

Data Management and Analysis Group

Family and Children's Study 2004



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Notes for tables:

- The source for all tables and charts is: *The Family and Children's Study 2004*.
- Columns may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
- Numbers in italics are based on a sample of less than 50 and should be used with caution.
- Cells showing '...' have been suppressed as they are based on a sample of less than 25 and are unreliable.

Findings

In the Family and Children's Study, information about the family is collected principally from one family member – usually the mother or the 'mother figure'. In the 2004 study, only two per cent of main respondents were men.

Mothers in London who are in work have the highest percentage working as *managers and senior officials* and in *professional occupations* compared to other regions in the country – 14 and 18 per cent respectively. This falls to 9 and 10 per cent for those with below 60 per cent median income (i.e. those considered to be in poverty). Most occupations that make up the *elementary occupations* classification are those that require little formal educational qualifications. These occupations are more important outside London in terms of providing employment to those in poverty. [Table 1]

The *retail, hotels and catering* industry is an important employer for those on low incomes and those requiring part time work. Eleven per cent of mothers in London work in this sector and this rises to 18 per cent for those below 60 per cent median income. This sector is even more important outside London where it employs nearly a third of all mothers with below 60 per cent median income. [Table 1]

In London, 18 per cent of all families with children have no academic qualifications – compared to 15 per cent in Great Britain. Only Wales has a higher percentage with 13 per cent. However, 33 per cent of all families in London have a First Degree or higher qualification, the highest for any region in the country – for Britain as a whole it is 21 per cent. Thirty-two per cent of those living in London with below 60 per cent median income have with no qualifications. [Table 2]

Twenty-one per cent of families with children receive income support, compared to 14 per cent in the whole of Great Britain. This rises to 47 per cent and 42 per cent respectively for those below 60 per cent median income. [Table 3]

Fifty-five percent of mothers in London are in paid employment, this falls to 23 per cent for those with below 60 per cent median income. Of the 45 per cent not in paid employment, 37 per cent said they were looking after the home or family, rising to 63 per cent for those below 60 per cent median income. [Table 4]

London, at 20 per cent, has the highest percentage of lone parent families not working more than 16 hours, this compares to 13 per cent for the rest of the country. This rises to 48 per cent for London and 41 per cent for Great Britain for those below 60 per cent median income. [Table 4]

Of the mothers that are not in work in London 25 per cent have never worked – this is the highest percentage in Britain. Fifteen per cent have never worked in the country as a whole.

Table 6 shows material deprivation by type of item and number of items that can't be afforded. Numbers rise significantly for those below 60 per cent median income.

From the survey responses a mean relative material deprivation score (RMDS) can be calculated. A higher score implies greater deprivation. For clothes and shoes, consumer durables and leisure activities London has the highest score. It has the highest overall score with 8.15. [Table 5]

Just over half of families with children in London that have below 60 per cent of median income live in social housing compared to 29 per cent for all families with children. Twenty-eight per cent of families with children in London that have below 60 per cent of median income live in a flat, this is double the equivalent figure for Great Britain as a whole. [Table 7]

The bedroom standard overcrowding measure is defined as the number of bedrooms the household has compared with number of bedrooms needed. For London the percentage that live in over crowded accommodation (i.e. one or more bedrooms below the number actually needed) is 20 per cent rising to 28 per cent for those below 60 per cent median income. The equivalent figures for Great Britain are 10 and 19 per cent respectively. [Table 9]

The age of the youngest child and the number of children appears to have little affect regarding poverty. The pattern for all families compared to those families with below 60 per cent median income are roughly equal. [Table 10]

In London 22 per cent of families with children do not have English as their first or main language, this rises to 29 per cent for those families with below 60 per cent median income. This compares to six and nine per cent respectively for Great Britain. [Table 11]

Thirty-six per cent of all families with children are of non-white origin, rising to 42 per cent for those with below 60 per cent median income. In Great Britain only eight per cent of all families with children are of non-white origin, rising to 12 per cent for those with below 60 per cent median income. [Table 11]

Introduction

The 2004 Family and Children's Study (FACS) is the sixth in a series of annual surveys to investigate the circumstances of British families with dependent children. The study began in 1999 with a survey of all lone parent families and low/moderate income couples. In 2001 the third annual study was enlarged to be representative of all families with dependent children.

