

Thurrock Child Poverty Needs Analysis 2015



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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Glossary

AHC	After Housing Costs
BHC	Before Housing Costs
BIS	Department of Business Innovation and Skills
BME	Black Minority Ethnic
CAB	Citizen Advice Bureau
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
DfE	Department for Education
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
ELG	Early Learning Goals
ESA	Employment Support Allowance
EYFSP	Early Years Foundation Profile
FRS	Family Resources Survey
FSM	Free School Meals
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GLD	Good Level of Development
HBAI	Households Below Average Income
HE	Higher Education
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
IS	Income Support
JSA	Job Seekers Allowance
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NOMIS	National Online Manpower Information System
ONS	Office of National Statistics
SEN	Special Educational Needs
UK	United Kingdom

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1 Summary

- A fifth of Thurrock children live below the poverty line. In 2012, the most recent year for which figures are available 7955 children aged 0-19 lived in low income families, below 60% median income.
- In broad terms, child poverty has remained at much the same level since 2008. Whilst the number of children in poverty in poverty has increased by 8 per cent from 7365 in 2008 to 7955 in 2012, the percentage has only increased from 19.8 per cent to 20 per cent.
- Child poverty in Thurrock is slightly above the national average (18.6%) and significantly above the level for Eastern region (15.1%).
- The majority, 5435 (68%) were aged 0-10; 2760 (35%) were aged 0-4.
- Three-quarters of poor children were living in one-parent families.
- 86 per cent were living in families with a parent claiming Jobseekers Allowance or Income Support.

Distribution of poverty

- Eleven wards have rates of child poverty below the local authority average. The lowest rates are in Orsett (6.5%), South Chafford (7.8%) Chafford and North Stifford (8.7%) and the Homesteads (9.6%).
- Child poverty is highest in Tilbury St Chad's (33.9%), and Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park (33.6%). The third highest rate of child poverty is in Chadwell St Marys (30.5%), followed by West Thurrock and South Stifford (25.7%), Belhus (23.2%) and Grays Riverside (23.1%).
- Six wards account for 54 per cent of all children in Thurrock living in poverty. The ward with the highest number of children is West Thurrock and South Stifford with 815 children, followed by Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park (760) and Chadwell St Marys (740).
- At LSOA level the distribution of child poverty is broadly similar to that identified at the last needs assessment. Twelve LSOAS account for 31 per cent of children in poverty.
- The worst affected LSOA, Thurrock 018D in Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, has 30 times the numbers of poor children in poverty as the lowest LSOA, Thurrock 001B in Corringham and Fobbing.

Causes and drivers

Low Pay

- Since 2010, in the UK, there has been a large rise in the proportion of poor children who are in families where someone is in work, with two-thirds of poor children now in working households.¹
- Thurrock has a low wage economy relative to nearby London Boroughs and much of the East of England Weekly earnings in Thurrock are below the average for England. There is a substantial gender earnings gap.

¹ State of Nation Report, Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain, 2013 www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2014-report

- In 2012, 166 children in Thurrock were in receipt of both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and 960 in receipt of Child Tax Credit with income less than 60 percent median income. Receipt of tax credits is an indicator of low income, but not necessarily of falling below the poverty threshold. In total, 6,400 children in Thurrock in 2012/13 were in families receiving Working Tax Credit.

Unemployment

- Unemployment is a main driver of child poverty in Thurrock. Among children in Low Income Families below 60 percent median income, 6880 or 86 per cent live in families in receipt of IS or JSA.
- Nearly 30 per cent of those children live in the 12 LSOAs with the highest rates of child poverty.

Disability

- Ill health, including physical and mental illness and disability creates significant barriers to work. 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 (22% compared to 16%).²
- There are 3239 households in Thurrock with dependent children and at least one person with a long term health problem or disability. In 2014, 5140 residents of working age claimed Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Incapacity Benefit.

Qualifications

- Children in families with no qualifications are twice as likely to be in poverty as children overall. In England, 22 percent of the working age population have no qualifications, but the proportion in Thurrock is higher. More than a quarter of adult residents have no academic or vocational qualifications.
- Inequalities among neighbourhoods are acute. In three LSOAs, more than 40 percent of adults have no vocational or academic qualifications. In the 12 LSOAs with the highest rates of child poverty, the proportion of the working age population with no qualifications ranges from 19 percent to 42 percent.

Large Families

- Nationally, more than a third of children in relative poverty live in families with three or more children (800,000) and children in larger families are almost two-thirds more likely to be in poverty than children in smaller families.³
- Families with three or more children represent 16.4 percent of all families with dependent children in Thurrock. Of the 7955 children in poverty in Thurrock in 2014, 3415, or 43 per cent, lived in families with three or more children. More than a third of children in poverty live in larger families in the 12 LSOAs with the highest rates of child poverty.

One parent families

- Children in one-parent families are more than 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.⁴ Lone-

² HBAI 2012

³ DWP, Households Below Average Income (2011/12)

⁴ HBAI

parents are one of the highest risk groups for persistent poverty, and have some of the highest entry rates into poverty, and lowest exit rates from poverty.⁵

- Among 7955 children in Thurrock in poverty, 75 per cent live in one-parent families. This is higher than the English average of 70 per cent.

Inequalities

- There is a continuum of child poverty in Thurrock. At one end, there are LSOAs with very low or low levels of child poverty, others which cluster around the average and - at the other end the twelve LSOAs identified in this assessment.
- In those twelve LSOAs, there are above average concentrations of families at greater risk of poverty – larger families, workless families, one-parent families and families where parents are disadvantaged in the employment market by lacking qualifications. Many families may experience a combination of these risk factors.

Educational 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. However, poor educational attainment is a both a driver of child poverty and a manifestation of its effects. Poverty is strongly associated with poorer performance, on average, at every Key Stage of schooling.⁶

EYFS

- In Thurrock in 2014, 66 per cent of pupils achieved at least the expected standard in the Early Learning Goals exceeding the English average by 6 percentage points. The attainment gap between children eligible for Free School Meals and the rest was 14 per cent, lower than the English average (19%).
- There is a significant gender gap – 14 per cent in 2014. Whereas Thurrock girls eligible for free school meals achieved scores above the English average for all pupils, slightly more than a third of boys eligible for FSM achieved a good level of development.

Early education and childcare

- In 2013, 422 children aged 2, 3 and 4 years in Thurrock who were eligible but who did not take up any early education
- The quality of funded early education and care is crucial for children's development at the end of the Foundation Stage. Good quality provision is crucial for children in more deprived areas. In 2013, the percentage of settings receiving a Good Ofsted Inspection outcome had risen from 60.3 per cent in 2010 to 69.8 per cent.⁷

Key Stage 2

- Key Stage 2 is the term for the period of schooling up to Year 6 for pupils aged 7-11 years. The picture in Thurrock is of continuously improving results now comparable with the English average. At this stage, the gender gap has narrowed. In 2014, 62 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals

⁵ Child Poverty Evidence Review⁵ DCSF (2009) Deprivation and Education The evidence on pupils in England, Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4

⁶ DCSF (2009) Deprivation and Education The evidence on pupils in England, Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4

⁷ Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014

achieved Level 4 or above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics at Key Stage 2, compared with 80 per cent of other pupils.

- Only three-quarters of primary school pupils in Thurrock attend schools which are at least good. A number of the primary schools which were not judged as good at the most recent inspection are in the more deprived areas of Thurrock.

Key Stage 4

- Thurrock is one of four higher attaining local authorities in Eastern Region with strong GCSE outcomes and is leading the provision of secondary schools which are good or outstanding. In 2014, 57.9 per cent of pupils in Thurrock achieving GCSEs A* to C including English and Mathematics.
- In England, in 2013-14, the attainment gap between FSM pupils and the rest was 27 per cent. In Thurrock, the gap was 31.3 per cent.

Free School Meals

- At all stages of schooling, although the gap between poor children and the rest has narrowed, it remains significant. 3840 pupils resident in Thurrock were receiving free school meals in 2014, representing 15 per cent of all pupils resident in the borough. Proportionately, more FSM pupils live in disadvantaged areas – 63 per cent live in just seven wards in Thurrock.
- Together the 12 LSOAs with the highest rates of child poverty account for 33 per cent of all FSM pupils in Thurrock. These numbers and proportions reinforce the need for good and outstanding schools within the local areas.

Looked after children

- Looked after children have poorer educational outcomes. In England, in 2013, 15.3 per cent of Looked After children gained 5 GCSEs A*-C including English and Mathematics or equivalent. The previous year the figure was 11 per cent. The attainment gap, while large is reducing.
- In Thurrock no Looked After Children achieved 5 GCSEs A*-C including English and Mathematics or equivalent, but 30 per cent gained 5 GCSEs A*-C, a slight reduction on the previous year.⁸

Level 2 and Level 3 at 19

- Nationally, attainment of a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 has been rising. In 2013, 86.2 per cent of 19 year olds were qualified to Level 2 or higher, and 59.1 per cent were qualified to Level 3. In Thurrock, 87 per cent of young people had achieved a Level 2 qualification or higher by the age of 19 and 53 per cent were qualified to Level 3 or higher.
- In Thurrock, the gap in qualifications between disadvantaged young adults and others – although improving over time - is wider than across the country as a whole.

Entry to Higher Education

⁸ SFR50_LAT_Tables

- Entry to higher education can advance social mobility. In England, in 2010/11, 35 per cent of young people entered higher education by age 19. In Thurrock, the figure is one of the lowest in England – 23 percent - with only 5 percent of young people who had been eligible for free school meals at 15 entering higher education by age 19.

NEET

- Those who are not in education, training or employment are termed NEET and are subdivided into 'available', that is, looking for work available or 'not available' for example because of pregnancy, illness or being a young carer. In November 2014, there were 242 young people in Thurrock, identified as NEET and available for work and 67 who were not available.

Raising Living Standards

Housing

- At the time of the last Child Poverty Needs Assessment, the average price of a house in Thurrock was £145,171. In November 2014, the average price had risen to £166,352.⁹ Although the cost of buying a home in Thurrock is, on average, lower than across the region and considerably lower compared with London, property is increasingly out of reach for local people.
- With house prices in Thurrock rising, there has been a growth in the private rental market. As a result of benefit changes, 161 families have been subject to a housing benefit cap. The majority were one-parent families and larger families. All of these households had dependent children. The vast majority, 155, had three or more children and almost two thirds were one-parent families.

Transport

- There are gaps in access to further education which may deter those affected from joining college courses, which in turn may prevent low-skilled residents from finding employment. In some deprived wards there is below average accessibility to services and to employment. There is poor accessibility to hospitals for some communities and particularly for non-car owning households.¹⁰
- Across the borough as a whole, 20.1 per cent of households are non-car owning. The wards which have the lowest proportions of households with cars are Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park (65.8%) and Tilbury St Chads, (71.4%). In 10 LSOAs more than a third of households do not own cars.

Fuel Poverty

- According to statistics published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in June 2014, 2.28 million households in England are living in fuel poverty, representing one in ten households. The health implications of living in cold homes are well established, ranging from cardiovascular and respiratory disease to depression. Those living in private rented homes have the highest rates of fuel poverty.
- 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.

⁹ Land registry House Price Index 2014

¹⁰ Thurrock Transport Strategy 2016-26

Food Poverty

- Food banks are a service of last resort for people living in poverty. Despite their best efforts, many people cannot earn enough to live on. UK food prices have increased by 43.5 per cent in the eight years to July 2013 and food expenditure as a proportion of total household expenditure has continued to rise.¹¹
- In 2013-2014 Thurrock Food Bank provided around 42,600 meals. Just under a quarter of the vouchers were given to lone-parent families and 20 percent to other families with children. The main reasons people gave for seeking help were benefit delays, low income, benefit changes, debt and unemployment.

