

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

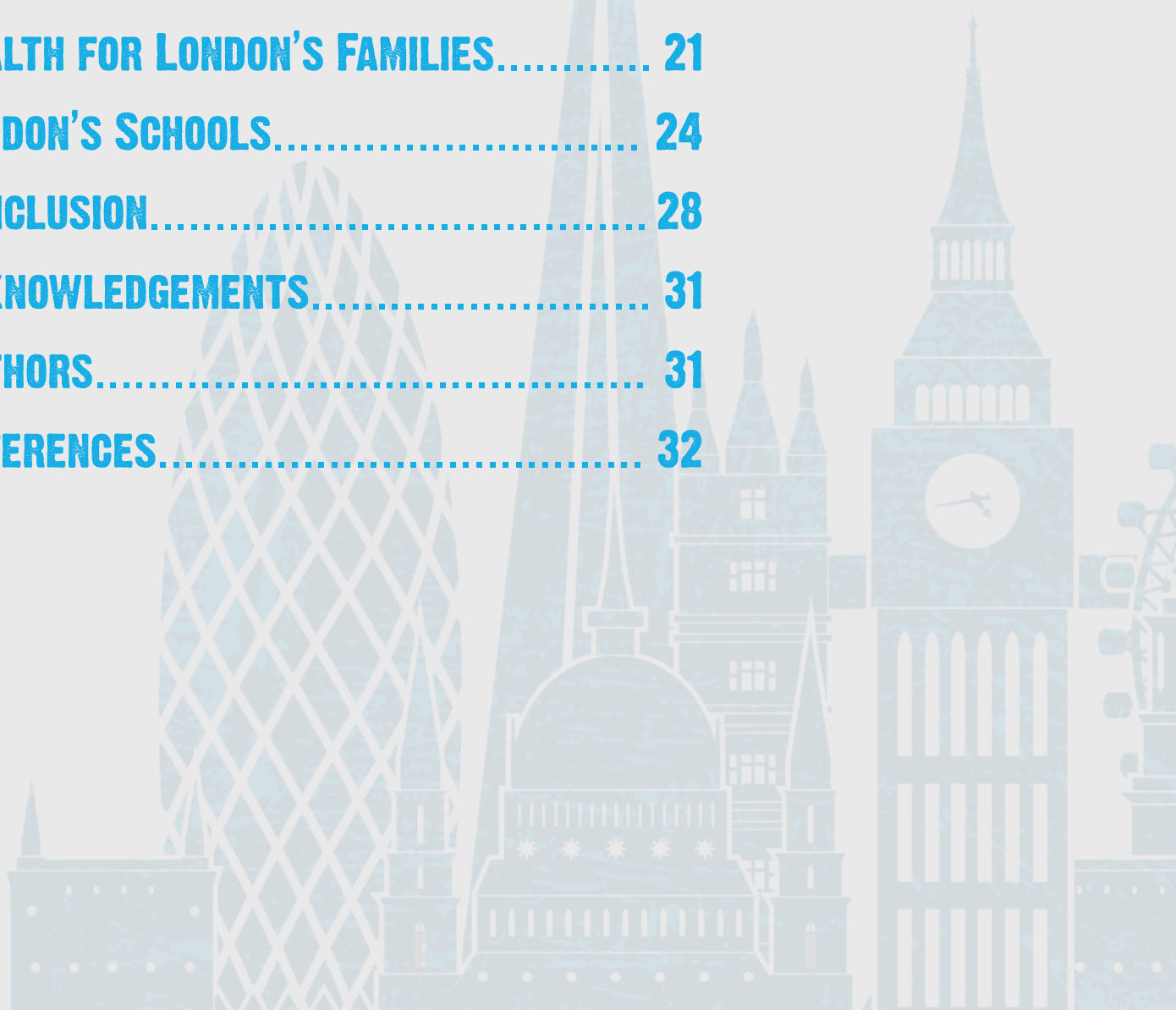


THE CHALLENGE FOR THE NEXT MAYOR

4
in
10 LONDON
CHILDREN
LIVE IN POVERTY

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NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND:

THE CHALLENGE FOR THE NEXT MAYOR

Since 2008, London's population has grown by about 100,000 people a year. In 2012/13, London recorded 131,000 births and fewer than 50,000 deaths. This is a city of growth and of youth. London's population boom is a measure of its economic and cultural success, but there are some notable challenges that come along with this success. The current Mayoral campaign has focused on the unaffordability of housing, alongside the cost of living (high transport costs, higher childcare costs). London policy makers also face the challenge of managing increased demand for public services: schools, health care provision and transport provision.

This report seeks to pull together the data on some of the main challenges facing children in low and middle-income families across in London. We examine key areas for families living in the capital, starting with an overview on child poverty over the last two terms of the current mayor and then moving on to housing, childcare, transport, work, health and education.

4in10 has drawn together these recommendations from practitioners and policy makers in our network of member organisations via a series of events over the last 12 months. They provide the next Mayor with a clear blue print to tackle the scourge of child poverty in the capital.

As we approach 2020, the next Mayor has the opportunity to bring political will, London's vast economic resources and co-ordinated policy making to bear on the issue of child poverty and the pressures of raising a family in the capital. It is possible to bring about change in London for the families experiencing poverty and its impact on the life chances of our youngest residents.

ADE SOFOLA
STRATEGIC MANAGER, 4IN10



CHILD POVERTY IN LONDON

“Over 600,000 children live below the poverty line and London is home to some of the most deprived boroughs in the country. Like Robin Hood we want to draw riches from wealth creators to give life-changing support to the poorest Londoners”¹

BORIS JOHNSON, 2009

Children are more likely to live in poverty in London than anywhere else in the country. 680,000 of London's children live in poverty, or 37 percent compared to 27 per cent nationally.² Since 2008 child poverty rates have remained largely flat in the capital overall, although the profile of households living in poverty has shifted. The number of children living in poverty in social housing has dropped while the number of children in poverty has soared to a quarter of a million in the private rented sector. A decade ago the typical London household in poverty was workless and living in social housing in Inner London; today they are a low-income working household in the private rented sector of Outer London.³ The higher child poverty rate in the capital is a result of spiralling housing, childcare and transport costs, combined with a lack of well-paid, flexible jobs – for mothers in particular.

The Multiple Indices of Deprivation measures and ranks relative deprivation at neighbourhood level in England across a number of factors and while the latest Index suggests a fall in overall deprivation in London, this has not been true for children. In the 2015 Index, despite the fact that no London borough was in the top twenty English local authorities with the most deprived neighbourhoods for the overall population, eight London boroughs still sit in the top twenty most deprived areas for children. Tower Hamlets continues to top the Index with the highest proportion of income deprivation affecting children, and Islington is third, a fall of just one place since 2010. Children in London are much more at risk of poverty than adults. Demographic changes can explain this mismatch in the geography of poverty for children in London compared to the overall population. Data suggests an influx of high skilled, better paid workers moving into Inner London boroughs over the last decade, which has resulted in average incomes rising and thus overall income deprivation falling relative to the rest of the country, yet the Index of Deprivation Affecting Children shows that children in Inner London have been left behind in poverty.⁴

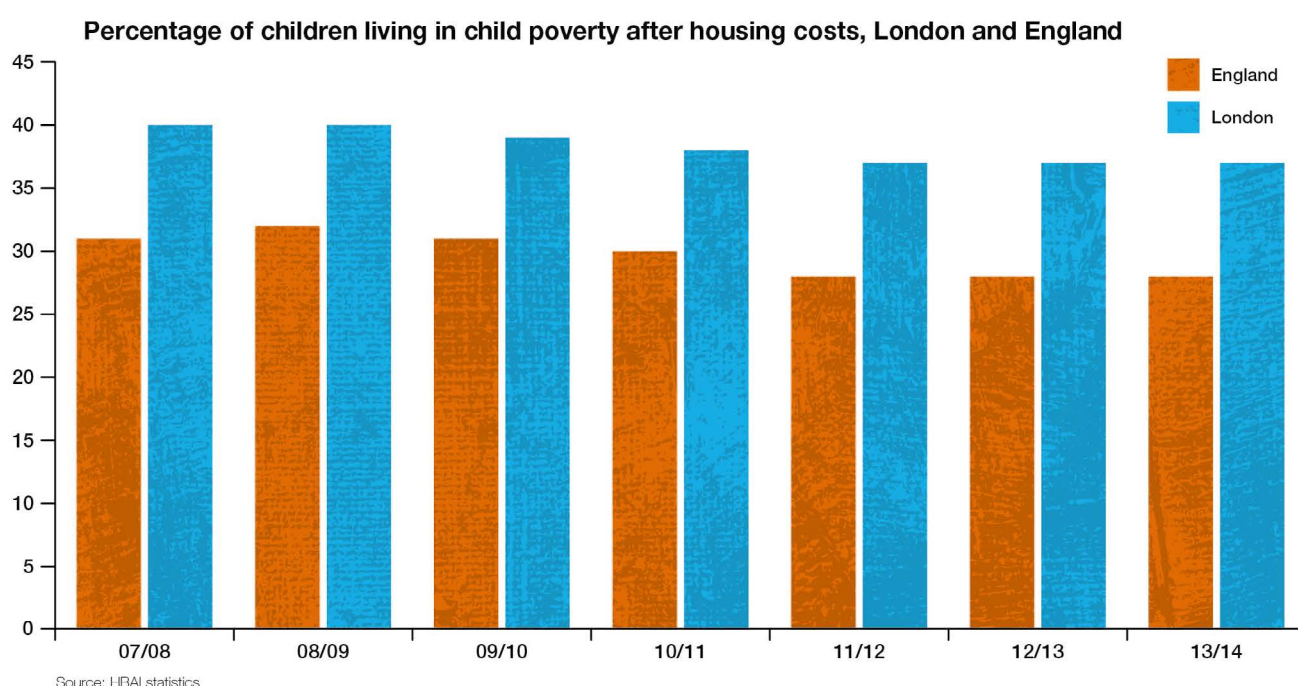
MEETING THE MINIMUM BASIC STANDARD OF LIVING IN LONDON