The study is commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions, and sponsored by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, Department for Education and Skills, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Department for Transport.

The focus of the surveys has widened to take into account new or modified Government policies. These new policies include the long-term targets to eradicate child poverty by 2020 and to reduce child poverty by half by 2010, as well as objectives to increase the proportion of households (particularly lone parents) in paid work.

The Study provides an opportunity to compare all families with children with those who have an income below 60 per cent of median income (after housing costs) – the official definition of poverty. This Briefing presents statistics for London compared to Great Britain as a whole.

The source used for measuring poverty is the 'Households Below Average Income' (HBAI) series. Direct comparisons with figures from FACS should be avoided because the HBAI is based on households whereas FACS is based on families with children. However, for the purpose of this report, the below 60 per cent median figure from the 2004/05 HBAI was used to identify those families in poverty.

Background to FACS

The main objectives of the FACS surveys are to provide information on:

- the effects of work incentive measures;
- the effects of policy on families' living standards;
- changes in family circumstances over time.

Specifically to look at:

- the impact of benefits and tax credits in supporting families with young children;
- barriers to work, particularly for low income families, and measures to overcome such barriers; and
- general family welfare issues.

Sample design

FACS began in 1999 and annual surveys are currently planned until at least 2006. The dual objectives of the initial sample design were to provide a representative sample of Britain's low-income families, while at the same time generating a sample of sufficient

size for a longitudinal study. Child Benefit (ChB) records were used as the sampling frame for the initial sample.

Each year the longitudinal sample is refreshed with a booster sample of new families in order to ensure it is representative of all families. The booster sample is made up of 'new' families due to the birth of a baby and, in 2001, the sample was expanded to include all families with children, regardless of income level. FACS, therefore, is now a survey of all families with dependent children.

The family unit

In FACS, the family unit must comprise at least one dependent child (see definition of dependent child below) and at least one adult who is responsible for this child. The adult responsible for the child can be the child's natural or adoptive parent, or the legal guardian(s) to whom child benefit is paid.

The main respondent/'mother figure'

In FACS, information about the family is collected principally from one family member – usually the mother or the 'mother figure'. In the 2004 study, only two per cent of main respondents were men (131 cases), the majority of whom (66 per cent) were lone fathers.

Dependent child

A dependent child is defined as any resident child aged 16 or under, or aged 17 or 18 and in full-time education.

The FACS surveys were carried out via a face-to-face interview with the mother and the partner (where available). The interview for 2004 was broadly similar to previous waves, with the exception of a new section of the interview on the New Tax Credits (NTC) renewal process.

Mother's interview

In 2004 the main themes covered in the mother's interview were:

- information about the family unit:
 - family composition;
 - relationship histories;
 - contact with non-resident parents;
 - housing;
 - receipt of other social security benefits;
 - receipt and the renewal process of NTCs (Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC));
 - other income and savings;
 - expenditure and hardship.

- information about the main respondent herself:
 - education and training;
 - health;

- caring responsibilities;
 - employment and self-employment;
 - work history;
 - unemployment and job search.
- information about each specific dependent child:
 - health;
 - school and education;
 - problems and use of local services;
 - parental aspirations for children;
 - childcare arrangements.

Partner's interview

For couple families, a short interview was carried out with the partner. The partner interview included information on:

- education and training;
- health;
- employment and self-employment;
- earnings;
- unemployment and job search; and
- caring responsibilities.

Response rates in 2004

The initial sample selected for the 2004 wave of FACS consisted of 9,179 families. The overall yield of interviews from these eligible addresses was 7,471 – giving a response rate of 81 per cent. However, only 6,940 respondents satisfied the definition of a 'family with dependent children' (as some family children had become adults) to be used in the cross-sectional analysis. From these families, 12,727 dependent children were identified. Interviews were conducted with two distinct types of family – lone parents and couples. Nationally, approximately three in ten interviews (28 per cent) were with lone parent families, and the remainder (72 per cent) with couples.

Non-response and weighting in 2004

A weight was developed to ensure that the sample, when analysed as a cross-section, has characteristics very close to those of the population of all families with children. In FACS 2004, five separate pieces of information were used in the weighting procedure:

- age distribution of child benefit recipients;
- number of dependent children;
- region;
- proportion of lone parents;
- number/proportion of NTC recipients.