Debt

- Unmanageable debt can leave families with insufficient income to meet their most basic needs. It can also act as a barrier to work and increase the risk of family breakdown, the effects of all which are felt by the children in the household.
- In 2013/14 Thurrock Citizens Advice Bureau advised 7959 clients with 11552 problems. The main problems were benefits (32%); debt (21%); employment (8%); and housing (11%).

Health

Low birth weight

- Low birth weight is associated with poorer health and poorer life chances. Low birth weight is more common in babies born in more deprived areas; to lone mothers, mothers under the age of 20 or over 40; to mothers in the lowest income groups and to mothers outside the UK.
- The proportion of low weight births in Thurrock is similar to the national average of 7.3 per cent of live and still births. Levels are higher in wards with higher levels of deprivation.

Breastfeeding

- The proportion of mothers initiating breastfeeding in Thurrock and breastfeeding at six weeks was significantly lower than the national and regional averages in 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13. Among the factors which appear to influence the decision to breast feed is area deprivation.

Child obesity

- Thurrock has an obesity prevalence in Reception-aged children of 9.6 per cent, which is significantly higher than the East of England average (8.1%), but only very slightly above the England average of 9.3%. Obesity in Year 6-aged children is at a rate of 19.8 per cent, more than double the prevalence at Reception Year. Obesity in Year 6-aged children is significantly higher than the East of England average (17.0%), and is above the England average of 18.9 per cent.
- The concentration of both Reception and Year 6 children who are obese is greatest in the more deprived parts of the borough.

Teenage conceptions

¹¹ www.church-poverty.org.uk/fuelfinance

- Thurrock has dramatically decreased its rate of under 18 conceptions by 51 per cent since the national teenage pregnancy strategy was launched in 1998. This impact is far greater in comparison to national and regional figures that have decreased by 40.6 per cent and 38.8 per cent respectively and is the 6th biggest reduction by a council outside of London.
- The most recent data (2010-12) shows that the wards with the highest rates of conceptions are Tilbury St Chads, Stanford Le Hope West and Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park.

Child protection

- The rate of children subject to child protection plans has been on an upwards curve in Thurrock and continued to rise through 2013/14. The rate per 10,000 children in 2013/14 was 75 (288 children). This compares to a rate of 53 in 2012/13 – an increase of 41 per cent. The rate also placed Thurrock significantly above the national rate. When analysed by category of abuse, the most prevalent category of abuse is neglect (44.5%) followed by emotional abuse (29.8%)

Looked after children

- As of 10th June 2014, there were 297 looked after children in Thurrock. Of the 297 children, 179 (60%) were male and 118 (40%) female. Out of the 110 young people in Thurrock aged 19, 20 and 21 leaving care, 41 per cent are NEET. 75 per cent of the 110 young people are reported to be in suitable accommodation, which is lower than the national average of 88 per cent.

Youth offending

- There were 207 offences committed in Thurrock in 2013/14 that were known to the Youth Offending Team – 174 were committed by males and 33 by females.

2 Introduction

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.¹²

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. It is widely acknowledged that this target will not be met. 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.

2.1 Child Poverty Act 2010

Part 2 of the Child Poverty Act introduced new duties on responsible Local Authorities to:

- Cooperate to put in place arrangements to work to reduce, and mitigate the effects of, child poverty in their local area;
- Prepare and publish a local child poverty needs assessment to understand the drivers of child poverty in their local area and the characteristics of those living in poverty; and
- Prepare a joint child poverty strategy setting out measures that the local authority and each named partner propose to take to reduce, and mitigate the effects of, child poverty in their local area.

2.2 Needs Assessment

This needs assessment aims to:

- provide a deeper understanding of the characteristics of children and families living in poverty and the areas within Thurrock in which they live;
- establish the key drivers of child poverty in the area and the links with local service provision;
- assess relevant local service provision across the authority and its partners, its suitability, culture and available resources;
- make clear the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to tackling child poverty in the area; and
- provide a solid foundation for the development of the local child poverty strategy

¹² D Hirsch, Estimating the costs of child poverty, 2013

3 Defining and measuring Child Poverty

The Child Poverty Act 2010 sets three income-related targets that the Government must meet by 2020, with a fourth to be set by December 2014. The four Child Poverty Act 2010 target measures 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 5per cent BHC, by 2020/21
3. Combined Low income and material deprivation target of less than five percent by 2020/21
4. Persistent poverty target of less than 7 per cent of children living in households in relative low income for a least three out of the last four years by 2020

In 2010-2011 prices, the poverty threshold (60% below the median national income BHC) was:

£414 a week for a couple with two children aged 5 and 14

£317 a week for a lone-parent with two children aged 5 and 14

3.1 Measuring child poverty at national level

The approach to measuring child poverty has changed since the last child poverty needs assessment was completed. The Households Below Average Income (HBAI) publication now provides the definitive national measure of relative child poverty as set out in the Child Poverty Act 2010. Households Below Average Income (HBAI) uses data from the Family Resources Survey (FRS) to measure living standards in the UK using disposable household income and material deprivation. Adjustments are made to take account of the size and composition of households to make the income figures comparable.

In 2012-13:

- 2.3 million or 17%, of children were in relative low income BHC
- 2.6 million or 19% of children were in absolute low income BHC
- 1.8 million or 13% of children were combined low income and material deprivation ¹³

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

3.2 Measuring child poverty at local level

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.¹⁴

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.

3.3 Methodology for the assessment

The assessment utilises data from the Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure, which is available at local authority, ward, and Lower Super Output (LSOA) levels. This is supplemented by other statistical data relating to children in workless households, eligibility for free school meals (FSM) and 2011 census data.

Other material factors contributing to child poverty are local pay levels and the costs of housing and these are included in the assessment of child poverty in Thurrock. In addition and because income poverty is inextricably linked to other forms of deprivation, including poorer health, the risk of debt, poor skills and lack of access to services and resources the assessment includes these as integral to the challenges faced by poorer families in Thurrock.

¹⁴ For the purpose of this assessment the term child poverty is used interchangeably with Children in Low-Income Families below 60% median income.

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	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

Some of these indicators are measured by reference to the HBAI and other national data Sources and local data is not therefore available. Where other relevant alternative information is available, this is included.

3.4 Local strategies

The assessment also draws on a range of local strategies and needs analyses which have a bearing on child poverty, including:

- Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014
- Thurrock JSNA 2015
- Child Health Profile Thurrock 2014 – Public Health
- Fairness in Thurrock Review 2014
- Thurrock Health and Well-being Strategy 2013-16
- Thurrock Economic Development Strategy
- Thurrock Transport Strategy 2013-26
- Thurrock Council Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan 2010-2015
- Thurrock Community Strategy

3.5 National data

The assessment made use of the extensive data available from ONS, NOMIS and GOV.UK and Public Health England pertaining to local authorities, wards and census output areas.

A range of research and other reports relating to child poverty at national level but having a bearing on the local area were drawn on for the assessment. These are cited in footnotes.

3.6 Other local data

Thanks are due to Thurrock staff for additional data relevant to the assessment.

4 Causes and consequences of child poverty

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.¹⁵

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.¹⁶

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.

These features of poverty are in part qualitative and cannot be captured by quantitative measures of income, but are nevertheless relevant to the assessment of child poverty and its effects, within the locality.

¹⁵ Households Below Average Income, An analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 – 2012/13, Department for Work and Pensions, 2014 DWP 2014

¹⁶ Households Below Average Income, An analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 – 2012/13, Department for Work and Pensions, 2014 DWP 2014

5 Growing up in Thurrock

Thurrock is a unitary authority situated 25 miles to the east of London on the River Thames. It covers an area of 64 square miles, over half of which is Green Belt and occupies 18 miles of river frontage. It has a diverse economy, including a number of industrial sites and is home to the Lakeside Shopping Centre, one of the largest retail developments in Europe. The Borough is a priority area within the Thames Gateway area, at the heart of major transport infrastructure - ports, roads and rail - and sustainable regeneration. Its key industries include transport, logistics, port functions and retail.

Thurrock has a young and expanding population, which at the time of the 2011 census was of 157,705 people¹⁷ which is projected to grow to 199,200 by 2033. ONS population estimates suggest that the population had grown to 160,854 people by mid-2013.

In 2012, there were 34,615 children under the age of 16 living in Thurrock, representing 22 per cent of the total population and an increase of more than 3000 young people since the time of the last Child Poverty Needs Assessment.¹⁸ Of these, 12,005 children were under the age of five. The highest concentrations of children are found in the south of the Borough, but particularly in wards such as Tilbury Riverside, Tilbury St Chad, West Thurrock and South Stifford, Grays Thurrock and Chafford and North Stifford. More than 21,000 families with children make their homes in Thurrock

The borough is made up of both indigenous local families, and a more ethnically diverse population, resulting from inward migration from London, from Eastern Europe and from other countries, in particular Africa. In 2011, approximately 14 per cent of the population was Black Minority Ethnic (BME). In the 0-4 age group 30 per cent of children were Black Minority Ethnic (BME).¹⁹

Thurrock is in the second quartile of local authorities in terms of deprivation and has enjoyed increasing affluence over the past five years. This overall picture, however, masks some very significant pockets of deprivation.

Of 98 Lower Super Output Areas in Thurrock, 5 are in the 10% most deprived in England, 7 are in the 20 per cent most deprived and ten in the 30 per cent most deprived. The most deprived wards in Thurrock include Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, Tilbury St Chads, Grays Riverside, Belhus, Chadwell St Mary, Ockendon and West Thurrock and South Stifford.

¹⁷ ONS 2011 Census

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid

6 The extent of child poverty in Thurrock

6.1 Poverty Key Facts

The latest available data on children in low income in Thurrock reveals that:

- A fifth of children in Thurrock live in poverty before housing costs are taken into account
- 7955 children (20%) of children aged 0-19 lived in low-income families below 60 percent median (poverty) in 2012. This is lower than the numbers in 2010 and 2011 but closer to the numbers in poverty at the time of the last needs assessment. Thurrock's child population has increased but in percentage terms, child poverty is at the same level as it was 2008.

Table 1: Children in poverty/Thurrock

Year	0-19 in poverty	% 0-19 in poverty
2008	7365	19.8%
2009	8040	21.1%
2010	8160	21.1%
2011	8385	21.4%
2012	7955	20%

Source: HMRC children in low -income families local measure 2014

- Child poverty in Thurrock is slightly above the national average (18.6%) and significantly above the level for Eastern region (15.1%)
- Proportionately more younger children are at risk of poverty. In 2014, 5435, or 68 per cent of children in low income families below 60 percent median income were aged 0-10;
- 2760 or 35 per cent were aged 0-4
- Three-quarters of children in low income families below 60 percent median income were living in one-parent families
- 86 per cent were living in families with a parent claiming Jobseekers Allowance or Income Support.

6.2 Distribution of child poverty

Child poverty exists everywhere in Thurrock but is most concentrated in the deprived parts of the borough. The distribution of poverty among wards is broadly similar to that noted in the last needs assessment. Whilst the number of children in poverty has increased by 8% from 7365 in 2008 to 7955 in 2012, the percentage has only increased from 19.8 per cent to 20 per cent.

