private Rent Watch –2011

⁸:<http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/tcs/intheeyeofthestorm.pdf>

Thurrock Child Poverty Priorities

Over-arching priority

Our over-arching priority is to reduce and eliminate child poverty. At the heart of our approach will be inclusion and learning. We will support vulnerable families wherever they live, but at the same time work with local communities to develop and implement a neighbourhood approach to child poverty.

We will consult with families within neighbourhoods about the best ways of moving forward, inviting them to be active participants and co-producers. We have already made a good start with this through the creation of community hubs, through our community engagement programme and by recruiting and training parent volunteers to work in our children's centres.

Priority 1 Develop neighbourhood-focused approaches

What we have achieved:

- We are committed to devolving advice services through community hubs in Ockendon, Aveley and Chadwell St Marys. We want to develop these as central points where people can get good quality advice and support about poverty issues, about employment and training and improving coordination at the first point of contact.

What we will do next:

- Community hubs will co-ordinate their anti-poverty work with schools and children's centres. Together, they will provide advice services and education in the community about poverty issues. They will invite other community organisations, housing associations, faith groups and community leaders to become partners in tackling child poverty at neighbourhood level.
- Community hubs and their partners will organise open meetings in the most affected wards, inviting residents to advise on and become involved in the delivery of neighbourhood plans.
- Staff and volunteers working in community hubs, children's centres, schools and other key locations will be trained to offer good quality advice and support around poverty issues and to signpost people to further sources of help where appropriate. We will train at least 50 per cent of those front-line staff in the first eighteen months of this strategy.

Priority 2 Create pathways into employment

What we have achieved:

- Thurrock is a dynamic partner within the Thames Gateway regeneration. Our Community Strategy is committed to equipping people with the skills needed to enter the workforce and maintain employment; delivering new sites for employment to create jobs; creating

quality housing and enhancing the environment; and improving infrastructure to enable delivery of new employment.

- The Thames Gateway delivery plan aims for at least 225,000 new jobs of which the indicative job growth identified for Thurrock by 2021 is 26,000 new jobs. The Thurrock Economic Strategy seeks to achieve this employment growth by focusing on existing core sectors and new opportunities.
- We are committed to reducing unemployment among young people and among those adults who are most marginalised in employment terms, because of disability and ill-health, family structure or poor qualifications. It is essential that all residents are enabled to have full participation in our growing economic prosperity.
- We are already working with a group of local organisations and businesses to create 300 new jobs and 100 apprenticeships in the borough. Through the Social Values Framework, Council contractors are being encouraged to contribute to the creation of new jobs.
- Volunteering and other transitional employment experiences can prepare people for work and help bridge any gap between their work experience and the current requirements of employers. Our Community Engagement Programme currently provides 250 opportunities for local people to volunteer.

What we will do next:

- Lone parents and those with three or more children face particular challenges in combining work with family responsibilities and in finding affordable childcare; challenges which may be exacerbated by low or no qualifications or poor health. Using and extending the Wishes model we will mainstream joint work with Jobcentre Plus and training providers in our children's centres, providing high quality advice and support for jobseekers, Wishes job clubs and tailored support plans to help families make the transition into work.
- We will bring together all of the agencies currently providing support for employment and training to consider ways of radically transforming the take-up of further education and employment preparation opportunities in the most disadvantaged communities. We will charge each community hub to undertake job fairs in their local communities, bringing employers, providers and training agencies together in a venue accessible to local families and other residents. Retired skilled workers will be recruited to act as volunteers, supporting job clubs and mentoring young people and parents who are seeking employment.
- We will maintain and extend our community engagement programme. We recognise also that social enterprises have a role to play in the delivery of public services and we will continue and extend our business support for new social enterprises.