According to research by Loughborough University for Trust for London, a single parent with a child under two in London would need to earn over £45,000 and couples with two children would have to earn £23,000 each to meet the Minimum Income Standard (MIS), determined by what the public regards as a decent standard of living meeting basic needs and participating minimally in society. 43 per cent of people in families with children in London are below the minimum income standard,⁵ having to make choices about what to sacrifice from this basic living standard, whether a child's birthday present, a day trip out, heating or eating.

“A minimum standard of living... includes, but is more than just, food, clothes and shelter. It is about having what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society.”

UK MINIMUM INCOME STANDARDS STUDY

In 2013/14, 32 per cent of children in London were materially deprived compared with 22 per cent nationally. London's children are more likely to be unable to afford everyday items than children in families elsewhere in the country, such as a bike, having friends round for tea or a snack, celebrations on special occasions, school trips, and eating fresh fruit and vegetables every day.⁶



CHILD POVERTY AND AUSTERITY

Welfare reforms, in particular those affecting housing, have hit families in London hard. Changes to Local Housing Allowance, combined with the 'Bedroom Tax' and Benefit Cap have been particularly difficult for families due to the shortage of reasonably priced and sized housing in London. The Mayor spoke out against government plans to cut Tax Credits⁷ and has sought to create more sustainable, quality jobs through investing in the London Enterprise Panel to support workless and low-income Londoners.⁸ While the level of out of work benefit claims has fallen in the capital in the last five years, almost 90 per cent of households with one or two children affected by the Benefit Cap live in London.⁹ When the cap is lowered to £23,000, an additional 20,000 households in London will be capped.¹⁰

“Benefit cap made a lot of our clients homeless! Some living in very poor conditions. We have been getting numerous clients in need of food vouchers due to benefit cuts. We make a lot of charity applications for clothing, bed sheets and basic essential items.”

KENSINGTON CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU

Children in families with disabled parents are particularly vulnerable to welfare reforms, given that disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to lack work. There are 59,000 people with disabilities who are unemployed in London and the unemployment rate for disabled people who want to work is higher in London than in the rest of the UK.¹¹

Children in families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) due to their immigration status are also particularly at risk. 1,670 NRPF families were supported in 20 London boroughs in 2015, but subsistence payments from local authorities to families with NRPF status are often lower than mainstream welfare support.¹²

The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires local authorities to assess and produce a strategy to reduce child poverty in their area but as councils are restructured due to cuts, keeping a focus on child poverty has become harder. Local authority schemes have replaced government crisis loans for families in short-term emergencies; however central government funding for these has not been ring-fenced.

The Mayor's Fund, a charity which helps young Londoners from disadvantaged backgrounds to escape poverty by acquiring skills and opportunities, was set up by the current Mayor. The Fund supports the delivery of breakfast clubs in 65 schools, alongside literacy and numeracy support to 5,000 of London's pupils.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MAYOR:

- Publish a pan-London Child Poverty Strategy which addresses the key drivers of child poverty including housing, transport and childcare costs, low-income, and maternal employment
- Establish a Deputy Mayor with responsibility and budget for managing the pan-London Child Poverty Strategy with a commitment to an annual report on child poverty in London.
- Promote membership of the NRPF network to local authorities across London



HOUSING IN LONDON



“Housing supply and affordability is now our biggest challenge and we need to double the number of homes being built.”

BORIS JOHNSON, 2013 ¹³



Successive governments have failed to build enough new homes in the UK, but nowhere is the housing crisis worse than in London where the population has risen by a million in a decade. For families this means soaring prices, overcrowding, unstable tenures, poor housing and, for some, homelessness. London still has a higher proportion of low cost, long-term social homes than anywhere else in the country but this is slowly declining and being replaced by more expensive and insecure ‘affordable’ housing.

London’s annual house-building target of 42,000 (32,000 until 2014) has never been met, although the number of new homes being started has increased steadily up to 20,500 in 2014/15 with building varying significantly across boroughs. The lion share of new homes have been built by private property developers, while housing associations completed between 5,500 and 7,500 homes each year – although house-building fell to 4,780 in 2014/15. Councils built just 1,500 new homes between 2008/09 and 2014/15 and many boroughs built no homes at all.¹⁴ A quarter of new homes built in the last year were family-sized with three or more bedrooms: a welcome growth of 15 per cent since 2008/9. However a shortage of affordable family homes persists.¹⁵

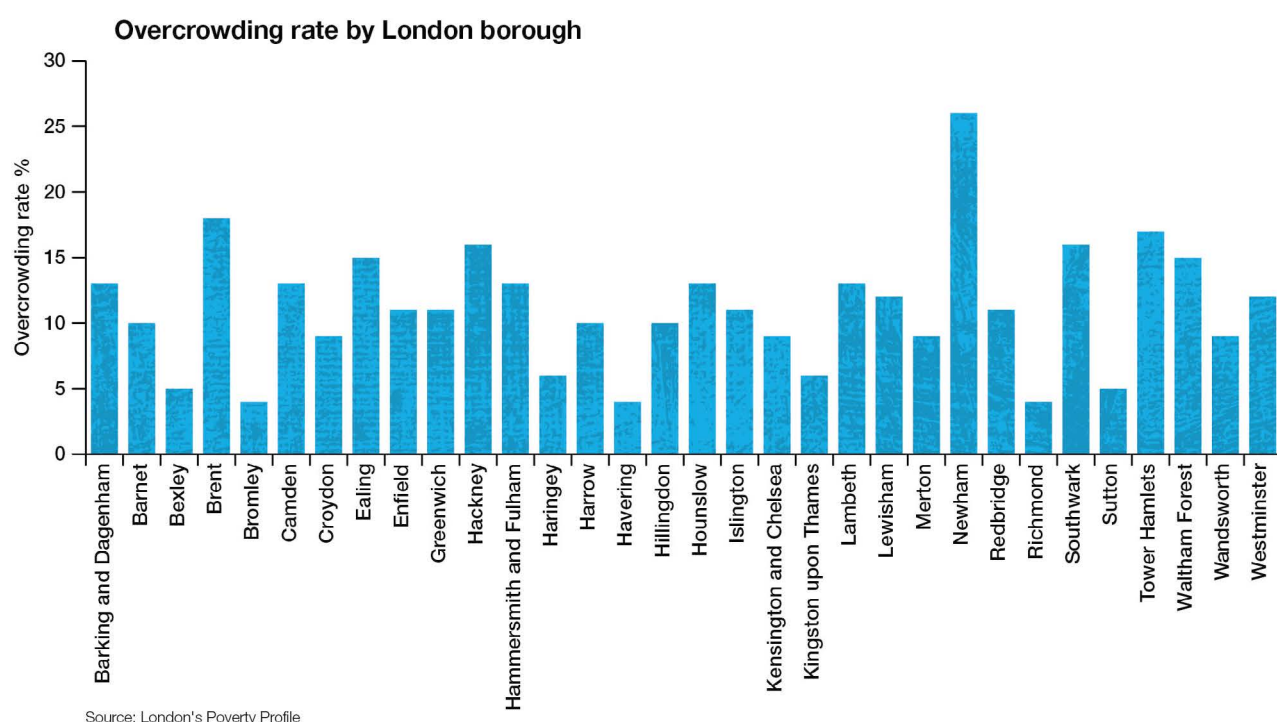
8% OF LONDON’S HOUSEHOLDS ARE OVERCROWDED