Table 1 Occupational and industrial group of main respondent, 2004	London		Great Britain	
	All Families with Children %	Families with children (below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %	All Families with Children %	Families with children (below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %
Respondent SOC-2000 major groups				
Managers and senior officials	14	9	9	5
Professional occupations	18	10	11	4
Associate professional and technical	18	9	16	8
Admin and secretarial	20	25	20	16
Skilled trades	...	...	2	1
Personal services	16	25	16	19
Sales and customer services	...	...	11	19
Process, plant and machine operatives	...	...	2	3
Elementary occupations	8	6	11	24
Total	100	100	100	100
Respondent SIC Group				
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	...	...	0	0
Mining and quarrying	...	...	...	...
Manufacturing	7	8	7	6
Electricity, gas and water supply	...	...	7	7
Construction	...	...	1	1
Retail, hotels & catering	77	78	19	32
Transport & communications	...	...	3	3
Banking, finance & business services	20	9	16	11
Other services-health, education, public admin	56	58	52	46
Total	100	100	100	100

Chart 1 Occupational group of main respondent, London, 2004

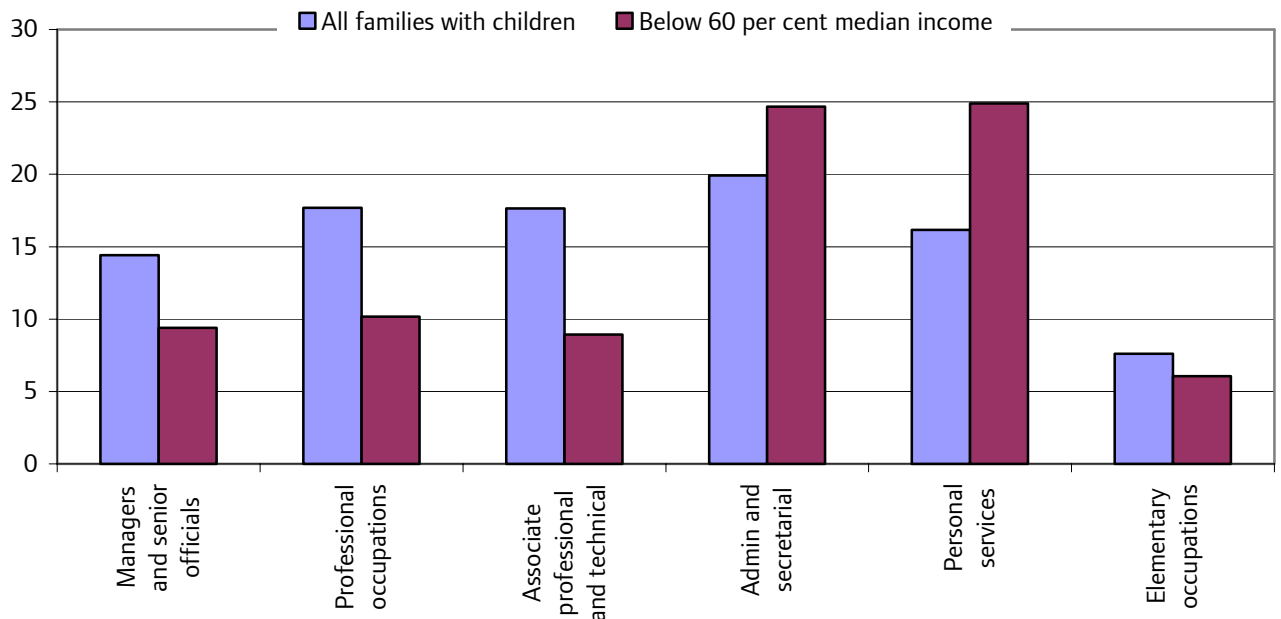


Table 2 Highest academic qualification in the family, 2004	London		Great Britain	
	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %
GCSE grade D-G and equivalent	8	9	14	17
GCSE grade A-C and equivalent	28	25	37	35
GCE A-level/SCE Higher grades (A-C) & equiv.	13	12	13	9
First degree	19	11	14	6
Higher degree	9	4	5	2
Other academic qualifications	5	6	3	2
None	18	32	15	28
Total	100	100	100	100