At ward level:

- Six wards account for 54 per cent of all children in Thurrock living in poverty.
- At ward level, child poverty is highest - in percentage terms - in Tilbury St Chad's and Tilbury Riverside. The third highest rate of child poverty is in Chadwell St Marys, followed by West Thurrock and South Stifford, Belhus and Grays Riverside.
- Ten wards have percentage rates of child poverty below the local authority average. The lowest rates are in Orsett, South Chafford, Chafford & North Stifford and The Homesteads.
- The ward with the highest number of children in poverty is West Thurrock and South Stifford with 815 children, followed by Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park (760) and Chadwell St Marys (740)

Table 2: Children in poverty by ward

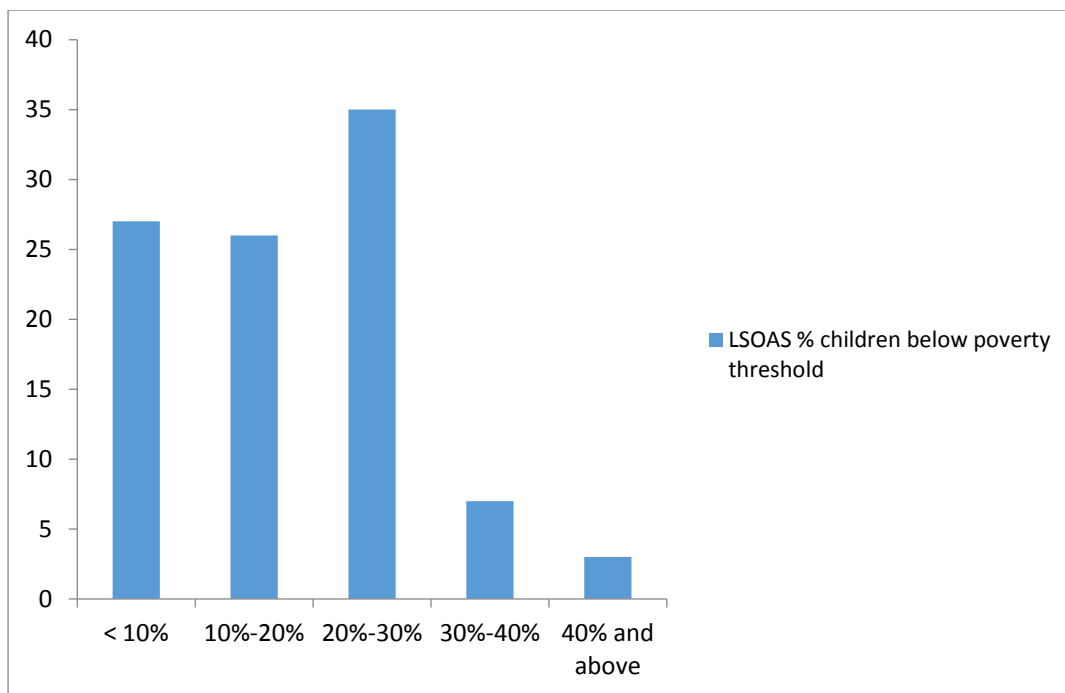
Ward	Children in poverty	% rate child poverty	Ward	Children in poverty	% rate child poverty
Aveley & Uplands	470	21.6%	Ockendon	550	22.1%
Belhus	630	23.2%	Orsett	80	6.5%
Chadwell St. Mary	740	30.5%	South Chafford	175	7.8%
Chafford & N. Stifford	205	8.7%	Stanford East	380	21%
Corringham & Fobbing	105	10.5%	Stanford le Hope West	300	21%
East Tilbury	310	18.9%	Stifford Clays	215	15.1%
Grays Riverside	710	23.1%	The Homesteads	175	9.6%
Grays Thurrock	440	19.7%	Tilbury Riverside	760	33.6%
Little Thurrock Blackshotts	145	12%	Tilbury St. Chads	635	33.9%
Little Thurrock Rectory	135	10%	West Thurrock	815	25.7%

Source: HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

At LSOA level:

- At LSOA level, the distribution of child poverty is broadly unchanged since the last needs assessment. Just 12 LSOAs account for 31 per cent of children in poverty. Nine of those were among the 12 LSOAs with the highest rates of child poverty at the time of the last needs assessment.
- The worst affected LSOA, Thurrock 018D, in Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park has 30 times the numbers of poor children in poverty as the lowest LSOA, Thurrock 001B in Corringham and Fobbing.
- In 2008, two LSOAs had child poverty rates above 50 per cent or above. In 2012 no LSOAs have child poverty rates above 50 percent. Three LSOAs have rates of 40 per cent or above, seven have rates of 30 per cent or above. The following figure shows Thurrock LSOAs ranked according to the percentage of children living in low-income below 60 percent median.

Fig1: LSOAs by % of children in poverty



Source: HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

- The LSOAs with the highest percentages of children in poverty also have the highest numbers of poor children.
- The LSOAs with highest rates are shown in the following table with comparison figures from the last needs assessment:

Table 3: LSOAS with highest percentages of children in poverty

LSOA	Ward	Children in poverty 2012	% rate child poverty 2012	Children in poverty 2008	% rate child poverty 2008
Thurrock 015C	West Thurrock	240	29.4%	175	34.2%
Thurrock 012C	Chadwell St Mary	125	29.6%	120	28.2%
Thurrock 018G	Tilbury St Chads	145	31.1%	135	29.8%
Thurrock 015E	West Thurrock	285	31.7%	315	40.6%
Thurrock 008A	Aveley & Uplands	130	32.3%	105	27.5%
Thurrock 018B	Tilbury Riverside	180	32.8%	210	42.3%
Thurrock 017D	Grays Riverside	250	35.3%	275	51.1%
Thurrock 018H	Tilbury St Chads	170	36.8%	210	44.9%
Thurrock 012F	Chadwell St Mary	215	37.6%	175	34.3%
Thurrock 012B	Chadwell St Mary	190	40.7%	170	37.3%
Thurrock 018E	Tilbury St Chads	210	42.5%	230	45.8%
Thurrock 018D	Tilbury Riverside	310	45.9%	335	55%
Total		2450		2455	

Source: HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

6.3 Free School Meals

Eligibility and take-up of free school meals (FSM) provide a further measure of children living in families on low incomes. In Thurrock in 2014, 3840 pupils resident in Thurrock were receiving Free School Meals.

Two thirds of these related to just 8 wards, Belhus, Grays Riverside, West Thurrock, Chadwell St Marys, Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, Tilbury St Chads, Aveley and Uplands and Ockendon.

7 Drivers and risk factors

The Child Poverty Act 2010 creates a duty in the UK Child Poverty Strategy to consider groups of children disproportionately affected by social-economic disadvantage. Families at the greatest risk of poverty include:

- Families where no-one is in work
- Having low or no qualifications
- Families having three or more children to care for
- One-parent families
- Families living with disability or ill-health.

7.1 Work

The main drivers of poverty are unemployment and low earnings.

According to the Child Poverty Action Group, it costs a minimum of £148,000 in total - around £160 per week - to bring up a child to age 18 and meet the child's minimum needs.²⁰ The minimum necessary cost rose by 4% in 2013, while the minimum wage rose by 1.8 per cent; average earnings by 1.5 per cent; benefits for families and children by just 1%, and child benefit did not rise at all.

Nationally since 2010, there has been a big rise in the proportion of poor children who are in families where someone is in work, with two-thirds of poor children now in working households.²¹

Thurrock has a low wage economy relative to nearby London Boroughs and much of the East of England. Average weekly pay in Thurrock is below the average for England.

There is a substantial gender pay gap which is relevant in the context of high numbers of one-parent families, headed by women.

The labour market in Thurrock reflects many of the patterns between males and females which are evident nationally. Men are traditionally concentrated in full-time work, whereas large numbers of women work part-time.

The figures below include full and part-time employees.

Table 4: Average weekly gross earnings Thurrock 2014

	Average Weekly earnings all 2014	Average Weekly earnings Males 2014	Average Weekly earnings Females 2014
England	£422	£513	£322
Thurrock	£391	£500	£269

Source: Nomis: Annual Survey of hours and earnings

²⁰ The Cost of a Child in 2013, Child Poverty Action Group

²¹ State of Nation Report, Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain, 2013

In 2012, 166 children in Thurrock were in receipt of both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and 960 in receipt of Child Tax Credit with income less than 60 percent median income. Receipt of tax credits is an indicator of low income, but not necessarily of falling below the poverty threshold. In total, 6,400 children in Thurrock in 2012/13 were in families receiving Working Tax Credit.

7.2 Unemployment

Worklessness is a key factor in child poverty. The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission believes "the best way in which child poverty can be ended is through a strategy which has at its heart getting parents into sustainable employment with *decent earnings*".²²

Between July 2013 and June 2014 the unemployment rate in Thurrock was 7.2 per cent, slightly above the UK average of 6.8 per cent and above the regional average (5.1%).

In May 2014, 10,170 residents in Thurrock were claiming out-of-work benefits, including 1780 lone parents.

Table 5: Thurrock claimants out-of work benefits

	Jobseeker (JSA)	ESA and incapacity benefits	Lone-parent	Other income related benefits
Thurrock	2930	5140	1780	320

Source: DWP: Out-of-work benefits claimants May 2014

In May 2014 – a total of 7860 children aged 0-19 in Thurrock were living in out-of-work benefit claimant households. The ward distribution is as follows.

Table 6: Children in out-of work benefit claimant households by ward

	Children 0-18 in Out-of-work benefit claimant households		Children 0-18 in Out-of-work benefit claimant households
Aveley & Uplands	465	Ockendon	535
Belhus	640	Orsett	75
Chadwell St Mary	725	South Chafford	170
Chafford & N Stifford	200	Stanford East	380
Corringham & Fobbing	110	Stanford le Hope West	300
East Tilbury	290	Stifford Clays	205
Grays Riverside	700	The Homesteads	160
Grays Thurrock	425	Tilbury Riverside	745
Little Thurrock Blackshotts	140	Tilbury St Chads	630
Little Thurrock Rectory	140	West Thurrock	825

Source: DWP Children in out of work benefit households May 2014

²² State of Nation Report, Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain, 2013

Not all families receiving out of work benefits are below 60 percent median income. Among children in low income families below 60 percent median income, 6880 or 86 per cent live in families in receipt of IS or JSA. Nearly 30 per cent of those children live in the 12 LSOAs with the highest rates of child poverty.

Table 7: Children in IS/JSA Families/children in poverty

LSOA	Ward	% rate child poverty	Poor children living in IS/JSA families
Thurrock 008A	Aveley & Uplands	32.3%	115
Thurrock 012B	Chadwell St Mary	40.7%	175
Thurrock 012C	Chadwell St Mary	29.6%	115
Thurrock 012F	Chadwell St Mary	37.6%	200
Thurrock 017D	Grays Riverside	35.3%	215
Thurrock 018B	Tilbury Riverside	32.8%	165
Thurrock 018D	Tilbury Riverside	45.9%	295
Thurrock 018E	Tilbury St Chads	42.5%	200
Thurrock 018G	Tilbury St Chads	31.1%	135
Thurrock 018H	Tilbury St Chads	36.8%	160
Thurrock 015C	West Thurrock	29.4%	215
Thurrock 015E	West Thurrock	31.7%	250

Source: HMRC Children in low-income families local measure 2014

7.3 Disability and ill health

Ill health, including physical and mental illness and disability creates significant barriers to work. 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 (22% compared to 16%).²³

In 2011, 500,000 poor children in the UK lived in families where at least one adult had a long-standing limiting disability.