The designation of homes as ‘affordable’ recognises that market priced housing in the capital is out of reach for many low and middle income households. The number of affordable homes delivered has fluctuated from 13,000 in 2008, up to 17,000 in 2011, down to 9,230 in 2013. The Mayor said he will have delivered 100,000 affordable homes over his two terms, yet this is well below what is needed. Shortly after taking office, the Mayor scrapped the target for 50 per cent of new homes to be ‘affordable,’ while in 2014 he redefined ‘affordable’ as up to 80 per cent of market prices.¹⁶ With exceptionally high market prices in London, ‘affordable’ homes are simply unaffordable for low and some middle income families. Westminster Council estimates that half of their social tenants have an annual income of less than £12,000 a year, yet to meet the cost of a new ‘affordable’ three bedroom social home in the area families would have to have an annual household income of £109,000.¹⁷

HOUSING IN LONDON IS GETTING MORE EXPENSIVE, INSECURE AND OVERCROWDED

Since 2009, the average London wage has fallen in real terms faster than anywhere else in the country, with wages falling fastest for those on low and middle incomes.¹⁸ At the same time, Londoners pay proportionately more for housing than people in other parts of the country, and since 2008 that price gap has grown for both social and private renters and house-buyers. The average property in the capital now sells for half a million pounds, close to double the average English house price. Only in three London boroughs, Barking and Dagenham, Newham and Tower Hamlets, are the average house affordable for two people on average incomes buying together.¹⁹



The private rented sector has grown significantly in London since 2008, particularly in Outer London. Property firm CBRE Residential says that London has the highest rents of any city on earth, with an average rent of £2,083 per month, more than double the average for the rest of the country.²⁰ In 17 London boroughs, the average weekly rent is more than 50 per cent of average income.²¹ For children, a growing share of whom now reside in the private rented sector, high rents mean less disposable income and less family time if parents are forced to work additional hours to pay that rent, while more frequent house moves disrupt education, friendships and community links. Two thirds of private renters have lived in their current home less than three years compared to the social rent average at 11 years, and 30 per cent of private rented homes in London are below the Decent Homes Standard.²² In 2014, the Mayor of London launched the London Rental Standard, a voluntary accreditation scheme for landlords and housing agents, in a bid to drive up the standards of rental accommodation in the city. Despite setting a target for 100,000 landlords and agents to be accredited by the scheme, in October 2015 just 14,900 landlords and 359 agents had been signed up to the Standard.²³

London's social housing sector has traditionally provided stable, affordable homes for low-income workers and their families. 32 per cent of housing in Inner London is social housing, compared to 17 per cent in Outer London and 16 per cent in the rest of England. However the social housing sector faces challenges. The proposed forced sale of high-value local authority property means Camden, for example, will have to sell 11,714 of its council homes,²⁴ while the plan to demolish social housing estates will affect 360,000 homes and over 1 million people in low-income households in London.²⁵ The extension of Right to Buy to housing associations is currently being piloted in London.

Overcrowding has increased in the social and private rented sectors and 8 per cent of London's households are overcrowded, three times more than in the rest of England. Newham has the highest overcrowding rate at a shocking 25 per cent of households, followed by Brent at 18 per cent.²⁶ Newham also has the highest proportion of concealed families, or multi-family households, in the country at 7.5 per cent.²⁷ The long-recognised negative impacts of overcrowding upon children include poor physical and mental health, worse educational attainment, and lower overall wellbeing.

“I do my homework in the living room but it is very noisy. It makes it quite difficult. Sometimes it gets so noisy so sometimes I do my homework in the toilet ... It's not nice. Well, it's quiet! But there's no table, no chairs. I have to write on the floor.”

JORDAN, 12 ²⁸

A third of London's housing benefit claimants are working. Local Housing Allowance has increasingly been used to top up the wages of privately renting working families as London's private rents have soared.

“Because of the recent legislation e.g. Benefit cap, bedroom tax, and limit on those eligible for housing benefit, families find it more difficult to exist, especially those in the private rented sector.”

KENSINGTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU



HOMELESS FAMILIES STUCK IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Homeless families often have to spend time in temporary accommodation until housing becomes available. In 2008, London had 42,000 households with children in temporary accommodation, falling to 27,000 in 2011 but rising to 39,000 in 2015. The number of children overall in temporary accommodation in London has risen between 2008 and 2015, from 73,000 to 78,000.²⁹ Long periods in temporary accommodation are detrimental to children's wellbeing and education, particularly in unsuitable and expensive B&B style accommodation, however the chronic shortage of affordable housing means many families are kept in B&Bs for longer than the 6 week limit, and London accounted for 57% of the total B&B accommodation used by local authorities nationally in 2015.³⁰

Local authorities unable to afford to temporary accommodation in their own boroughs have been placing families out of the area – a practice which has increased 20 per cent between 2014 and 2015. Wandsworth bought properties to rehouse homeless families in places as far away as West Bromwich, Birmingham, Leicester and Plymouth.³¹ When this happens, families lose their support networks, children's education is disrupted, and London's social mix is lost.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MAYOR:

- Redefine affordable housing to be linked with average income instead of market rate
- Introduce a target of at least 30 per cent of London's new homes to be social housing
- Increase the reach of the London Rental Standard by making it a compulsory scheme
- Explore the expansion of community land trusts in perpetuity with funding from London Trusts and Foundations
- Explore the development of a moratorium on rent rises by setting up the London Living Rent
- Promote a Stable Rental Contract offer in London through the London Rental Standard



CHILDCARE FOR LONDON'S FAMILIES

“High quality childcare is vital to our economy... We want London parents to have access to affordable, flexible provision.”

BORIS JOHNSON, 2013 ³²

There are over one million families with a child in London and in 2014 there were around 628,600 children aged 0 – 4 and 645,000 children aged 5 – 10 in London.³³ Affordable, quality childcare is a key priority for London's families and is crucial in enabling parents to work. The Government's expansion of the free childcare offer for two and three year olds recognises that unaffordable childcare is a key barrier to work.

Enabling parents to return to their careers after having children drives growth in London's economy and increases tax revenue. However in London just 60 per cent of women with dependent children work, compared with 69 per cent of mothers with dependent children who are working in the rest of the UK.³⁴ The high cost and limited supply of quality childcare, longer travelling time and transport costs, and the tax and benefit system all disincentivise women returning to work after having children in London. This was noted in the London Enterprise Panel's 'Growth Deal' plans, which proposed allocating funding to develop childcare facilities and skills in the capital in order to enable more mothers to work.³⁵

“In the families we work with, childcare costs and availability often make it difficult for parents to return to education or work”

ST MICHAEL'S FELLOWSHIP

AVAILABILITY OF CHILDCARE

London experiences high population churn, with more British people moving in and out of the capital than any other UK region.³⁶ On top of internal migration, 37 per cent of Londoners were not born in the UK.³⁷ So whether Londoners moved here from other parts of the UK or abroad, parents are less likely to have family support networks to rely on for childcare. Just one in nine children in London receive informal childcare – three times lower than the average for the rest of England.³⁸ Holiday childcare and before- and after-school provision for children of all ages is expensive and in short supply, forcing some parents to give up work over the summer or send their children out of London over the summer holidays.³⁹

Although central government offers 15 hours a week of early education for the most disadvantaged two year olds and 15 hours a week of free childcare universally for three and four year olds, supply of these places in London is dramatically insufficient. In December 2013, the Mayor of London launched an £8 million fund to boost early years' childcare places in the capital as only half of councils said they had enough nursery places for the government's two year old offer. At the end of 2014, one third of local authorities said they still did not have enough

childcare for working parents and almost all London's boroughs said that they didn't have enough childcare provision for parents on irregular working patterns.⁴⁰ The number of registered childminders, who are best able to provide childcare for families on irregular work patterns, has dropped from 10,457 in 2008 to 8,141 in 2015 in the capital.⁴¹

London has the lowest take-up rates of free early education of any region by eligible families. 26 of the 35 local authorities with the lowest take up rates at 90 per cent or below for three year old free early education are in London, with Westminster the lowest at 68 per cent.⁴² Just 50 per cent of two year olds who are eligible to receive free early education in London are accessing the government offer. The lack of available places, including flexible places, is one reason why take up of the free offer in the capital is so low. Free early education targeting low-income families explicitly aims to promote child development and narrow the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers – but with low numbers of children accessing the offer, London's children are missing out. With the government's free childcare offer for working parents of three and four year olds set to double to 30 hours a week, the crisis of childcare supply is likely to increase.