Priority 3 Maximise income and raise living standards

What we have achieved:

- Employment remains the most effective route out of poverty, but to be effective requires fair wages and contractual conditions. As a fair employer, Thurrock has adopted the Living Wage for council employees.
- Thurrock is one of the lead partners of the new Essex Energy Consortium, enabling both the private and public sector housing bodies, to take advantage of the Government's Green Deal and Energy Commitment Obligation funding (ECO) and to reduce energy costs.
- Thurrock Well Homes is a scheme to improve the housing conditions and health and well-being of residents in private accommodation. The pilot is on offer in Grays, Tilbury and West Thurrock and South Stifford. Participating households are visited by an adviser who can put them in touch with health and lifestyle services, or advise on home repairs which may be needed, including faulty gas or electrical installations, and refer clients to sources of energy advice.

What we will do next:

- Through our Social Values Framework we will seek to ensure that our contractors and sub-contractors are also committed to the Living Wage. With business partners, we will consider the extent of in-work poverty among families in poverty and the scope, in particular, for increasing women's earnings.
- We will work with a range of expert bodies and through our community hubs to ensure that people have accurate advice and support in relation to their entitlement to benefits and tax credits. We will also support families to deal with the impact of welfare reforms, particularly one-parent families and larger families who have been most affected by benefit caps. We will develop a protocol for the child and family workforce on responding to families in acute need because of a reduction or stoppage in benefits.
- We will respond to food poverty by supporting food banks and the distribution of Healthy Start vouchers. We will ensure that each of our children's centres offers education about eating and cooking on a limited budget. We will explore other possible actions to counter food poverty e.g. food-buying cooperative.
- We will develop financial capability through our partnership with a range of expert bodies and through our Community Hubs. We will encourage schools to provide financial capability education for young people.

Priority 4 Support parents to upgrade their skills

What we have achieved:

- We aim to support all adults to raise their skills and qualification, but within this, focus on raising the qualifications of poorer parents. Parental education has been shown consistently to be a key factor in predicting children's achievement. By enabling parents to become better qualified, we also raise their prospects of better paid employment.
- We have already made considerable progress in raising the skills of adults in our local communities through the Wishes project, through the devolved Community Hubs, through the provision of Family learning and by developing our children's centres as centres of learning for the whole family.

What we will do next:

- We aim, by 2020, to reduce the percentage of adults lacking any qualifications to at least the English average and to reduce inequalities between wards. We will also try to eliminate barriers for those parents whose highest qualification is at Level 2 who wish to upgrade their qualifications.
- We will work with training providers to ensure that Skills for Life courses and Level 1, 2 and 3 courses are accessible to adults with family responsibilities and that a robust system is in place to collect and monitor participation and achievement data relating to adults with dependent children.
- We will undertake focused research with parents in the twelve most disadvantaged neighbourhoods to overcome the barriers to entering education or skills training.
- We will recruit and train twenty adult literacy and numeracy volunteers to mentor and support adults at the early stages of returning to learning.
- We will encourage parents to share skills through the development of parent-led study groups in children's centres or other groups formed for this purpose.

Priority 5 Continue to narrow the gap in achievement between children on low incomes and children from more affluent families.

What we have achieved:

- Thurrock is now in the top 25 per cent of local authorities in the East of England for the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and within the region has the highest proportion of secondary schools which are at least good.⁹ At Key Stage 2, the picture is also one of continuously improving results.
- A new service offer is available to vulnerable pupils including new Service Level Agreements for all targeted services to children and young people with SEN/LDD.

⁹ Ofsted2014 East of England Regional report

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- We continue to work to narrow and eliminate the gap between children from all socio-economic groups at each key stage of their schooling and to narrow the current gap between girls and boys.
 - We continue to focus on Foundation Stage (FS), Key Stage 1 (KS1), Key Stage 2 (KS2) and Key Stage 4 (KS4) outcomes with the aim of there being no schools below the floor standard.
 - We continue to increase our capacity to provide high quality early education for two year olds in line with national targets

What we will do next:

- We will ensure that all early education providers and primary schools are helped to achieve at least a good Ofsted judgement. Our first priority in this will be to first ensure that no primary school or early years provider with higher than average numbers of disadvantaged children falls below the standard of good.
- We will work with schools and early years providers to monitor the use of the pupil premium as a means of raising the attainment and aspiration of disadvantaged pupils at the same time engaging their parents in their own learning and support for their children's learning.
- We will ask schools to examine and monitor their admission policies to ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are not unduly clustered or segregated within a relatively small number of schools.
- We will increase social mobility by supporting young people to gain qualifications at Level 3 and 4 and ensure that more young people enter higher education. With our schools, we will develop an effective awareness campaign to encourage children from low-income families to gain Level 4 qualifications and to enter higher education.