The 2011 Census identified 3239 households in Thurrock with dependent children and at least one person with a long term health problem or disability.

Statistics relating to Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Incapacity benefit provides an indication of the extent and distribution of adult disability or chronic poor health. In 2014, 5140 people of working age in Thurrock were in receipt of ESA or Incapacity Benefit. The numbers are highest in the wards with higher levels of child poverty.

The following table shows the ward distribution of these disability related benefits.

²³ HBAI 2012

Table 8 : Claimants ESA / Incapacity Benefits by ward

	ESA/Incapacity benefits		ESA/Incapacity benefits
Aveley & Uplands	335	Ockendon	445
Belhus	530	Orsett	90
Chadwell St Mary	450	South Chafford	85
Chafford & N Stifford	115	Stanford East	310
Corringham & Fobbing	120	Stanford le Hope West	175
East Tilbury	190	Stifford Clays	210
Grays Riverside	410	The Homesteads	130
Grays Thurrock	275	Tilbury Riverside	330
Little Thurrock Blackshotts	150	Tilbury St Chads	315
Little Thurrock Rectory	130	West Thurrock	345

Source: DWP Workless Benefits May 2014

7.4 Parents lacking qualifications

Parental educational achievement an important factor affecting children's educational outcomes. Higher qualification levels and skills are also associated with higher earnings and employment prospects for individuals. This reduces the risk of poverty for more highly qualified individuals and their children.

Children in families with no qualifications are twice as likely to be in poverty as children overall (35% compared to 17%). Children in families with low qualifications are one and a half times as likely to be in poverty as children overall (26% compared to 17%).²⁴

Thurrock is a key site for regeneration and anticipates the creation of up to 22,000 new jobs in its core industries by 2021.²⁵ However, the local authority has a low skills base which prevents some local residents from taking advantage of economic growth.

Statistical data is not available at local level relating to the qualifications held by parents, but instead to the qualifications held by people of working age.

The 2011 census provides data on the highest qualifications held by people of working age at national, regional, local authority and MSOA and LSOA levels.

²⁴ HBAI 2012

²⁵ Thurrock Economic Development Strategy

In England, 22 per cent of the working age population have no qualifications, but the proportion in Thurrock is higher, with proportionately fewer people having higher level qualifications.

Table 9 : Residents aged 16 and over: highest level of qualification 2011 Census

Highest Level of qualification	England	Eastern Region	Thurrock
No qualifications	22%	23%	26%
Level 1	13%	15%	18%
Level 2	15%	16%	18%
Apprenticeship	4%	4%	3%
Level 3	12%	12%	11%
Level 4	27%	26%	17%
Other qualifications	6%	5%	6%

Source: 2011 Census

The following table shows the ward distribution of adults lacking qualifications.

Table10: Residents aged 16 and over no qualifications by ward 2011 Census

	% rate Child Poverty	Residents 16+ No qualifications		% rate Child Poverty	Residents 16+ No qualifications
Aveley & Uplands	21.6%	33%	Ockendon	22.1%	29%
Belhus	23.2%	33%	Orsett	6.5%	22%
Chadwell St Mary	30.5%	37%	South Chafford	7.8%	9%
Chafford & N Stifford	8.7%	13%	Stanford East	21%	34%
Corringham & Fobbing	10.5%	29%	Stanford le Hope West	21%	26%
East Tilbury	18.9%	24%	Stifford Clays	15.1%	31%
Grays Riverside	23.1%	21%	The Homesteads	9.6%	23%
Grays Thurrock	19.7%	26%	Tilbury Riverside	33.6%	33%
Little Thurrock Blackshotts	12%	29%	Tilbury St Chads	33.9%	37%
Little Thurrock Rectory	10%	23%	West Thurrock	25.7%	20%

Source: 2011 Census

Adult qualifications in the LSOAs with the highest levels of child poverty are shown in the following table.

Table 11: Residents aged 16 and over no qualifications/LSOA highest rates of child poverty

LSOA	Ward	% rate child poverty	No qualifications
Thurrock 008A	Aveley & Uplands	32.3%	41%
Thurrock 012B	Chadwell St Mary	40.7%	33%
Thurrock 012C	Chadwell St Mary	29.6%	39%
Thurrock 012F	Chadwell St Mary	37.6%	35%
Thurrock 017D	Grays Riverside	35.3%	24%
Thurrock 018B	Tilbury Riverside	32.8%	40%
Thurrock 018D	Tilbury Riverside	45.9%	36%
Thurrock 018E	Tilbury St Chads	42.5%	42%
Thurrock 018G	Tilbury St Chads	31.1%	37%
Thurrock 018H	Tilbury St Chads	36.8%	42%
Thurrock 015C	West Thurrock	29.4%	26%
Thurrock 015E	West Thurrock	31.7%	19%

Source: 2011 Census and HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

7.5 Larger families

Families with three or more children are at greater risk of being in poverty. Nationally, more than a third of children in relative poverty live in families with three or more children (800,000) and children in larger families are almost two-thirds more likely to be in poverty than children in smaller families.²⁶

Larger families need to achieve higher income levels to avoid poverty, but there is also evidence of higher rates of worklessness among larger families. Poor children in large families are more likely to have parents with low or no qualifications and larger families have childcare responsibilities which may make it more difficult to work. Compared with an only child, a child living in a household with three or more children is over three times more likely to experience persistent poverty.²⁷

Larger families have borne the brunt of the benefits cap. Among families with children who were capped, 86% had three or more children.²⁸

In Thurrock, at the 2011 census there were 3547 families with three or more children, representing 16.4 per cent of all families with dependent children. This is higher than the regional average (10%).²⁹ Eleven of the borough's 20 wards fall within the range of 8 per cent - 16 per cent of families with three or more children. In Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park and Tilbury St Chads 23 per cent of families have three or more children.

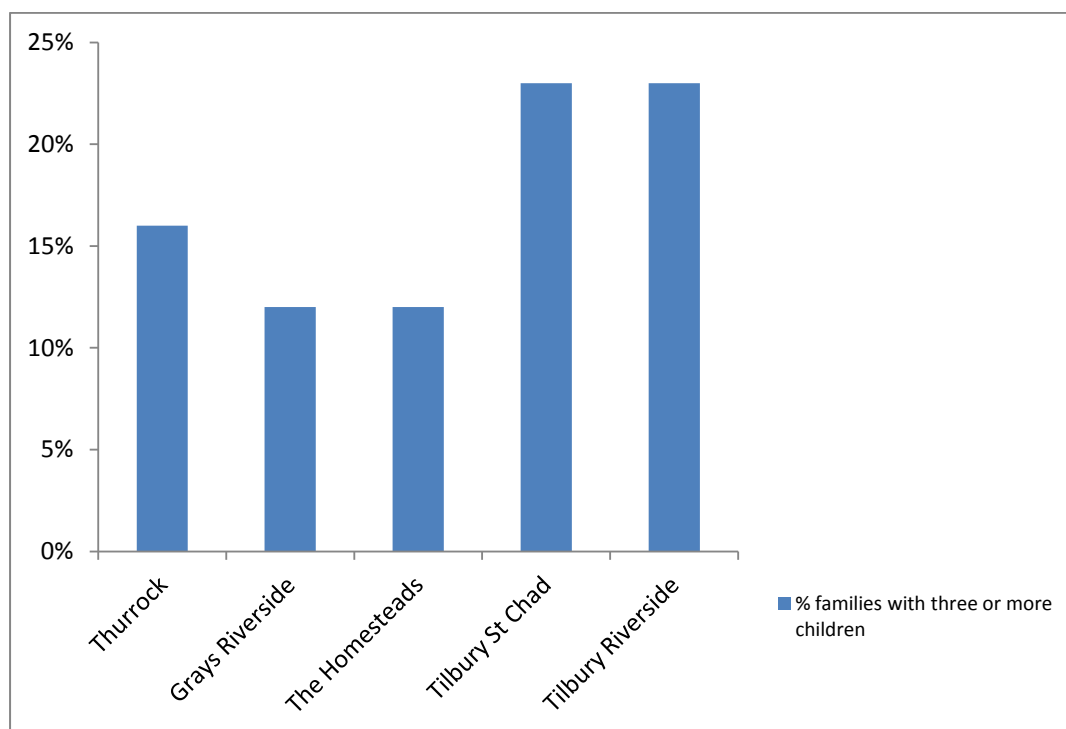
²⁶ DWP, Households Below Average Income (2011/12)

²⁷ Child Poverty Evidence Review 2014 HM Government

²⁸ DWP Housing benefit cap 2014

²⁹ 2011 Census QS118EW_2621_2011

Fig 2: Families with 3 + children, highest and lowest wards



Source: HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

Of the 7955 children in poverty in Thurrock in 2012, 3415, or 43%, lived in families with three or more children. The ward distribution is shown below.

Table 12: Children in poverty in families with 3 + children by ward

	Children in Low-Income Families 3+ children	% of all poor children in ward		Children in Low-Income Families 3+ children	% of all poor children in ward
Aveley & Uplands	230	49%	Ockendon	235	43%
Belhus	255	40%	Orsett	20	25%
Chadwell St Mary	345	47%	South Chafford	55	31%
Chafford & N Stifford	70	34%	Stanford East	145	38%
Corringham & Fobbing	30	29%	Stanford le Hope West	115	38%
East Tilbury	135	44%	Stifford Clays	120	56%
Grays Riverside	200	28%	The Homesteads	55	31%
Grays Thurrock	200	45%	Tilbury Riverside	375	49%
Little Thurrock Blackshotts	45	31%	Tilbury St Chads	345	54%
Little Thurrock Rectory	55	41%	West Thurrock	385	47%

HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

More than a third of children in poverty who live in larger families live in the 12 LSOAs with the highest percentages of child poverty.

Table 13: LSOAs with highest percentages children in poverty in families 3 + children

LSOA	Ward	Children in Low-Income Families 3+ children	% of all poor children in LSOA
Thurrock 008A	Aveley & Uplands	75	58%
Thurrock 012B	Chadwell St Mary	105	55%
Thurrock 012C	Chadwell St Mary	60	48%
Thurrock 012F	Chadwell St Mary	65	30%
Thurrock 017D	Grays Riverside	75	30%
Thurrock 018B	Tilbury Riverside	90	50%
Thurrock 018D	Tilbury Riverside	160	52%
Thurrock 018E	Tilbury St Chads	130	62%
Thurrock 018G	Tilbury St Chads	70	48%
Thurrock 018H	Tilbury St Chads	90	53%
Thurrock 015C	West Thurrock	140	58%
Thurrock 015E	West Thurrock	145	51%

Source: HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

7.6 One-parent families

Children in the UK have a higher probability of experiencing parental separation, having a lone parent, or being part of a step-family when compared to a majority of other developed countries. Just over two-thirds of children aged 0–14 in the UK live with both their parents, compared to an OECD average of 84 per cent.³⁰

Children in one-parent families are more than 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.³¹ Lone-parents are one of the highest risk groups for persistent poverty, and have some of the highest entry rates into poverty, and lowest exit rates from poverty.³²

There were nearly 2.0 million lone parents with dependent children in the UK in 2011. Lone-parents with dependent children represented 24% of families in England.

In Thurrock, in 2011, there were 4729 one-parent families, representing 22 per cent of all families with dependent children. At ward level, the percentage varies from 11 per cent to 35 per cent. At LSOA level, the percentage of one-parent families varies from 5 per cent to 44 per cent.