“*My baby is 19 months, I'm not working because I can't afford childminder and there's nowhere else I can take her, so it's a problem, so cos of that I'm still not working right now, I'm still taking care of her but maybe when she's older, she'll be able to start childcare or something*”

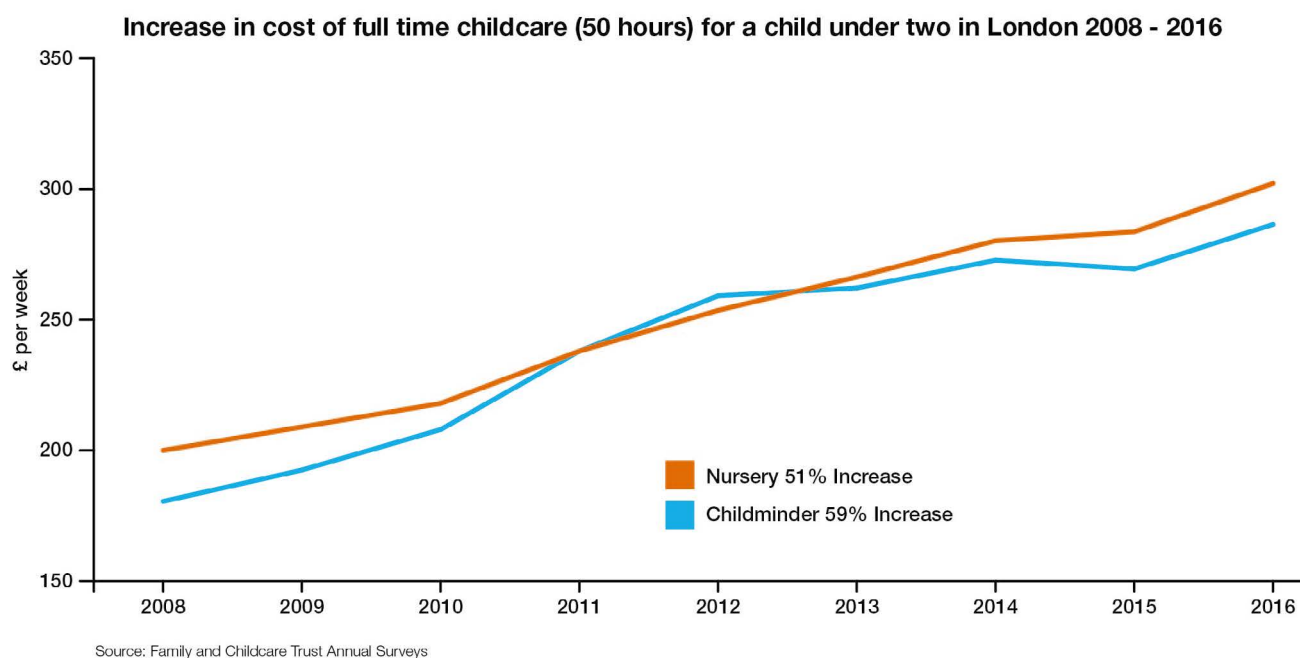
NORTH LONDON MOTHER ⁴³

COST OF CHILDCARE

The high cost of childcare in the capital is a key reason that maternal employment rates in London trail behind the rest of the UK. The minimal financial gains of returning to work when factoring in childcare costs can mean that both parents working full-time does not make financial sense for many families and this is particularly the case for lower income families. Although many of these families receive welfare support, steep taper rates in the current system mean that workers receiving in-work benefits will keep just 27p for every extra £1 earned as a result of reduced entitlement. The proposed Universal Credit system does not adequately incentivise a second earner in a family, usually mothers, to work or take on additional hours,⁴⁴ particularly when factoring in childcare costs, as all of their income will be subject to these high marginal tax rates. Under Universal Credit, a London couple with two children will be £2,000 worse off per year than a couple living elsewhere if both parents are working, due to London's higher childcare costs.⁴⁵ The Mayor has encouraged London employers to offer childcare voucher schemes, which bring down the cost of childcare for working parents. However the childcare voucher scheme will be replaced in 2017 with a tax-free childcare scheme, which will only be available to couples with both parents working.

Childcare prices have increased at time when the cost of living has skyrocketed and wages have fallen in real terms. Between 2008 and 2016, the weekly cost of full-time care for a child under two in London increased by 51 per cent for a nursery place up to £302.17 and by 59 per cent

up to £286.48 with a childminder. For a child aged over two, the cost of a full-time nursery place increased by 65 per cent and by 70 per cent with a childminder. 15 hours at an out-of-school club costs parents 49 per cent more in 2016 than it did in 2008.⁴⁶ It's easy to see why parents might not find it cost-effective to return to work with such huge increases in childcare costs.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MAYOR:

- Incentivise flexible and family-friendly skilled part-time jobs and training and apprenticeship opportunities for parents who want to return to work or improve their skills
- Pump-prime childcare provision in London to ensure a sufficient supply of childcare places so that parents can access the government free childcare offer
- Fund a childcare deposit guarantee scheme to help get parents back into work (particularly targeted at second earners)
- Encourage employers to develop childcare schemes, particularly focusing on holiday and after- and before-school provision
- Create a Universal Childcare Trust Scheme to maximise central government subsidies and leverage monies from London businesses to create a universal childcare offer based on the model in Kirklees
- Provide small loans and start-up advice for childminders across the city (to increase the number of childminders who are more able to offer atypical hours childcare to parents)

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON'S FAMILIES

“Transport costs account for a sizeable chunk of people’s budgets, and whilst the economy is now showing some very positive signs, Londoners, who’ve played a huge part in the recovery, are still feeling the pinch.”

BORIS JOHNSON, 2013 ⁴⁷

Affordable and efficient public transport provision in London is crucial for families: 43 per cent of households have no vehicle, compared to 21 per cent in the rest of England.⁴⁸ Londoners can travel by bus, tram, Tube, train and even by cable car, and public transport is used every day by millions of families to get to school, work, shops, to visit friends and enjoy leisure activities. The ease of transport use in London and travelling time all have a big impact on Londoners’ quality of life.

Transport also plays an important role in the city’s economy, not only enabling Londoners to get to work, but also driving growth and regeneration where new transport routes open. The importance of public transport in London is reflected in the Mayor’s strategic planning and provision oversight through his role as Chairman of Transport for London.

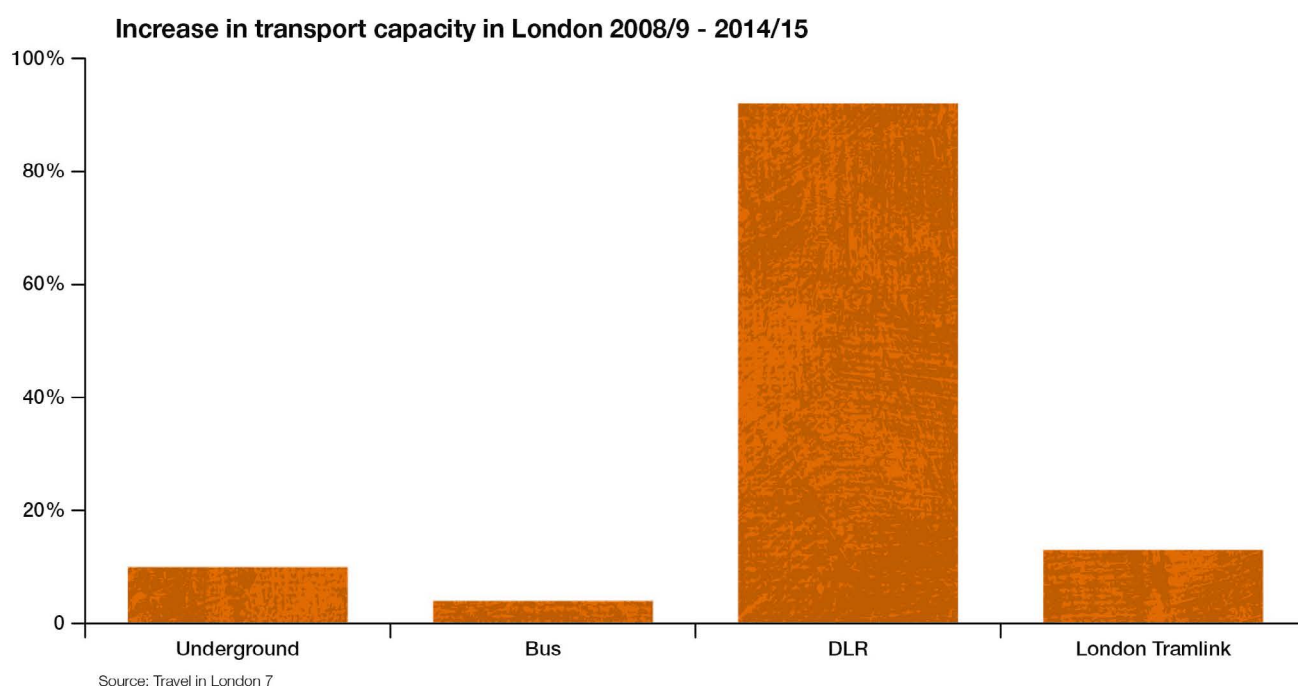
INCREASED PUBLIC TRANSPORT CAPACITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

In his first year, the Mayor outlined a ten-year transport investment plan to deliver a substantial 31 per cent capacity increase in the capital’s overall transport network by 2018. Since 2008, London has introduced the New Routemaster buses, the ‘Boris Bikes’ public bicycle scheme, and the Emirates Air Line cable car service across Thames – and Crossrail construction continues. Underground capacity has increased by 9.8 per cent and London Tramlink by 13.1 per cent, and preparations for the London Olympics in Stratford saw DLR capacity rocket up by 91.9 per cent.⁴⁹ However, bus capacity rose by just 4.3 per cent since 2008, and TfL’s plans to grow capacity in the next few years do not meet its own forecasts for increased demand on London’s overstretched bus network.