Priority 6 Support the health of children affected by poverty and reduce inequalities in health outcomes

What we have achieved:

- Support and delivery to parents in Thurrock focusing on premature babies and low birth weight is delivered through the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP). Thurrock's children's centres also play an integral role in supporting parents both before and after the child is born, and offer a range of supportive services to do this
- Through a Healthy Child Programme, we offer every family a programme of screening tests, immunisations, developmental reviews, and information and guidance to support parenting and health choices. We have robust systems in place to ensure:
 - Improved vaccination uptake
 - Improved screening uptake
 - Improved breastfeeding prevalence

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- We have reduced levels of obesity in Reception age and Year six age children. We have also reduced the prevalence of teenage pregnancies.
 - We have established a range of services for children with disabilities, aimed at supporting them and their families. These include the Early Support Programme, Educational Psychology, Sensory Support, Portage, Sunshine Centre and School for Parents at Beacon Hill School; the Early offer of Help; Social Care services; help with payments and personal budgets and short breaks.

What we will do next:

- We will work with children centres and schools to improve family diets and raise awareness about nutrition and access to more affordable food. We will also work in partnership with schools around raising the awareness of the importance of increasing physical activities. We intend to look at the close proximity of takeaways to schools in Thurrock and work with food outlets within close proximity to schools to promote healthier options.
- We will continue to work with Community Mums and Dads, Parents 1st, Coram and Family Nurse Partnership to promote activities to raise awareness of breastfeeding benefits, reducing inequalities and improving access to breastfeeding support for women in low-income groups. We will be commissioning a new parent breastfeeding service from July 2015.

Priority 7 Provide suitable housing and prevent homelessness

What we have achieved:

- We have an ambitious house-building programme, aiming to create 18,500 new homes in the borough by 2021 and recently secured £4.6 million support from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to fund the building of one and two-bedroom houses and family homes across the borough.
- Through our investment in new homes, we have created a range of employment opportunities including apprenticeships and programmes to offer the long term unemployment job opportunities.
- Homelessness in Thurrock is significantly better than the national average. We have reduced the number of empty homes and have frozen Council Tax.

What we will do next:

- We will continue to deliver high quality housing and services proactively supporting residents to achieve health, wellbeing and employment outcomes.
- Through our housing strategy we plan to create more employment opportunities, at the same time supporting residents to enjoy health and well-being. We will pilot a scheme to enable residents to gain skills through volunteering on refurbishment and redecoration projects.

Priority 8 Remove transport barriers

What we have achieved:

- Thurrock's current transport strategy is pledged to improve accessibility to shops and businesses, education and leisure facilities and other key services in areas of relatively high deprivation, to ensure that those without cars are able to access a wider range of jobs, to upgrade their skills and to enjoy leisure activities on the same terms as residents in other parts of Thurrock.
- Improved access to education is likely to have a positive impact on attendance and achievement rates and may encourage more people to enter further education.
- Core pedestrian and cycle routes, supported by 20mph zones in Tilbury, Grays, West Thurrock, Purfleet and Ockendon will deliver improved accessibility and enhanced health and fitness. Rights of Way improvements will provide access to green space and provide play opportunities for children.
- Improved public transport in deprived wards will create access for non-car owners to hospitals.

What we will do next:

- We will investigate, in the twelve most deprived neighbourhoods the feasibility of recruiting skilled volunteer driving instructors to teach others to drive.
- We will develop car-sharing and volunteer driving schemes to enable residents in the twelve most disadvantaged areas to access further education and training.