³⁰ Child Poverty Evidence Review

³¹ HBAI

³² Child Poverty Evidence Review

Of the 7955 children in Thurrock in poverty, 75 percent were living in one-parent families, higher than the English average of 70 per cent. The following table shows the distribution by ward

Table 14: Children in poverty in one-parent families by ward

	Children in poverty in one-parent families	% of children in poverty		Children in poverty in one-parent families	% of children in poverty
Aveley & Uplands	355	76%	Ockendon	405	74%
Belhus	460	73%	Orsett	60	75%
Chadwell St Mary	555	75%	South Chafford	125	71%
Chafford & N Stifford	165	80%	Stanford East	295	78%
Corringham & Fobbing	80	76%	Stanford le Hope West	230	77%
East Tilbury	250	81%	Stifford Clays	170	79%
Grays Riverside	520	73%	The Homesteads	125	71%
Grays Thurrock	295	67%	Tilbury Riverside	620	82%
Little Thurrock Blackshotts	110	76%	Tilbury St Chads	435	69%
Little Thurrock Rectory	110	81%	West Thurrock	595	73%

Source: HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

At LSOA level, there is even more variation in the numbers and proportions of families which are headed by a lone-parent. Thurrock 014A in Grays Thurrock has the lowest proportion of one-parent families (5.7%), while Thurrock 018D in Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park has the highest (44%).

The following table shows, for the LSOAs with the highest levels of child poverty, the percentage of one-parent families identified at the 2011 census, the percentage of all children in poverty and the numbers and percentage of children in poverty living in one-parent families. All have above average percentages of one-parent families. Together the 12 LSOAs account for 30 per cent of children in poverty who live in one-parent families.

Table 15: Percentage of all children in poverty who are in one-parent families by LSOAs

LSOA	Ward	% lone-parent families	% rate child poverty	children in poverty living in one-parent families	% all children in poverty living in one-parent families
Thurrock 008A	Aveley & Uplands	23%	32.3%	100	77%
Thurrock 012B	Chadwell St Mary	30%	40.7%	140	74%
Thurrock 012C	Chadwell St Mary	27%	29.6%	80	64%
Thurrock 012F	Chadwell St Mary	41%	37.6%	180	84%
Thurrock 017D	Grays Riverside	39.6%	35.3%	175	70%
Thurrock 018B	Tilbury Riverside	41%	32.8%	155	86%
Thurrock 018D	Tilbury Riverside	44%	45.9%	250	81%
Thurrock 018E	Tilbury St Chads	27%	42.5%	140	67%
Thurrock 018G	Tilbury St Chads	28%	31.1%	105	72%
Thurrock 018H	Tilbury St Chads	28%	36.8%	105	62%
Thurrock 015C	West Thurrock	24%	29.4%	180	75%
Thurrock 015E	West Thurrock	38%	31.7%	195	68%

Source: HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

It is harder to sustain employment as a lone parent. In November 2013, 1720 lone-parents in Thurrock were in receipt of out-of-work benefits. Together, the 12 LSOAs with the highest rates of poverty accounted for 30% of lone parents claiming out-of-work benefit. The following table shows the percentage of lone parents out of work and the numbers of lone parent claimants of out of work benefits alongside the highest 12 child poverty rates.

Table 16: Lone parents not in work/ out-of work benefit claimants by LSOAs with highest rates of child poverty

LSOA	Ward	% rate child poverty	% lone-parents not in work: 2011 census	Out-of-work benefit claimants (2014)
Thurrock 008A	Aveley & Uplands	32.3%	58%	25
Thurrock 012B	Chadwell St Mary	40.7%	57%	30
Thurrock 012C	Chadwell St Mary	29.6%	64%	25
Thurrock 012F	Chadwell St Mary	37.6%	63%	65
Thurrock 017D	Grays Riverside	35.3%	57%	65
Thurrock 018B	Tilbury Riverside	32.8%	59%	55
Thurrock 018D	Tilbury Riverside	45.9%	69%	75
Thurrock 018E	Tilbury St Chads	42.5%	52%	40
Thurrock 018G	Tilbury St Chads	31.1%	62%	45
Thurrock 018H	Tilbury St Chads	36.8%	45%	35
Thurrock 015C	West Thurrock	29.4%	58%	45

Thurrock 015E	West Thurrock	31.7%	53%	35
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Source: HMRC/DWP/2011 census

7.7 Structural Inequalities

There is a continuum of child poverty in Thurrock. At one end, there are LSOAs with very low or low levels of child poverty, others which cluster around the average and - at the other end - the twelve LSOAs identified in this assessment.

In those twelve LSOAs, there are above average concentrations of families at greater risk of poverty – larger families, workless families, one-parent families and families where parents are disadvantaged in the employment market by lacking qualifications. Many families may experience a combination of these risk factors.

These neighbourhoods are not identical. Thurrock 017D in Grays Riverside has levels of qualifications which are close to the Thurrock average, but still has one of the highest rates of child poverty. In Thurrock 018H in Tilbury St Chads lone parent unemployment is slightly below the Thurrock average but the child poverty rate is still one of the highest.

Nevertheless there is a clear relationship between child poverty and other deprivation factors.

8 Education and 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.

However, poor educational attainment is a both a driver of child poverty and a manifestation of its effects. Poverty is strongly associated with poorer performance, on average, at every Key Stage of schooling.³³

At the time of the last Needs Assessment educational outcomes in Thurrock were improving, but attainment was, overall, low compared with the East of England and England as a whole. At the Foundation Stage, only 45% of children achieved a good stage of development, compared with 50% of children in the region and 52% nationally. At Key Stage 2, Thurrock had the lowest results in the East of England.

Since then, the attainment of children at each key stage of schooling has improved and the gap between poorer children and the rest has narrowed. Thurrock is now in the top 25% 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 had the highest proportion of secondary schools which are judged to be at least good by Ofsted.³⁴

Only three-quarters of primary school pupils in Thurrock attend schools which are at least good. A number of the primary schools which were not judged as good at the most recent inspection are in the more deprived areas of Thurrock.

8.1 School readiness

The term “school readiness” does not yet have a nationally agreed definition, but the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is currently accepted as a measure of children’s preparedness for school. A revised EYFSP was introduced in 2013, and requires practitioners to make a best fit assessment of whether children are emerging, expected or exceeding against 17 early learning goals (ELGs).

Children have been deemed to have reached a good level of development (GLD) in the new profile if they achieve at least the expected level in the ELGs in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. The new Profile’s ‘emerging’, ‘expected’ and ‘exceeding’ scale are different to the previous Profile’s 117 point scale and this, together with a reduction in the number of early learning goals means that the results are not comparable with 2012 and before.

In Thurrock in 2014, 66 per cent of pupils achieved at least the expected standard in the Early Learning Goals exceeding the English average by 6 percentage points. The attainment gap between children eligible for Free School Meals and the rest was 14 per cent, lower than the English average (19%).

³³ DCSF (2009) Deprivation and Education The evidence on pupils in England, Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4

³⁴ Ofsted2014 East of England Regional report

Table 17: Percentage achieving a good level of development/Thurrock / FSM

Year	All	FSM	Not FSM	England All	FSM	Not FSM
2013	53%	42%	55%	52%	36%	55%
2014	66%	54%	68%	60%	45%	64%

Source: DfE, SFR46_2014_National/LA tables

There is a significant gender gap – 14 per cent in 2014. Whereas Thurrock girls eligible for free school meals achieved scores above the English average for all pupils, slightly more than a third of boys eligible for FSM achieved a good level of development.

Table 18: Percentage achieving a good level of development/Thurrock / gender

Year	All	FSM	Not FSM	English All	FSM	Not FSM
Boys	59%	47%	61%	52%	36%	56%
Girls	73%	61%	76%	69%	53%	72%

Source: DfE SFR46_2014_National/LA tables

In Thurrock, 21 per cent of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) but no statement and 7 per cent of pupils with SEN having a statement achieved a good level of development compared with the English average of 21 per cent and 3 per cent respectively.

Among children whose first language is not English, 60 per cent achieved the expected standard compared with the English average of 53 per cent. White and BME children achieved above average results, the highest being secured by children of mixed heritage.

Table19: Percentage achieving a good level of development by ethnic group

	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Chinese
England	62%	62%	57%	59%	58%
Thurrock	65%	74%	69%	71%	60%

Source: DfE SFR46_2014_National/LA tables

Take up of early education and childcare varies across the year, but using Spring 2013 data, there were 422 children aged 2, 3 and 4 years in Thurrock who were eligible but who did not take up any early education.

Table 20: Eligible children and children accessing early education in Thurrock/Spring 2013

	2 year olds	3 year olds	4 year olds	Total
Children accessing Early Education	369	2144	2285	4798
Eligible Children	443	2360	2417	5220
Number of Eligible Children NOT accessing early education	74	216	132	422

Source: Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, 2014 [Data based on ONS mid year estimates 2012, DWP 2013 data and Spring Census data 2013]

The most recent Childcare Sufficiency assessment identified a potential childcare places deficit as a result of both an increasing population and the extension of free funded places for two year olds. Aveley, Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, West Thurrock and South Stifford, South Chafford and Belhus were all identified as high priority for the development of additional places.³⁵

The quality of funded early education and care is crucial for children's development at the end of the Foundation Stage. Good quality provision is crucial for children in more deprived areas. In 2013, the percentage of settings receiving a Good Ofsted Inspection outcome had risen from 60.3 per cent in 2010 to 69.8 per cent.³⁶

8.2 Key Stage 2

Key Stage 2 is the term for the period of schooling up to Year 6 for pupils aged 7-11 years. The picture in Thurrock is of continuously improving results now comparable with the English average. At this stage, the gender gap has narrowed.

Table 21: Key Stage 2/ Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above, Reading/Writing & Mathematics/Thurrock

Year	All	English average	Girls	Boys
2012	71%	75%	76%	66%
2013	72%	76%	76%	68%
2014	77%	79%	81%	73%

Source: DfE SFR50_KS2_Local Authority Tables

In 2014, 62 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals achieved Level 4 or above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics at Key Stage 2, compared with 80 per cent of other pupils.

The breakdown by ethnicity was as follows:

Table 22: Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in Reading/Writing & Mathematics /Ethnicity

	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Chinese
England	79%	80%	80%	77%	89%
Thurrock	75%	80%	82%	85%	100%

³⁵ Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014

³⁶ Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014

Source: DfE SFR50_KS2_Local Authority Tables

8.3 Key Stage 4

Thurrock is one of four higher attaining local authorities in Eastern Region with strong GCSE outcomes and is leading the provision of secondary schools which are good or outstanding.

The following table shows, in a time series, the percentage of pupils in Thurrock achieving GCSEs A* to C including English and Mathematics. NB the methodology for GCSE results has changed, the reforms including new quality criteria and an 'early entry' policy – only a pupil's first attempt at a GCSE is counted. These reforms have had an impact on results.

Table 23: Pupils achieving 5 GCSEs A* - C including English and Mathematics 2010 -2014

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
<i>Thurrock</i>	60.1%	59.2%	59.5%	57.9%
<i>England</i>	59%	59.4%	59.2%	53.4%

Source: DfE SFR2_2015_Additional Tables Time series

In England, in 2013-14, the attainment gap between FSM pupils and the rest was 27 per cent. In Thurrock, the gap was 31.3 per cent.

8.4 Free School Meals Pupils

At all stages of schooling, although the gap between poor children and the rest has narrowed, it remains significant. Ofsted, in its regional report 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.