The overall increase in transport capacity has given Londoners more options in the types and routes of public transport they can take, and satisfaction with TfL services has increased. However, public transport remains crowded, largely as a result of London’s population which rose from 7.8 million in 2008 to 8.5 million in 2014.⁵⁰

Around a quarter of Tube stations, half of all London Overground stations, most piers and all DLR stations now have step-free access from street to platform and all buses have low-floor access, making public transport more accessible for all. Nevertheless, parents with young children still have to negotiate the three quarters of Tube stations with steps, while others find themselves left at bus stops due to a lack of pram space on the bus that arrives, making travelling with small children unreliable and difficult for London’s families. Half of all bus trips in England take place in

London,⁵¹ yet bus capacity in the capital has increased considerably less than capacity on other modes of transport.



“I’ve had to get on a bus with my daughter before and she was a small kid and it’s not pleasant when you can’t get on a bus, you’ve got a buggy, there’s two buggies on the bus already you can’t get on. It’s not nice; it’s horrible.”

LONDON MOTHER ⁵²

SOARING FARES HIT LONDON’S FAMILIES

Travel prices in London have grown steadily for all adult and some child ticket types since 2008. Under the current Mayor, Tube travelcards for adults and children aged over 5 have increased by around a third. A parent living in Outer London and travelling to work in the city pays £580 more for an annual Tube travelcard in 2016 than they did in 2008 – an increase of 32.5 per cent. Adult bus and tram passes have soared by almost two thirds in the last eight years, with a parent living in Outer London travelling to work in the city paying £328, or 63 per cent more. As Londoners on the lowest incomes tend to use the bus rather than the Tube, fare increases under the current Mayor have disproportionately hit London’s poorest families.

While most people commuting into zone 1 choose the quickest or best commute, one in four people commuting from Outer London choose the cheapest route rather than the shortest or most convenient. One in five people commuting from Outer London to zone 1, or 156,000 people, cut other household spending such as food and utilities in order to meet the costs of travelling to work. Low earners are more likely to use the bus as a cheaper travel option, despite overcrowding on the network with bus capacity expansion having seen significantly less

investment than other modes of transport have enjoyed under the Mayor. While all Londoners are concerned about rising travel costs, people on low-incomes are worried that further fare increases could affect their ability to work in zone 1 and therefore earn the higher salary this offers.⁵³

“Public transport in London is amazing, but the Tube is effectively inaccessible to anyone on a low-income.”⁵⁴

With 22 per cent of Londoners working part-time, many with unpredictable shift patterns, transport fares need to cater for families who work flexibly and don't benefit from existing travelcards. PAYG Oystercard bus travel soon adds up as a single journey can require several buses. The three day travelcard was discontinued by the current Mayor in 2010, putting a strain on the budget of low-income families with parents (usually mothers) working part-time. In 2015, however, TfL adjusted the daily PAYG fare cap on Oyster cards to benefit part-time workers. This has been particularly beneficial for those commuting into the city from Outer London, where the yearly saving (compared to the previous year) for travelling 3 days a week was £553.

Children under 5 travel free on all transport in London. Through the ZIP Oyster photocard schemes, children under 16 can travel free on buses and trams and pay a child rate on the Tube, DLR, London Overground, and most National Rail services. The 16+ Zip Oyster photocard enables children aged 16 and 17 (and up to 19 if in full-time education) to buy a child rate travelcard or pay half the adult rate PAYG on bus, Tube, DLR, London Overground, and most National Rail services. Continued free bus and tram travel for under 16s is crucial in relieving pressure on family budgets, as well as giving children and young people from all backgrounds access to the capital's cultural and leisure activities. Nonetheless, travel for over 16s, and for those aged under 16 who need to use transport other than the bus or tram, has increased by a third with a travelcard and by two thirds for PAYG fares, putting a huge strain on family budgets.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MAYOR:

- Invest significantly in London's bus network, putting more buses on the streets and opening up new bus routes in underserved areas
- Freeze bus fares in London and introduce time-limited PAYG bus tickets
- Increase the number of underground stations with step-free access
- Ensure that TfL provides open data on bus routes



LONDON'S WORKING FAMILIES

“The London Living Wage rewards hard working Londoners for their valuable contribution to the productivity and growth of this city's economy. It is a win-win scenario for the workforce and employers alike.”

BORIS JOHNSON, 2014 ⁵⁵

London's economic growth since 2008 has been stronger than any other region and unemployment has decreased from eight per cent to six per cent in the capital, the lowest ever level.⁵⁶ Yet beneath the headline employment figures there has been a huge rise in self-employment, casual and flexible contracts, low pay and in-work poverty. For Londoners there has been a growing gap between the high cost of housing, transport, childcare and bills and their wages: the proportion of jobs paying less than the London Living Wage (LLW) has increased by 54 per cent. 21 per cent of people in working families in London are now in poverty, compared to 15 per cent a decade ago.⁵⁷

During the recession, employers reduced hours, increased casual contracts, and froze pay to protect jobs. Employers have increasingly used part-time, temporary, and zero-hours contracts, with the proportion of London workers on part-time and temporary contracts increasing from 25 per cent to 29 per cent between 2008 and 2015.⁵⁸ It may be that the trend towards casualised labour will reverse as the economy recovers and companies choose to keep experienced workers as part of a growth strategy. On the other hand, many see increased labour casualisation as part of a wider goal of companies to reduce their responsibilities to employees, and if this is a longer-term structural change in the economy families are likely to experience greater job insecurity and in-work poverty.

GETTING THE RIGHT MIX OF FLEXIBLE AND QUALITY JOBS FOR LONDONERS

Flexible jobs can be beneficial to both families and business in the right circumstances. Some parents choose to work part-time to reduce the cost of childcare and to balance work with family and caring responsibilities. For employers, part-time working can increase productivity and employee engagement and wellbeing. However, casual contracts often offer weaker employment rights, lacking automatic sick pay, maternity and paternity leave, paid annual leave, pension contributions, and training. The number of hours available from week to week can vary heavily and often at short notice, leaving families with fluctuating incomes and little stability. Casual contracts have come to be associated with low paid, insecure jobs and in-work poverty.⁵⁹ 35 per cent of part-working families are in poverty compared to 9 per cent of families on full-time contracts. Those working in London's hospitality and retail sectors are particularly likely to be low paid and on casual contracts.

35% OF PART-WORKING FAMILIES ARE IN POVERTY



COMPARED TO 9% OF FAMILIES
ON FULL-TIME CONTRACTS

“

“More employers offering zero hours contracts, more clients feel that they have to take this type of work because of pressure from their Housing Advisor or Benefit Advisor.”

NOTTING HILL HOUSING TRUST

”

The Mayor has championed growth in London's economy but while jobs in London increased at a faster rate than in UK as a whole since 2008, London's productivity growth has been slower than in the UK. Overuse of flexible contracts has weakened the productivity of London's economy by under-utilising a workforce who do want to work more hours and by under-investing in training and skills. There are 96,000 Londoners on zero hours contracts, and four in ten of those on such contracts would like to work more hours.⁶⁰ The proportion of mid-skilled jobs declined by 13 per cent in London between 2008 and 2015 and workplace training decreased, creating a “hollowed-out” labour market in the capital. There are many low skilled and high skilled jobs but fewer opportunities for career progression into mid-skilled and better paid jobs, creating what the London Assembly has described as an “hourglass economy”.⁶¹

At the high skilled and high paid end of the market, there are not enough flexible work opportunities. Although part-time jobs are growing at a faster rate than full-time jobs, just three per cent of jobs advertised in the capital with a salary greater than £20,000 FTE are part-time or open to flexibility.⁶² Many mothers returning to work after having children are unable to find part-time or flexible jobs at their previous skill levels and have to compromise, accepting flexible but lower skilled and paid work, reducing their future career potential, diminishing London's productivity and making them reliant on in-work benefits. The employment gap between mothers in London and in the rest of the country reflects the high costs of childcare, housing and transport in the capital which can make it more cost-effective for one parent to stay at home with young children rather than taking on low-paid work.