Chart 2 Highest academic qualification for families in London, 2004

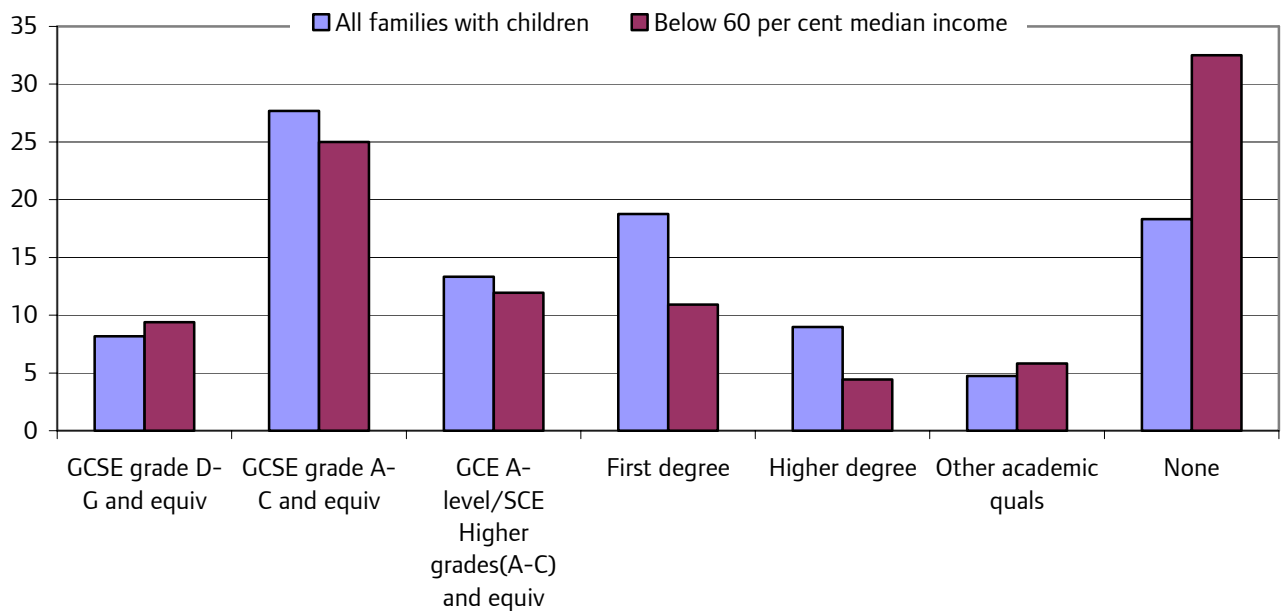


Table 3 Benefits received (percentage of all families with children), 2004	London		Great Britain	
	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %
Received New Tax Credits (WTC and/or CTC)	47	47	65	56
Income Support received	21	47	14	42
Incapacity Benefit received	3	5	3	6

Table 4 Work status of main respondent and the family unit, 2004	London		Great Britain	
	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %
Respondent Work Status				
Respondent working 30+ hours	29	9	29	8
Respondent working 16-29 hours	17	7	28	17
Respondent working <16 hours	8	7	10	7
Respondent not working	45	77	33	67
Total	100	100	100	100
Family unit working status				
Lone parent working 16+ hours	10	6	12	12
Lone parent not working 16+ hours	20	48	13	41
Couple both working 16+ hours	31	5	42	8
Couple one working 16+ hours	33	27	29	25
Couple neither working 16+ hours	6	13	5	14
Total	100	100	100	100
What are you currently doing?				
Working 16 or more hours	47	16	57	25
Working fewer than 16 hours	8	7	10	7
Unemployed and seeking work	4	8	2	7
On a training scheme,	...	...	...	...
Full time education/at school	...	...	1	4
Sick/disabled	...	...	2	4
Looking after the home or family	37	63	26	52
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 5 Mean relative material deprivation score (RMDS), 2004	Food and meals mean	Clothes and shoes mean	Consumer durables mean	Leisure activities mean	All items means
North East	2.96	4.66	4.09	10.82	5.08
North West	3.29	5.00	3.75	10.36	5.01
Yorkshire and The Humber	3.73	6.04	4.56	10.83	5.73
East Midlands	4.49	7.53	3.87	13.39	6.35
West Midlands	3.76	4.75	3.33	9.00	4.66
South West	3.14	4.99	3.02	9.38	4.51
Eastern	4.96	7.08	3.26	11.44	5.77
London	4.21	8.53	6.19	17.57	8.15
South East	3.07	4.59	3.17	10.92	4.73
Wales	5.49	7.91	5.33	16.86	7.81
Scotland	5.53	6.54	4.25	14.79	6.74
Great Britain	3.98	6.08	4.02	12.18	5.79