Priority 9 Family Well-being

What we have achieved:

- We have established our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as a single point of entry where there is a need for support or where there is a specific concern about the welfare of a child or a young person. MASH will help to ensure early identification of concerns and provisions of help to families; which is vital in promoting children and young people's wellbeing.
- Linked as a function to the MASH is the Early Offer of Help, which is designed to ensure that children and families receive support if they do not meet the threshold criteria for support through statutory social work services, or are stepped down from children's social care services. The aim is to offer appropriate help, which ranges from offering advice and information to parents, carers and partner agencies, signposting families to appropriate services, including parenting support services.
- In our most recent inspections our Youth Offending Service was found to be creditable, and our Safeguarding and our Fostering services were found to be good.

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- The national Troubled Families programme focuses on families with worklessness, poor school attendance and anti-social behaviour as problem features. Thurrock's Troubled Families service is currently working with their 3rd year cohort and the programme is becoming fully embedded into services within the local authority.

What we will do next:

- We will review the implementation of MASH and monitor its impact on children and families. We will also review the provision of services to families and ensure they meet local need and demand. We will implement a strengthening families approach to the child protection conference process.
- We will explore alternative approaches opportunities such as Volunteers in Child Protection, which could be brought into the Early Offer Strategy.
- For children with disabilities we will offer seamless and coordinated support across all agencies, based on early intervention and the prevention of family breakdown.

Priority 10 Work together to share information and maximise impact

What we have achieved:

- As part of the 2011-2014 Child Poverty Strategy we commissioned and provided training aimed at understanding child poverty for staff and managers working in our Early Years, Families and Communities Directorate.
- We have established the Thurrock Fairness Commission to reduce inequalities and make Thurrock a fairer place.

What we will do next:

- With our partners we will develop a shared knowledge of the current support available around poverty issues to enable a consistent and coordinated service at the level of front-line services. We will share developing intelligence about the impact of policy and other events on families most in need to ensure a swift and effective response.
- Through our policy making processes we will ensure that planning, fiscal and other decisions are assessed for their impact on child poverty.
- Through our procurement processes we will ensure that our contractors are aware of our commitment to eliminate child poverty.
- We will provide education for the general public on poverty issues and invite help from the whole community to end child poverty.

Annex A: Child Poverty in the UK

Poverty is the single largest threat to the well-being of children and families and affects every area of a child's development. Child poverty imposes costs on society – estimated to be at least £29 billion a year.¹⁰

2.3 million children in the UK live in poverty; 3.7 million after housing costs are taken into account. The previous government pledged to halve poverty by 2010 and set a target of poverty elimination by 2020. Child poverty in the UK reduced significantly between 1998/9-2011/12 when 1.1 million children were lifted out of poverty. Under current government policies, child poverty is projected to rise from 2012/13 with an expected 600,000 more children living in poverty by 2015/16. This upward trend is expected to continue with 4.7 million children projected to be living in poverty by 2020.

In the UK, as elsewhere, the factors influencing child poverty include family size and structure, the age and educational qualifications of parents, low earnings, ethnicity and lack of employment. One-parent families, larger families and families where no-one is in work are particularly vulnerable to poverty. Poverty in the UK is also intrinsically related to high levels of inequality, especially income inequality.

The HBAI/FRS data shows that children in larger families are almost two-thirds more likely to be in poverty than children in smaller families. Children in one-parent families are over a third more likely to be in poverty than children in couple families and over a third of families who become one-parent families enter poverty.¹¹

Children in families with low qualifications are one and a half times as likely to be in poverty as children overall. Children in workless families are three times as likely to be in relative poverty compared with children in families where at least one adult is in work, and twice as likely as children overall. Children in families with a disabled adult are over a third more likely to be in poverty than children in families with no disabled adult.¹²

Poverty results from a complex interplay of influences, involving factors at the level of the family, local neighbourhood, the employment market and wider society. Within this context, factors which appear to be the causes of poverty can also appear as consequences and vice versa. Poor educational attainment is an example of a factor which both drives and is a consequence of the experience of poverty. Poor housing may be the only affordable alternative for poor families, but through its potential effect on health exerts a negative effect on health and achievement, helping to set up a cycle of deprivation.