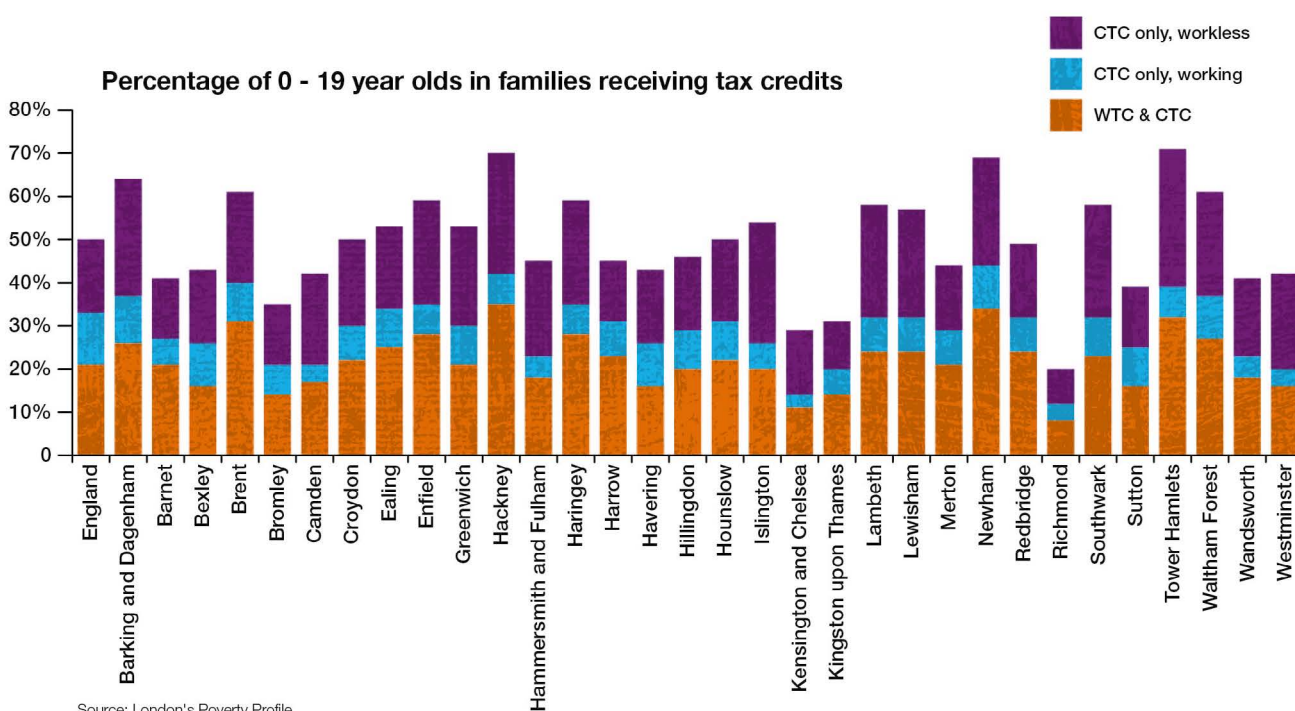
London needs more quality, flexible employment and innovation should be encouraged in meeting demand for jobs that will work better for families, employers and the city's economy. For example, annualised hours, where a worker is contracted to work a certain amount of hours over a twelve-month rather than weekly period, could provide useful flexibility for families and business.

“I have 2 children, one is three next week and since I had him I've not started working... If you are working they will pay you something like £6, £7, you will not even make enough to pay for childcare. The salary we are paid is little and not enough to pay for childcare”

NORTH LONDON MOTHER ⁶³

TACKLING LOW PAY IS KEY TO DECREASING IN-WORK POVERTY

Tackling low pay is crucial in reducing poverty for working families, as well as cutting the benefits bill for government. Currently, in-work benefits are needed to top up the wages of low-income working families who cannot make ends meet in London. A third of London's Housing Benefit claimants are working, and there are 64,000 0 – 19 year olds in London in working families receiving tax credits, whether Child Tax Credit only or in addition to Working Tax Credit. The rate of children in families claiming Tax Credit varies significantly across London, with 44 per cent of children in Newham receiving Tax Credits into their working household, and just 12 per cent in Richmond upon Thames. In Inner London, 32 per cent of working families with children receive Tax Credits, while in Outer London it is 29 per cent of families. ⁶⁴



The government is taking steps to tackle endemic low pay and cut the in-work benefit bill by raising the minimum wage to 'National Living Wage' in April 2016. However, at £7.20 an hour, rising to £9 by 2020, this is considerably lower than that set by the Living Wage Foundation and has no London weighting to recognise the higher cost of living in the capital. The Living Wage Foundation's current London rate is £9.15 an hour (£7.85 for the UK). London's low-income workers will lose out on the increase compared to workers across the country, despite the high number of London workers in sectors with pervasive low pay such as hospitality, retail, and social care. The current Mayor has previously called for business to pay the Living Wage Foundation's rate, recognising that better pay ultimately benefits everyone. There are 700 London Living Wage accredited employers in London, higher than the Mayor's target of 250 businesses by the end of his second term but just a drop in the ocean of London's 400,930 registered businesses. Unfortunately, the London Living Wage has not been adopted universally by the GLA Group and the GLA Family, which would have set an excellent example for London's businesses and helped many low-income families.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MAYOR:

- Ensure that the GLA Group and the GLA Family implement the London Living Wage for all their employees and ensure subcontractors do the same using the Social Value Act
- Ensure paid travel time for public sector carers between appointments
- Set up a transparent tipping scheme for London's hospitality sector
- Set up a GLA scheme to promote and recognise innovation in flexible working arrangements by businesses
- Explore the use of TfL assets (land above stations) as spaces for childcare
- Support a campaign to promote the value of working from home (to ease pressure on transport infrastructure)



HEALTH FOR LONDON'S FAMILIES

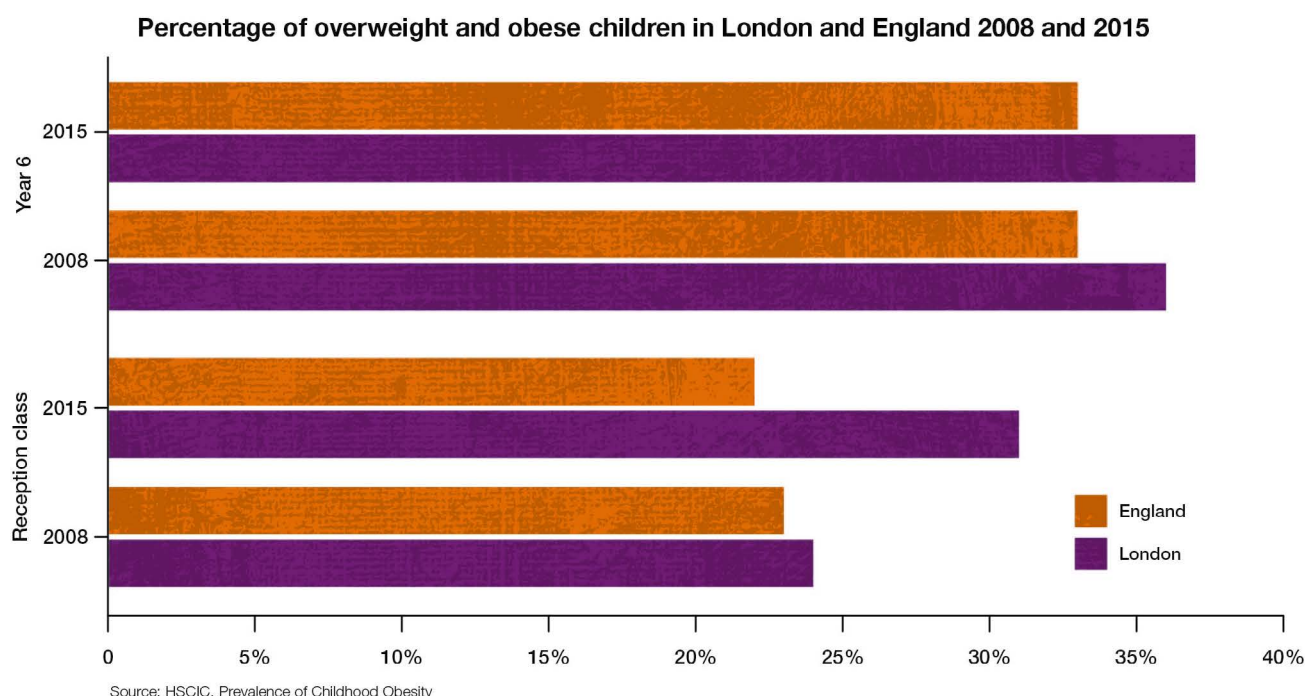


“London is facing major health challenges, including childhood obesity, mental ill health and health inequalities”

BORIS JOHNSON, 2013 ⁶⁵



Health and wellbeing in the capital is affected by many factors, including poverty, housing, and the environmental issues in the local area. Improving children's and families' health requires action in these areas and more. The London Health Board is responsible for addressing strategic health issues in the capital and is chaired by the Mayor.