Table 6 Material deprivation of family unit, 2004		London		Great Britain	
		All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %
No of durables can't afford in 2004	0	61	35	68	41
	1	14	18	14	20
	2	8	13	8	14
	3+	17	33	10	24
	Total	100	100	100	100
No of entertainment items can't afford in 2004	0	56	28	65	33
	1	11	13	14	19
	2	13	22	9	16
	3+	20	38	13	32
	Total	100	100	100	100
No of clothes items can't afford in 2004	0	75	57	80	57
	1	9	15	8	15
	2	7	11	5	11
	3+	9	18	6	17
	Total	100	100	100	100
No of food items can't afford in 2004	0	84	67	86	68
	1	9	17	8	15
	2	3	6	3	6
	3+	4	10	4	11
	Total	100	100	100	100

Note:

Material deprivation reflects aspects of poor living standards by indicating the inability to afford/access items including: food and meals; clothing and shoes; consumer durables; and leisure activities. A family is defined as deprived of an item if it did not have it and wanted it but could not afford it.

To account for the importance of different items and activities, a methodology that defines deprivation relative to the prevalence of the item among all families is used. This approach weights each item according to the proportion of families that own it. A higher weight is given to an item that is widely owned – so to go without this item implies more serious deprivation. This approach is based on the assumption that it is more serious to go without something that most other families have, such as a telephone, than to go without a less commonly held item, such as cable television.

Relative material deprivation score (RMDS) calculated using disadvantage items and weighted according to ownership of the item among all families. Higher scores imply greater deprivation. (see Table 5).

Table 7 Families with children by type of tenure and accommodation, 2004	London		Great Britain	
	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %
Tenure type				
Owned outright	9	7	7	4
Mortgage	52	26	62	30
Shared ownership	...	...	1	1
Social tenant	29	51	22	48
Private tenant	7	12	7	15
Other arrangement	...	...	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100
Type of accommodation				
House	81	72	93	86
Flat	19	28	6	13
Total	100	100	100	100