Registration for free school meals is widely used as a broad indicator of child poverty or child disadvantage and is used by the Department for Education for the purpose of measuring the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils

As noted above and based on Thurrock Council schools data, 3840 pupils resident in Thurrock were receiving free school meals in 2014, representing 15 per cent of all pupils resident in the borough.

Proportionately, more FSM pupils live in disadvantaged areas – 63 per cent live in just seven wards. The following table shows the ward distribution of FSM pupils as a percentage of all pupils resident in the ward.

Table 24: Free School Meals by ward

	FSM pupils	% all pupils		FSM pupils	% all pupils
Aveley & Uplands	199	18%	Ockendon	307	21%
Belhus	324	19%	Orsett	37	5%
Chadwell St Mary	320	20%	South Chafford	56	3%
Chafford & N Stifford	91	6%	Stanford East	196	16%
Corringham & Fobbing	44	6%	Stanford le Hope West	110	12%
East Tilbury	142	14%	Stifford Clays	114	12%
Grays Riverside	326	17%	The Homesteads	64	5%
Grays Thurrock	190	13%	Tilbury Riverside	429	27%
Little Thurrock Blackshotts	103	12%	Tilbury St Chads	352	28%
Little Thurrock Rectory	61	7%	West Thurrock	375	19%

Source: Thurrock Council

The table below show the numbers and percentages of children receiving Free School Meals in the LSOAS with the highest rates of child poverty. In six of those LSOAS, the proportion of children receiving free school meals is double or more than the Thurrock average (15%).

Together the 12 LSOAS with the highest rates of child poverty account for 33 per cent of all FSM pupils in Thurrock. These numbers and proportions reinforce the need for good and outstanding schools within the local areas.

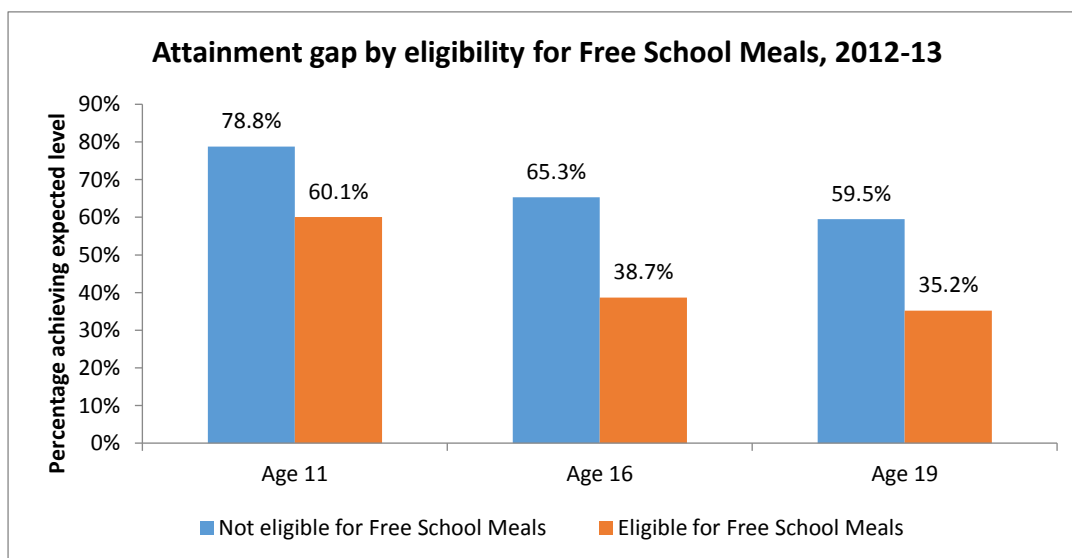
Table 25: LSOAS with highest percentages children in poverty/FSM pupils

LSOA	Ward	FSM pupils	% all pupils
Thurrock 008A	Aveley & Uplands	49	21%
Thurrock 012B	Chadwell St Mary	87	30%
Thurrock 012C	Chadwell St Mary	78	24%
Thurrock 012F	Chadwell St Mary	84	27%
Thurrock 017D	Grays Riverside	129	30%
Thurrock 018B	Tilbury Riverside	126	32%
Thurrock 018D	Tilbury Riverside	168	33%
Thurrock 018E	Tilbury St Chads	124	34%
Thurrock 018G	Tilbury St Chads	90	27%
Thurrock 018H	Tilbury St Chads	96	31%
Thurrock 015C	West Thurrock	108	18%
Thurrock 015E	West Thurrock	128	25%

Source: Thurrock Council and HMRC children in low-income families local measure 2014

A key priority for government is to narrow the gap between FSM pupils and other pupils. The figure below shows the association between eligibility for free school meals and educational performance nationally.

Fig 3: Attainment gap from age 11 to age 19 by eligibility for free school meals, 2012-13



Source: DfE

8.5 Looked after children

Looked after children have poorer educational outcomes. In England, in 2013, 15.3 per cent of Looked After children gained 5 GCSEs A*-C including English and Mathematics or equivalent. The previous year the figure was 11 per cent. The attainment gap, while large is reducing.

In Thurrock no Looked After children achieved 5 GCSEs A*-C including English and Mathematics or equivalent, but 30 per cent gained 5 GCSEs A*-C, a slight reduction on the previous year.³⁷

8.6 Level 2 and Level 3 at age 19

Thurrock is in the bottom quartile for the proportion of post-16 learners achieving a Level 3 qualification. In 2012/13 and 2013/14 the cumulative percentage of students in England gaining at least two substantial Level 3 qualifications was 88.6 per cent, with an average point score of 213.4. In Thurrock, the average point score was 200.4.³⁸

Nationally, attainment of a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 has been rising. In 2013, 86.2 per cent of 19 year olds were qualified to Level 2 or higher, and 59.1 per cent were qualified to Level 3.

In Thurrock, 87 per cent of young people had achieved a Level 2 qualification or higher by the age of 19 and only 53 per cent were qualified to Level 3 or higher.

³⁷ SFR50_LAT_Tables

³⁸ The average point score per examination entry is calculated as the sum of the points awarded to each 16-18 year old student, divided by the total number of GCE/VCE examination entries.

In Thurrock, the gap in qualifications between disadvantaged young adults and their peers – although improving over time - is wider than across the country as a whole.

Table 26: FSM Attainment gap by age 19

	FSM attainment gap Level 2 qualification by age 19	FSM attainment gap Level 2 qualification inc English and Mathematics	FSM attainment gap Level 3 qualification
<i>England</i>	16.3%	27%	24.3%
<i>Thurrock</i>	20%	31%	29%

Source: DfE SFR10_2014_Tables 15-26 2014

8.7 Entry to Higher Education

Entry to higher education can advance social mobility, but despite the unprecedented growth in higher education since the 1970s, the most advantaged 20% of young people are still seven times more likely to attend the most selective universities than the 40% most disadvantaged.³⁹

In England, in 2010/11, 35 per cent of young people entered higher education by age 19. In Thurrock, the figure is one of the lowest in England - 23 percent - with only 5 percent of young people who had been eligible for free school meals at 15 entering higher education by age 19.

Table 27: Entry to Higher education 2010/11/FSM

<i>Estimated percentage who entered HE</i>				
	FSM	Non-FSM	Gap	All
<i>England</i>	20%	38%	18%	35%
<i>Thurrock</i>	5%	26%	21%	23%

Source: BIS 2013: Widening participation in Higher Education

8.8 Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET)

Those who are not in education, training or employment are termed NEET and are subdivided into 'available', that is, looking for work available or 'not available' for example because of pregnancy, illness or being a young carer. In November 2014, there were 242 young people in Thurrock, identified as NEET and available for work and 67 who were not available.

³⁹ Social mobility Commission 2012: University Challenge: How Higher Education Can Advance Social Mobility

The following table shows the ward distribution.

Table 28: NEET by ward

	NEET Available	NEET Unavailable		NEET Available	NEET Unavailable
Aveley & Uplands	24	4	Ockendon	24	4
Belhus	16	7	Orsett	8	0
Chadwell St Mary	19	4	South Chafford	4	1
Chafford & N Stifford	6	1	Stanford East	16	2
Corringham & Fobbing	3	0	Stanford le Hope West	7	4
East Tilbury	9	9	Stifford Clays	13	3
Grays Riverside	14	4	The Homesteads	6	3
Grays Thurrock	18	11	Tilbury Riverside	15	8
Little Thurrock Blackshotts	6	4	Tilbury St Chads	20	3
Little Thurrock Rectory	1	0	West Thurrock	13	4

Source: Thurrock Council

9. Raising Living Standards

For families on low incomes, the cost of basics like food, housing, energy and transport costs can be critical. In 2011 research for Save the Children revealed that poorer families face a 'poverty premium' for basic necessities compared with better off families. Those on low incomes pay nearly £1300 more each year because of expensive energy prepayment systems, higher insurance premiums and steep borrowing rates.

9.1 Housing

A rapidly growing population, with significant inward migration from London and from outside of the UK, has created significant pressures on the Thurrock housing market. In the period 2008 – 2011 Thurrock had the third highest increase in one-person households in local authorities in England and the seventh highest increase in couple households. Between 2001 and 2011, 6,900 new national insurance registrations were issued to non-UK nationals, principally from Eastern Europe and Africa.⁴⁰

At the time of the last Child Poverty Needs Assessment, the average price of a house in Thurrock was £145,171. In November 2014, the average price had risen to £166,352.⁴¹ Although the cost of buying a home in Thurrock is, on average, lower than across the region and considerably lower compared with London, property is increasingly out of reach for local people. Nearly half (48%) of households cannot afford to purchase a flat as a first time buyer on a mortgage at 3.0 times their income, rising to 68 percent of those wishing to purchase a terraced property and 87 per cent for a detached property.⁴²

The pattern of housing tenure varies across the authority. Nearly half of people in Corringham and Fobbing own their property outright (47.3%), whilst three-quarters of people in Chafford and North Stifford own their own home with a mortgage (74.8%). This compares to Grays Riverside and Tilbury St. Chads where the majority of residents rent their property. Tilbury St. Chads has the most Local Authority households at 37.4% and Grays Riverside has the most households renting from a housing association at 5.5% and private landlord or letting agency at 16.4%.⁴³

Among house owners, the recession has affected the capacity to service mortgage repayments. Between 2011 and 2012, Thurrock had the 3rd highest level of possession claims issued by mortgage lenders in England.⁴⁴

In a difficult economic climate, Thurrock Council has, since the last Needs Assessment, acted to reduce the numbers of empty homes, reduced the numbers of residents in temporary accommodations and has secured £4.6 million support from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to fund the building of one and two-bedroomed houses and family homes across the borough. Working with partners in the private and voluntary sector, the Council aims to deliver a target of 18,500 new homes in the borough by 2021. In 2014 the Council agreed to freeze Council Tax.