PROMOTING PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

London's child obesity rates are higher than in the rest of England, with the highest rates found in deprived areas and amongst black African children. 23 per cent of children in year 6 in London are obese, with the highest rate in Southwark at 28 per cent, compared to 19 per cent in England.⁶⁶ Almost one in four children in London's reception classes are overweight or obese. Having a fast food outlet within 160 metres of a school is associated with a 5 per cent increase in obesity, yet many of London's 8,000 fast food shops are close to schools. Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham and Tower Hamlets have refused planning applications for new fast food outlets or restricted them to certain areas: however they have faced legal challenges to this policy.⁶⁷ The London Health Commission recommended fast food exclusion zones within 400 metres of schools; however the Mayor did not include this in the updated London Plan.

“*McDonalds is the healthy end of the market in Tower Hamlets. We have 42 chicken shops per secondary school. Near one of the surgeries, it is not Mile End Road, it is Chicken Shop Mile.*”

DR SAM EVERINGTON OBE, GP AND CHAIR OF TOWER HAMLETS CCG ⁶⁸

Funded by the Mayor, the charity Magic Breakfast provides free, nutritious breakfasts in 50 primary schools across Hackney, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Southwark and Tower Hamlets.⁶⁹ Food poverty, the inability to afford or access healthy food, is on the rise in London. It's linked to child obesity, malnutrition, poor physical and cognitive development, behavioural problems and attainment. Between 2011/12 and 2014/15, the number of three-day emergency food parcels given to children in London by the Trussell Trust increased over sevenfold, from 5,354 food parcels, to 40,043 food parcels.

“*There is a social gradient; poor children are more likely to be obese, poor children are malnourished. This is a mark of deteriorating socio-economic conditions*”

PATIENTS ASSOCIATION, 2014 ⁷⁰

Poor housing conditions, including excess cold, hazardous homes, mould and damp, and overcrowding are also linked to physical and mental ill health and impact children's education. 15 per cent of London's housing stock is poor housing: improving poor housing in London could have a big impact on the health of London's families and save £156 million for the NHS.⁷¹

Just 5 per cent of London's children are physically active⁷² and the city needs to promote walking, cycling and sports, as well as increasing and improving play and green spaces so that children can be active near their own homes. The Mayor set up a Sports Participation Fund and schemes to strengthen sports clubs and groups, but unprecedented local authority cuts have reduced youth provision. Although London has more parks and green spaces than any other comparable global city, they are not always considered safe by parents and young people themselves, limiting the opportunity to play, exercise and relax.

“*If I take the kids to the park, I'm not safe, my kids are not safe*”

NORTH LONDON MOTHER ⁷³

One in ten children and young people aged 5 – 16 have a mental health disorder, or more than 100,000 children in London. In the last ten years, children and young people admitted to hospital for mental health related issues increased by 68 per cent.⁷⁴ Promoting overall pupil wellbeing is not only a worthwhile end in itself but is linked to higher attainment. Clearly, improving mental health awareness and teaching coping strategies in school is vital.

TACKLING AIR POLLUTION

12.5 per cent of London currently exceeds the legal limit for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and 5 per cent of pupils in Inner London are in schools in areas with harmfully high NO₂ levels, with Westminster, Tower Hamlets, Southwark and Camden most at risk. 328,000 school children are exposed to unhealthy levels of NO₂, which is linked to asthma and respiratory infections.⁷⁵ The Mayor has introduced the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) to tackle poor air quality but emissions cuts across the city are needed to improve air quality and protect public health.

HEALTH AND CARE PROVISION

There are wide variations in mortality rates across boroughs for infants and children, with a threefold difference between the best and worst boroughs. However, death rates in London's hospitals are higher than elsewhere. Contributing factors include a large immigrant population that may have more difficulties seeking help, poor access to GPs, and the high number of children's tertiary centres in London with very sick children coming from other parts of the country.⁷⁶ The maternal mortality rate in London is twice that across the UK, with 70 per cent of maternal deaths involving shortfalls in care.⁷⁷

For children with long-term and complex health and care needs in London, whether mental or physical conditions or terminal illnesses, services are fragmented and do not do enough to support families. They and their families need access to health care, social care, housing, education and other services, but evidence suggests these services are often poorly linked. At the end of 2015, London's Mayor, London boroughs and CCGs agreed to run five pilots to test new models of health and care as the first step in London's health devolution deal. The changes could improve health and care provision in London but decision-makers must consistently put children and families at the heart of this emerging deal.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MAYOR:

- Introduce city-wide exclusion zones for new fast food outlets within 400 metres of a school as part of the London Plan
- Support the expansion of universal free school meals for primary school children from four boroughs to all London boroughs through a phased implementation
- Fund youth clubs to provide more free sports and health-related activities with universal access
- Promote health literacy and healthcare access in London's migrant families
- Work with boroughs to explore the diversification of public health points of access to deliver better health care for children and families
- Expand the London Play Streets Project across the capital
- Work with boroughs to develop healthy and safe routes for walking and cycling to school
- Establish clean air zones near London's schools

LONDON'S SCHOOLS

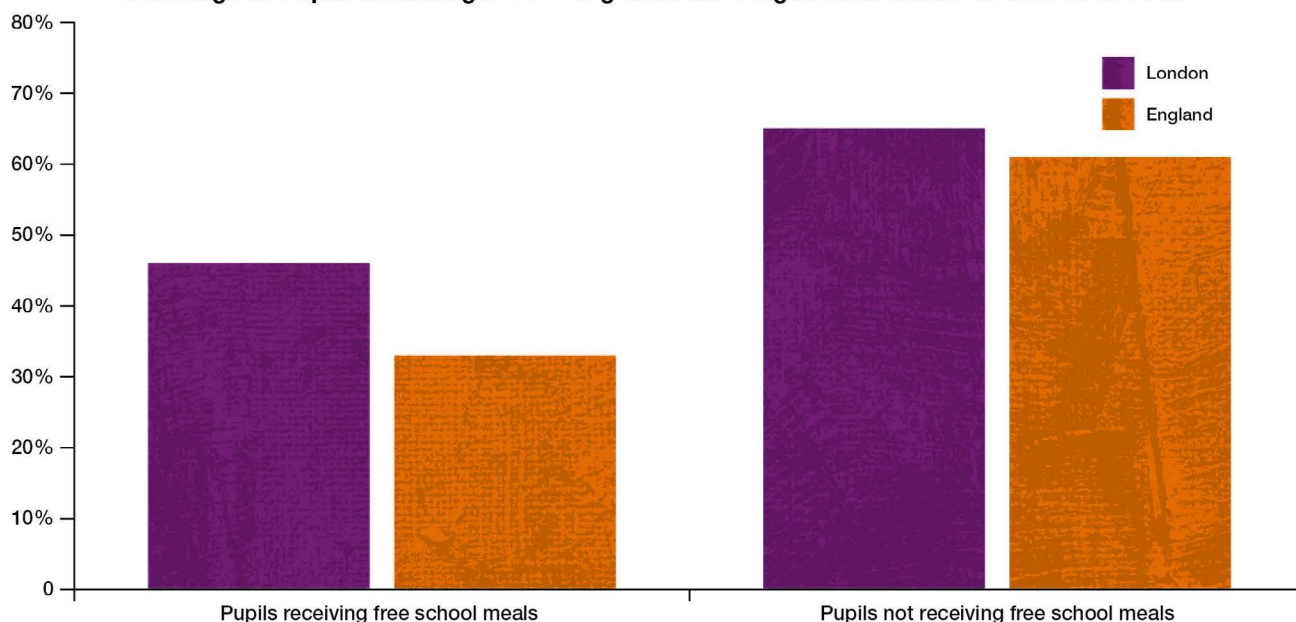
“Academic excellence and social confidence should belong to all children, regardless of their background”

BORIS JOHNSON, 2011⁷⁸

Attainment in London's schools is the best in the country, despite fifteen years ago ranking the worst in the country. The transformation of London's schools has been credited to effective leadership at every level in the system over successive governments. A number of schools improvement initiatives, including the London Challenge, Teach First, and the Academies programme have enjoyed high-level political support over successive governments, transforming the quality of London's schools and closing the attainment gap for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.⁷⁹ Yet London's education system still faces challenges, particularly in school places and crowded classrooms.

Following the Mayor's Education Inquiry in 2012, the London Schools' Gold Club was introduced, building on the London Challenge model of supporting high performing schools in sharing best practice with other schools in the capital, and a £24 million London Schools Excellence Fund was set up. The Mayor has also promoted pupil health and wellbeing, both physical and emotional, through the Healthy Schools London awards.