Poverty is not synonymous with poor parenting but creates additional challenges through the imposition of stress, poorer health and social exclusion. There is considerable evidence of poverty being transmitted from one generation to another, manifesting its effects in the first few years of life. But the home environment is subject to factors which in many cases are beyond the control of families and cannot, therefore, be addressed in isolation.

¹⁰ D Hirsch, Estimating the costs of child poverty, 2013

¹¹ Households Below Average Income, An analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 – 2012/13, Department for Work and Pensions, 2014 DWP 2014

¹² Households Below Average Income, An analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 – 2012/13, Department for Work and Pensions, 2014 DWP 2014

Annex B: Performance measures and indicators

As noted, the four Child Poverty Act 2010 targets are

- 1 Relative low income target of less than 10 per cent Before Housing Costs (BHC), by 2020/21
- 2 Absolute low income target of less than 5 per cent BHC by 2020/21
- 3 Combined low income and material deprivation target of less than 5 percent by 2020/21.
- 4 Persistent poverty target of less than 7 per cent of children living in households in relative low income for at least three out of the last four years by 2020/21.¹³

The government has adopted a range of further indicators for the purpose of assessing progress towards meeting its child poverty targets. These include:

Severe Poverty	Proportion of children who experience material deprivation and live in households where income is less than 50% of median household income for the financial year (BHC).
Children in Workless Households	Proportion of children living in workless households
In-Work Poverty	Proportion of children living in families where at least one person works but are still in relative poverty
Transition from childhood to the labour market	Proportion of 18-24 year olds (i) participating in part time or full time education and training (ii) not in full time education or training who are not in employment
Low birth weight	Low birth weight (gap between social classes 1-4 and social classes 5-8).
Child Development	Currently, EYFS Good Level of Development
Attainment at school and in further education	Attainment gap between children receiving free school meals and the rest at Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics
	Attainment gap between children receiving free school meals and the rest in achieving the basics at Key Stage 4 (currently defined as achieving an A*-C in English and Mathematics GCSES)
	Attainment gap between children who were receiving free school meals at age 19 and the rest in achieving level 3, broken down into; (a) achieving two A levels, 20.8 (b) other A level equivalent qualification.
Progression to higher education	Progression of pupils aged 15 to higher education at age 19 (FSM at 15, non-FSM at 15 and gap)
Teenage pregnancy	Conception rates per 1000 for women aged 15-17 years.
Young offending	Number of young people aged 10-17 receiving their first reprimand, warning or conviction.
Family Structures	The proportion of children living in relative poverty in families by:
	(a) couples who are married/in a civil partnership
	b) couples who are cohabiting; and (c) lone-parents

Measuring child poverty at local level

¹³ For an explanation of income targets see Annex A

The Households Below Average Income (HBAI) is based on data from the Family Resources Survey (FRS,) meaning that the sample sizes are insufficient for useful analysis at the local level.

The Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure is the proportion of children living in families within the UK that are either in receipt of out-of-work benefits or in receipt of tax credits with a reported income which is less than 60 per cent of national median income. This is the former N116 national indicator.

This measure provides a broad proxy for relative low-income child poverty as set out in the Child Poverty Act 2010 and enables analysis at a local level, although the differences in methodology means that the figures cannot be compared directly with the HBAI. There is a two-year time lag on the publication of the data and the latest figures are for 2012.

The Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure is based on administrative tax credits and benefit data Sources. The measure includes children who are living in families either in receipt of out-of-work benefits or in receipt of tax credits with reported income less than 60 per cent of median income.

The Children in Low-Income Families local measure does not take into consideration families with low incomes that are above the threshold of 60 percent median income, before housing costs but who are on very low incomes after housing costs are taken into account.