Chart 3 Families with children in London by tenure type, 2004

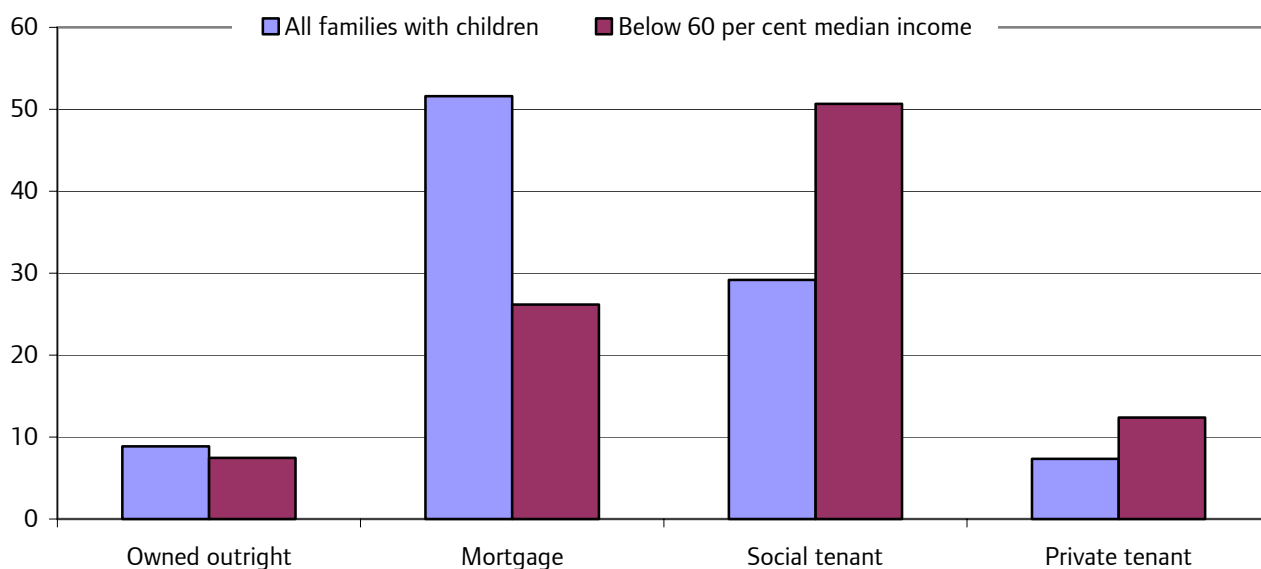


Table 8 Families with children by family type, 2004	London		Great Britain	
	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %
Couple	70	46	75	47
Lone Parent	30	54	25	53
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 9 The bedroom standard overcrowding measure, 2004 The bedroom standard overcrowding measure is defined as the number of bedrooms the household has compared with number of bedrooms needed.	London		Great Britain	
	All Families with Children	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC)	All Families with Children	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC)
		%		%
1 or more below	20	28	10	19
Equal	39	46	38	48
1 above	29	18	38	27
2 or more above	12	7	14	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Chart 4 Bedroom standard overcrowding measure for families in London

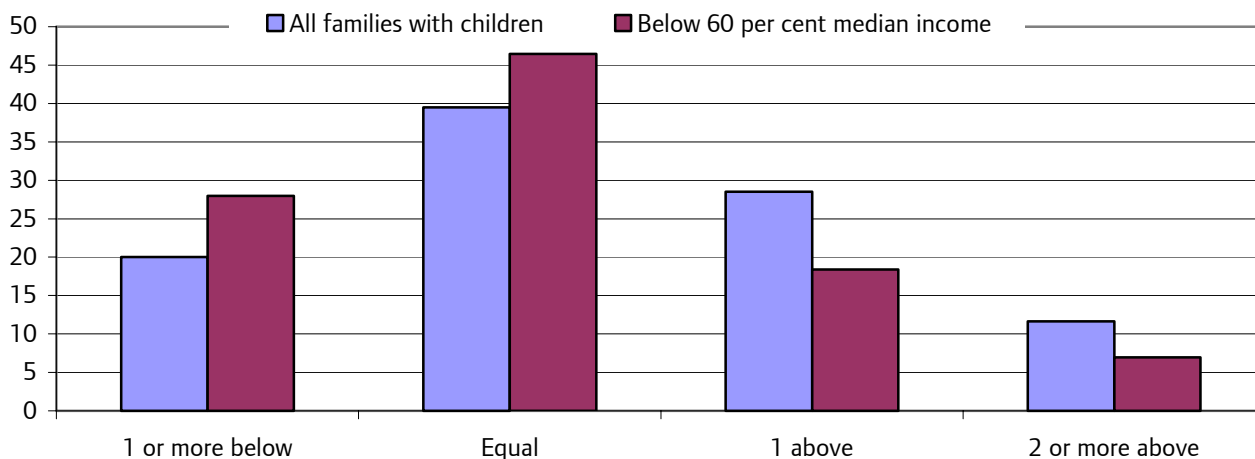


Table 10 Families with children by age of youngest child and number of dependent children, 2004	London		Great Britain		
	All Families with Children	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC)	All Families with Children	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC)	
		%		%	%
Age of youngest child (grouped)	0-4 years	47	51	44	48
	5-10 years	25	20	29	29
	11-15 years	19	19	21	18
	16-18 years	8	9	6	6
	Total	100	100	100	100
Number of dependent children, benefit definition	1	43	44	45	44
	2	36	30	39	33
	3	15	17	12	16
	4+	6	9	4	7
	Total	100	100	100	100

Table 11 Families with children by first language spoken and ethnic group, 2004	London		Great Britain	
	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %	All Families with Children %	Families with children (Below 60 per cent of median income AHC) %
First or main language				
English is first or main language	78	71	94	91
Another language is first or main language	14	21	4	6
Bilingual: English with another language	8	8	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100
Ethnic origin				
White	64	58	92	88
Non-white	36	42	8	12
Total	100	100	100	100

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