As an alternative to home ownership and with a declining social rented sector, the private rental market has grown, aided by Housing Benefit. Between 2008 and 2013, the numbers of housing benefit claimants in Thurrock increased from 9803 to 12,423.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Housing Market Trends in England: National Housing

⁴¹ Land registry House Price Index 2014

⁴² Thames Gateway South Essex Housing Market Trends Quarterly Report April 2014

⁴³ Fairness in Thurrock Review 2014

⁴⁴ Housing Market Trends in England: National Housing Federation

⁴⁵ Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Caseload Summary Statistics February 2013 DWP

The growth of private rentals is reflected nationally. In 2011, a million more households rented privately, compared with 2006. In a report in 2011, the national charity Shelter reported that less than half of tenants felt that private renting was a good type of housing tenure and for many, private renting was not a choice but the only type of housing they could realistically access. Close to a third (30%) of private rented homes contained children, and more than half (51%) of those children lived in households falling below the poverty line, after housing costs.⁴⁶

In the same report, Thurrock was identified as a “fairly unaffordable” area, with an average monthly rent of £695 for a two-bedroom, requiring 39% of average monthly take home pay.⁴⁷ In 2014 an analysis of housing trends in the Thames Gateway found Thurrock to be the most expensive with a median weekly cost of renting a one bedroom home of £144.⁴⁸

From 2011, welfare benefits, including housing benefits, have been subject to a ‘cap’ of £500 per week for lone-parents or couples with children. For those in privately rented homes there is a cap according to the number of bedrooms. From 2013, for those renting from the Council or a housing association a cap on housing benefit for ‘under-occupancy’ was introduced – the so-called bedroom tax. In addition and from 2013, Council Tax Benefit was scrapped by government in favour of locally managed Council Tax Support schemes.

Nationally, these benefit changes have been widely identified as creating hardship for poorer families. In May 2013 1400 households in Thurrock were reported to be in arrears with Council Tax payments.⁴⁹ Government statistics show that in Thurrock, between April and November 2014, 161 households had their housing benefit capped. All of these households had dependent children. The vast majority, 155, had three or more children and almost two thirds were one-parent families.

Family Homelessness, at a rate of 1.3 per 1,000 households in Thurrock is better than the English average of 1.7.⁵⁰

9.2 Transport

As noted in the last Needs Assessment, transport links in Thurrock to the M25 and to London are good. Access to local services like the GP surgeries and post offices, is good across the Borough, with 99.35% of households able to access a GP surgery in 15 minutes by walking, cycling or public transport, compared to 84% nationally.⁵¹

However, while access to rail services is good, public transport is relatively costly. There are gaps in access to further education which may deter those affected from joining college courses, which in turn may prevent low-skilled residents from finding employment. In some deprived wards there is below average accessibility to services and to employment. There is poor accessibility to hospitals for some communities and particularly for non-car owning households.⁵²

Across the borough as a whole, 20.1% of households are non-car owning. At ward level, Orsett, Chafford and North Stifford and The Homesteads have the highest levels of car ownership – 93.3%, 92.5% and 91.5% respectively.

The wards which have the lowest proportions of households with cars are Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park (65.8%) and Tilbury St Chads, (71.4%). At LSOA level the degree of variation is even

⁴⁶ Shelter Report: Private Rent Watch –2011

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Housing Market Trends in England: National Housing Federation

⁴⁹ Thurrock Gazette 28/5/2013

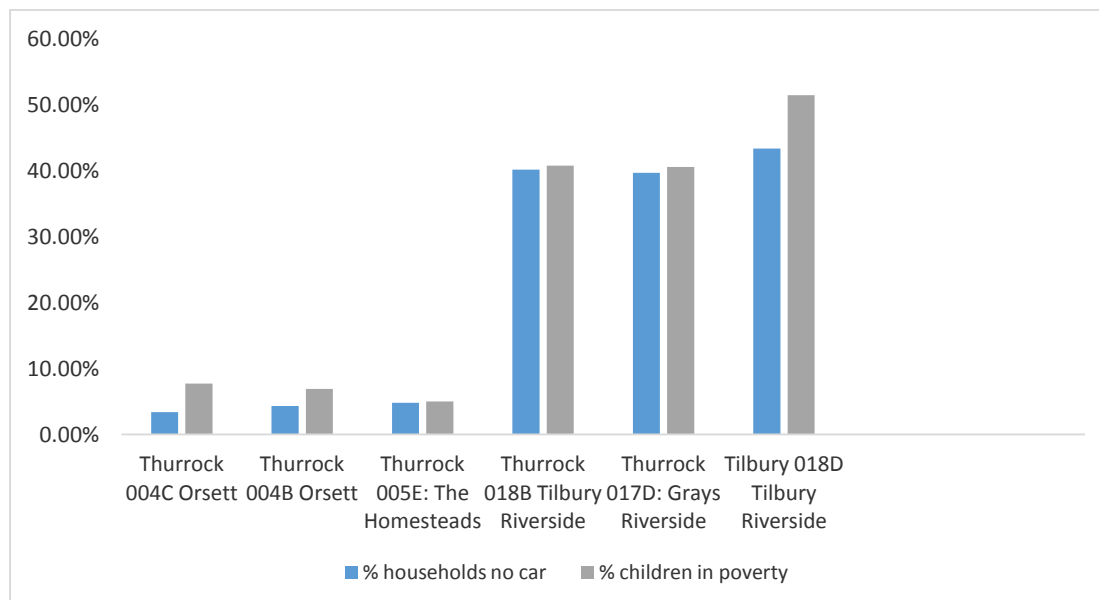
⁵⁰ Chimat 2014

⁵¹ Thurrock Transport Strategy 2008 -21

⁵² Thurrock Transport Strategy 2016 -26

greater; in 10 LSOAS more than a third of households do not own cars. The following figure compares car ownership in the least and most income deprived LSOAS. Corresponding percentages for children in poverty are also provided.

Fig 4: Car ownership and children in poverty by LSOA



Source: ONS

Thurrock’s current transport strategy aims 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, bringing more people into the labour market; and ensuring that accessibility for all is incorporated into the decision making process in the delivery of the Local Development Framework.

9.3 Fuel Poverty

According to statistics published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in June 2014, 2.28 million households in England are living in fuel poverty, representing one in ten households.

The health implications of living in cold homes are well established, ranging from cardiovascular and respiratory disease to depression. Those living in private rented homes have the highest rates of fuel poverty.

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.

Struggling households, unable to meet their heating and lighting bills are more vulnerable to debt. In 2012/2013 Thurrock CAB reported advising 2987 clients about money-related matters, including 206 clients who were advised on energy-related consumer problems or fuel debt or both.⁵³

⁵³ Health and Poverty Thurrock CAB 2013

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 in the first year. Participating households are visited by an adviser who can put them in touch with health and lifestyle services, or advice on home repairs which may be needed, including faulty gas or electrical installations, and refer clients to sources of energy advice.

Where client are private tenants, advisers will work with landlords to encourage them to carry out necessary repairs and there is an accreditation scheme for landlords.

9.4 Food Poverty

Food banks are a service of last resort for people living in poverty. Despite their best efforts, many people cannot earn enough to live on. UK food prices have increased by 43.5 per cent in the eight years to July 2013 and food expenditure as a proportion of total household expenditure has continued to rise.⁵⁴

Oxfam and Church Action on Poverty have calculated that 20,247,042 meals were given to people in food poverty in 2013/14 by the three main food aid providers. This is a 54 percent increase on 2012/13.⁵⁵

In 2013-2014 Thurrock Food Bank provided around 42,600 meals. Of the 4266 people receiving the vouchers, 2435 were adults and 1831 were children.

Just under a quarter of the vouchers were given to lone-parent families and 20 percent to other families with children.

The largest numbers of vouchers were given out to the following wards:

- Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park (514 adults, 413 children);
- West Thurrock and South Stifford (309 adults, 277 children);
- Grays Riverside (193 adults, 153 children);
- Grays Thurrock (179 adults, 83 children);

Followed by, Belhus, Chadwell St Mary and Tilbury St Chads.

In 2013/14 the main reasons given by people for seeking help were, in order:

- Benefit delays
- Low income
- Benefit changes
- Debt
- Unemployment

In 2014/15 to date, low income has replaced benefit delays as the main crisis type.

9.5 Access to debt advice and affordable credit

⁵⁴ www.church-poverty.org.uk/fuelfinance

⁵⁵ *ibid*

Unmanageable debt can leave families with insufficient income to meet their most basic needs. It can also act as a barrier to work and increase the risk of family breakdown, the effects of all which are felt by the children in the household.

In 2011, families with children had on average over 20 per cent more unsecured debt than families without children. Lone parent households are three times more likely to have problem debt than other households.⁵⁶

At the time of the last Needs Assessment, Thurrock was one of six urban areas in the region found to have the highest concentration of financial exclusion. The LSOAs with the highest levels of financial exclusion were in the following wards.

- Stanford East & Corringham Town
- Belhus
- Ockendon
- Aveley & Uplands
- Chadwell St Marys
- Grays Riverside
- Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park
- Tilbury St Chads

In 2013/14 Thurrock Citizens Advice Bureau advised 7,959 clients with 11552 problems, which is over 6.5% of the local population. The main problems were benefits (32%) debt (21%); employment (8%); and housing (11%).

The main debt problems were:

- Council tax and community charge arrears 19%
- Unsecured personal loan debts 13%
- Credit, store and charge card debts 12%
- Mortgage and secured loan arrears 5%
- Water supply and sewerage debts 4%

⁵⁶ Consumer Credit Counselling Service (2012) Consumer Credit Counselling Service Statistical Year Book 2011.

10. Health and Family Wellbeing

Health in Thurrock is comprehensively assessed in the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA)⁵⁷. Across the UK, poverty is a key factor, determining health outcomes, life chances and family well-being.

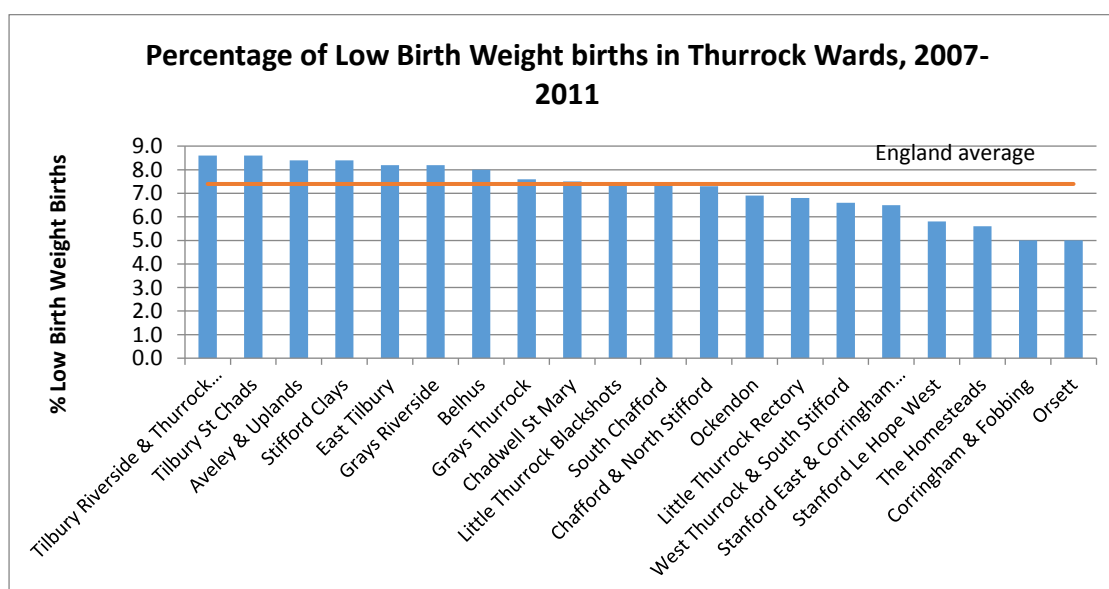
The health related indicators adopted by government for the purpose of monitoring child poverty are relatively limited. Among the basket of indicators only two – low birth weight and teenage conceptions- are directly related to health. In this needs assessment we have selected a small number of health issues affecting children which are directly related to income inequalities, but the fullest and best assessment can be found in the JSNA.

10.1 Birth weight

In the period January – December 2013, 191 low-birth weight babies were born in Thurrock. Birth weight is a good measure of infant health and low birth weight, defined as less than 2,500gm is associated with poorer health and poorer life chances. Low birth weight is more common in babies born in more deprived areas; to lone mothers, mothers under the age of 20 or over 40; to mothers in the lowest income groups and to mothers outside the UK.

The proportion of low weight births in Thurrock is similar to the national average of 7.3 per cent of live and still births. Levels are higher in wards with higher levels of deprivation. The following table shows the distribution of low weight births by wards.

Fig 5: Percentage of low birth weight births (all live and still births in Thurrock Wards 2007-11



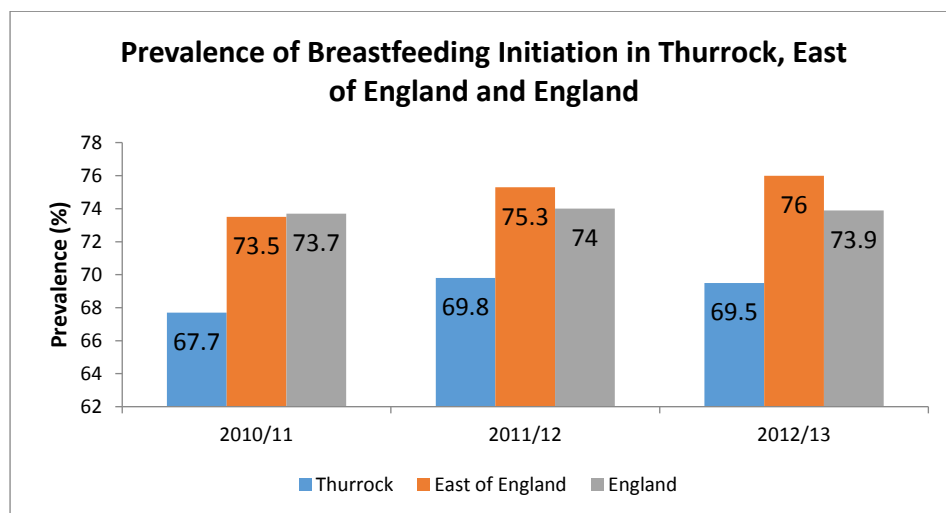
Source: Local Health

⁵⁷ Thurrock JSNA 2015 (draft)

10.2 Breast feeding

The proportion of mothers initiating breastfeeding in Thurrock was significantly lower than the national and regional averages in 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Fig 6: Prevalence of breastfeeding in Thurrock



Source: Thurrock JSNA

A similarly lower prevalence of mothers breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks occurred in the same period. A number of factors appear to influence breastfeeding, one of which is areas of higher deprivation.

10.3 Child Obesity

Childhood obesity is a world-wide health problem and in 2010, three out of ten children in the UK, between the ages of two and ten were obese. Evidence from the analysis of data from the National Child Measurement Programme suggests that obesity prevalence among children in both Reception and Year 6 increases with increased socioeconomic deprivation. Nationally obesity prevalence of the most deprived 10% of the population is approximately twice that of the least deprived 10%.⁵⁸

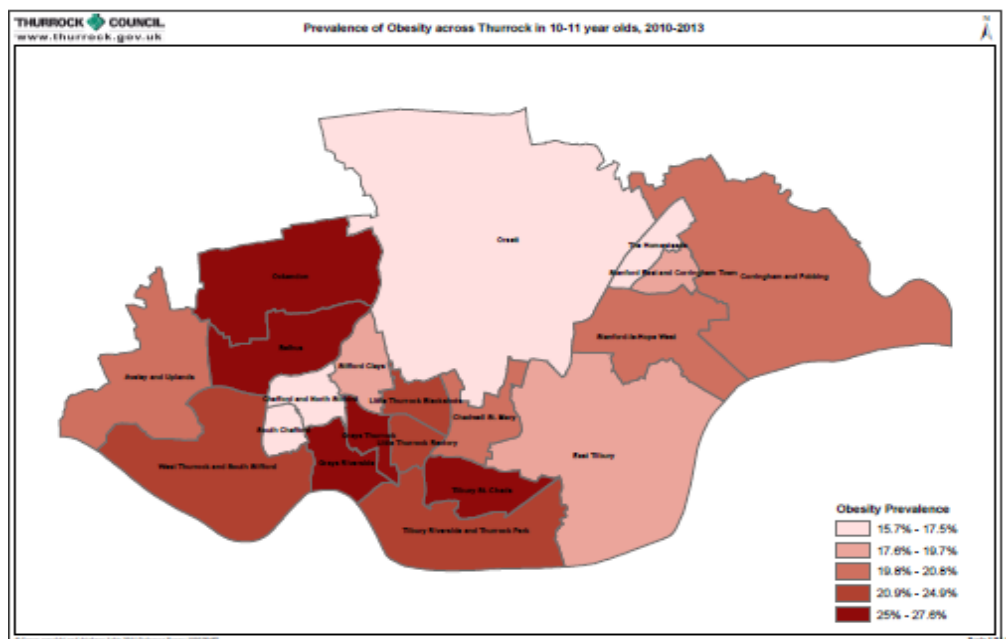
Thurrock has an obesity prevalence in Reception-aged children of 9.6%, which is significantly higher than the East of England average (8.1%), but only very slightly above the England average of 9.3%. Childhood obesity in Thurrock has decreased in line with the regional trend.

Obesity in Year 6-aged children is at a rate of 19.8%, more than double the prevalence at Reception Year. Obesity in Year 6-aged children is significantly higher than the East of England average (17.0%), and is above the England average of 18.9 per cent.

The concentration of both Reception and Year 6 children who are obese is greatest in the more deprived parts of the borough. The following figure shows, for the latter group how obesity varies across the borough.

Fig 7: Obesity prevalence across Thurrock in Year 6-aged children, 2010-13

⁵⁸ <http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/projects/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review>



10.4 Teenage conceptions

Factors such as housing, income, employment and benefits are often closely related to the teenage pregnancy rate. Where teenagers go ahead with their pregnancies, they are at risk of a range of poorer outcomes, including poverty and unemployment.

Thurrock has dramatically decreased its rate of under 18 conceptions by 51% since the national teenage pregnancy strategy was launched in 1998. This impact is far greater in comparison to national and regional figures that have decreased by 40.6% and 38.8% respectively and is the 6th biggest reduction by a council outside of London.

The most recent data (2010-12) shows that the wards with the highest rates of conceptions are Tilbury St Chads, Stanford Le Hope West and Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park.

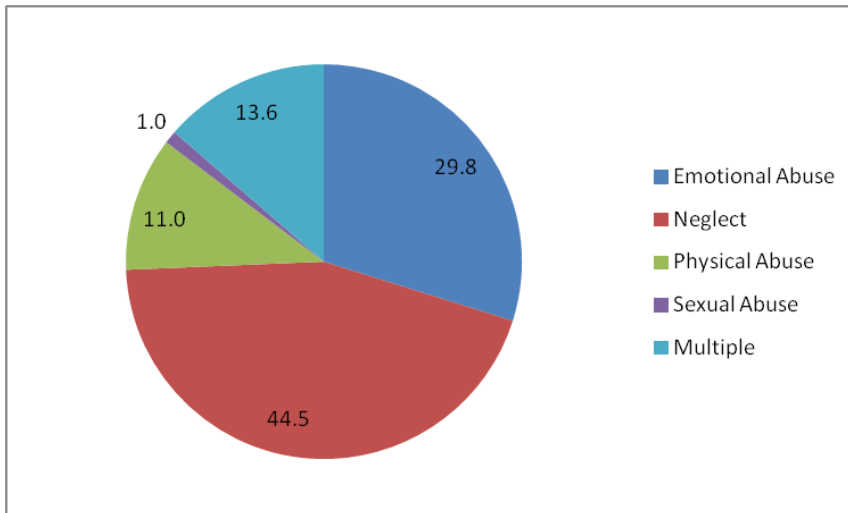
10.5 Children in Need

According to the JSNA, there were 575 referrals relating to children in need between April 2014 and July 2014, similar to the numbers in the same period the previous year. A new multi-agency model for delivering services to children and families in Thurrock was introduced in July 2014. This model incorporates the MASH (Multi agency safeguarding hub) and enhancing the Early Offer of Help.

10.6 Children subject to a child protection plan

The rate of children subject to child protection plans has been on an upwards curve in Thurrock and continued to rise through 2013/14. The rate per 10,000 children in 2013/14 was 75 (288 children). This compares to a rate of 53 in 2012/13 – an increase of 41%. The rate also placed Thurrock significantly above the national rate. When analysed by category of abuse, the most prevalent category of abuse is neglect (44.5%) followed by emotional abuse (29.8%)

Fig 8: Children subject to a CP plan in Thurrock by category of abuse, 2014



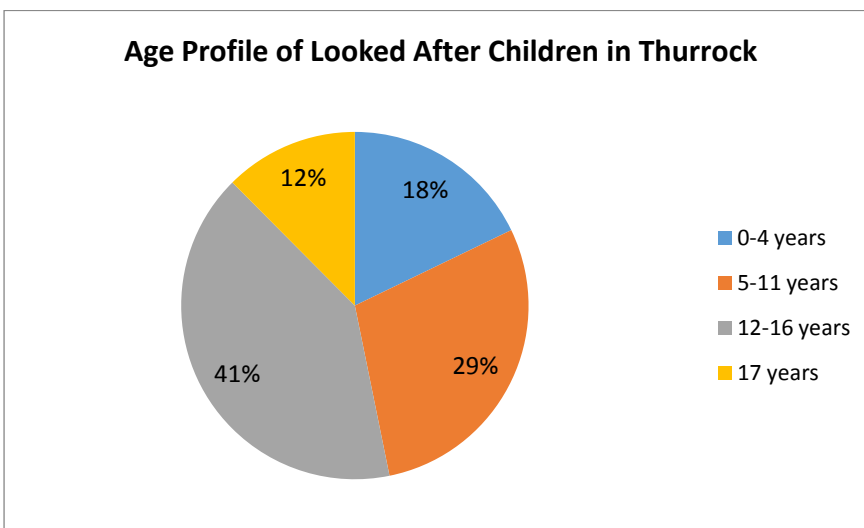
Source: Thurrock Council

10.7 Looked after children

Since its creation as a Unitary Authority Thurrock Council historically had relatively low numbers of Looked After Children. However this profile has changed over the last few years, with a significant year on year rise. As of 10th June 2014, there were 297 looked after children in Thurrock. Of the 297 children, 179 (60%) were male and 118 (40%) female.

The age profile is as follows.

Fig 9: Age Profile of Looked After Children in Thurrock, June 2014



Source: Thurrock JSNA

Out of the 110 young people in Thurrock aged 19, 20 and 21 leaving care, 41 per cent are NEET. 75 per cent of the 110 young people are reported to be in suitable accommodation, which is lower than the national average of 88 per cent.

10.8 Youth Offending

There were 207 offences committed in Thurrock in 2013/14 that were known to the Youth Offending Team – 174 were committed by males and 33 by females. The number of offences increases by age.

Table 29: Offences in Thurrock in 2013/14 by age of offender

	Number of offences
10-13 years	23
14 years	33
15 years	37
16 years	42
17 years	72
All ages	207

Source: Thurrock Youth Offending Service/JSNA

The following figure shows the rates of youth offending by ward.

Fig: 10 Youth Offending by ward