Percentage of Pupils achieving 5+ A* – C grades inc. English and Maths GCSEs in 2014/15



Source: DfE GCSE and equivalent results in England 2014/15

BETTER SCHOOLS, BETTER OUTCOMES FOR ALL

Today London has the highest proportion of any region in the country of schools judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding.'⁸⁰ At KS2, 11 year olds in London perform better than in the rest of the country and this is repeated at KS4 GCSE level. Attainment in London's schools has risen faster than the national average. Between 2008/9 and 2014/5, the number of pupils achieving at least five A* – C GCSE grades including English and Maths rose by 6.9 percentage points in London as a whole, and in inner city schools by 10 percentage points, compared to a 4 percentage point rise in the rest of the country.⁸¹

The demography of London's pupils is different from the rest of England. 30 per cent of secondary school pupils in Inner London receive Free School Meals (FSM) – just over double the national average. 39 per cent of London's pupils' first language is not English, rising to 52 per cent in Inner London – a huge difference from the national average of 8 per cent. The attainment gap for disadvantaged children in the capital is smaller than in the rest of the country, but the gap for some (not all) minority ethnic groups, children on free school meals and students with Special Educational Needs does remain a persistent problem. While 73.1 per cent of London students achieved 5+ A* – C GCSE grades in 2014/5, only 56.6 per cent of students on free school meals achieved this set of grades.⁸² However, aspirations in London are high, and disadvantaged pupils in London schools are Inner London are now more likely to go to university than better off pupils outside the capital.⁸³

LONDON'S SCHOOL PLACES SHORTFALL MEANS CROWDED CLASSES

London's school-age population has risen faster than in the rest of the country. Primary pupil growth is set to grow by 3 per cent each year between now and 2019. Numbers of secondary school pupils are forecast to increase from 488,000 to 561,000 by 2020, and London Councils calculate a shortfall of just over 35,000 secondary school places over the course of this Parliament.⁸⁴

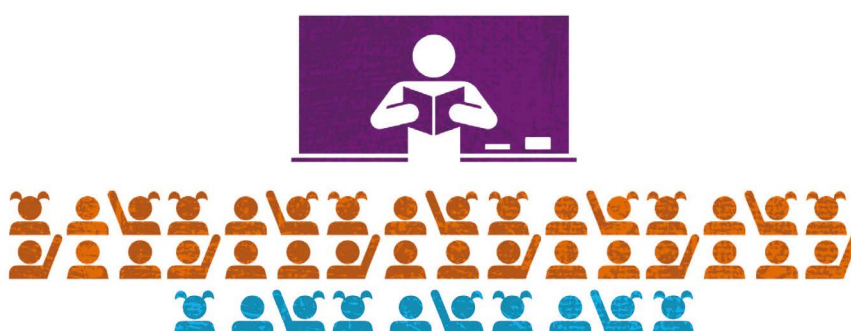
The fragmentation of the education sector via the creation of free schools and academies outside of local authority control means there is no strategic oversight of London's education system. Local authorities cannot open new state-maintained schools. New parent-led free schools cannot always meet high and rising demand and new free schools are not necessarily opened in areas where they are most needed. Councils and schools have worked hard to increase school places, converting music rooms, libraries and even buses into extra classrooms, but there is a huge shortfall in funding from central government for new school places. The high cost of building schools in the capital means that London Councils estimate a £1 billion funding shortfall in funding for new school places.⁸⁵

The shortfall of school places has led to overcrowded classrooms in the capital. 50,000 London pupils are now being taught in classes of more than 30 and 2,700 pupils are now being taught in classes of over 40.⁸⁶ Unless overcrowded classrooms and the substantial school places shortfall is addressed, London's impressive educational gains risk slipping away.

“Without a significant number of new buildings parents and children will need to get used to “a new normal”. This could include longer journeys to school, less chance of getting your school of preference and a less pleasant learning environment with a diminution of play space”

LONDON ASSEMBLY EDUCATION PANEL, 2014 ⁸⁷

**50,000 LONDON PUPILS ARE NOW
BEING TAUGHT IN CLASSES OF
MORE THAN 30**



**AND 2,700 PUPILS ARE NOW
BEING TAUGHT IN CLASSES OF
OVER 40**

Recognising that pan-London strategic education oversight is needed, the Mayor has called for a London Schools Commissioner.⁸⁸ A GLA New Schools Unit has been set up to support the expansion of free schools, including using the GLA's land for building schools, and the Mayor has, in some instances, used his strategic planning powers to ensure that schools are included in new housing developments. These are welcome initiatives, which could be expanded by a new Mayor.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL CHILDREN TO SUPPORT LEARNING

In 2014 the Coalition Government introduced universal free school meals (FSM) for pupils in reception and years 1 and 2. Schools have encouraged parents to continue to register for FSM status as this is a criterion for pupil premium payments – additional funding for raising the attainment of children from low-income backgrounds. However, the proportion of pupils eligible for and claiming FSM status has dropped across all ages groups since 2008. Children in families where parents receive Working Tax Credit no longer receive free meals, even if family income is below the eligibility threshold of £16,190 a year.⁸⁹ Paying for school meals can be a burden on the budgets of many hard-pressed working families in London, who also struggle to pay for expensive school uniforms and school trips.

“Schools we work in are saying a number of families they serve don’t have access to benefits, don’t get listed for FSM eligibility, and that poverty rates are far higher than what is listed.”

SAVE THE CHILDREN UK, AT 4IN10 SEMINAR IN 2015

Data suggests that schools are seeing more hungry children, with 17 per cent of teachers in one London survey saying that their school no longer had a breakfast club although it once did.⁹⁰ Hunger has a big impact upon children’s ability to learn and consequently on educational outcomes. Recognising this, Islington, Newham, Southwark and Tower Hamlets local authorities now fund universal free school meals for all primary school children.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MAYOR:

- Ensure that new housing developments include schools for the community
- Fast-track the use of the GLA’s land for building new schools
- Launch a Mayor’s Schools Food Trust to pull funding from corporate and charitable partners to expand universal free school meals for all primary school children from four boroughs to all London boroughs
- Continue and expand the best practice initiatives which have made London’s schools the best in the country and which require long-term investment
- Lobby government for more funding to address London’s school places shortage
- Improve careers advice for young people by funding London Ambitions through the London Enterprise Panel
- Create a London Challenge to address the post-16 skills gap by ensuring employers are engaged in the design and content of post-16 skills education in London
- Campaign for the London weighting to influence the new funding formula for schools
- Continue the successful Healthy Schools Awards Programme



CONCLUSION

There are many challenges for a new Mayor in ensuring that no child in London is left behind from the capital's economic success. However, there are also many opportunities for developing innovative ways of tackling London's issues.

Some issues can be tackled at regional level, and devolution will potentially increase London's power to do so. Other issues require targeted local intervention but will benefit greatly from Mayoral support and coordination. Finally, when policies set by central government have a disproportionate effect on Londoners, the new Mayor can lobby government for greater powers or for London adjustments.

A city-wide, joined-up approach through a child poverty strategy, overseen by a Deputy Mayor with a budget and remit for child poverty in London, can have a significant impact on child poverty and the life chances of London's children, making London better for everyone both now and in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MAYOR:

CHILD POVERTY

- Publish a pan-London Child Poverty Strategy which addresses the key drivers of child poverty including housing, transport and childcare costs, low-income, and maternal employment.
- Establish a Deputy Mayor with responsibility and budget for managing the pan-London Child Poverty Strategy with a commitment to an annual report on child poverty in London.
- Promote membership of the NRPF network to local authorities across London.

HOUSING

- Redefine affordable housing to be linked with average income instead of market rate
- Introduce a target of at least 30 per cent of London's new homes to be social housing
- Increase the reach of the London Rental Standard by making it a compulsory scheme
- Explore the expansion of community land trusts in perpetuity with funding from London Trusts and Foundations
- Explore the development of a moratorium on rent rises by setting up the London Living Rent
- Promote a Stable Rental Contract offer in London through the London Rental Standard

CHILDCARE

- Incentivise flexible and family-friendly skilled part-time jobs and training and apprenticeship opportunities for parents who want to return to work or improve their skills
- Pump-prime childcare provision in London to ensure a sufficient supply of childcare places so that parents can access the government free childcare offer
- Fund a childcare deposit guarantee scheme to help get parents back into work (particularly targeted at second earners)
- Encourage employers to develop childcare schemes, particularly focusing on holiday and after- and before-school provision
- Create a Universal Childcare Trust Scheme to maximise central government subsidies and leverage monies from London businesses to create a universal childcare offer based on the model in Kirklees
- Provide small loans and start-up advice for childminders across the city (to increase the numbers of childminders) working atypical hours

TRANSPORT

- Invest significantly in London's bus network, putting more buses on the streets and opening up new bus routes in underserved areas
- Freeze bus fares in London and introduce time-limited PAYG bus tickets
- Increase the number of underground stations with step-free access
- Ensure that TfL provides open data on bus routes

WORKING FAMILIES

- Ensure that the GLA Group and the GLA Family implement the London Living Wage for all their employees and ensure subcontractors do the same using the Social Value Act
- Ensure paid travel time for public sector carers between appointments
- Set up a transparent tipping scheme for London's hospitality sector
- Set up a GLA scheme to promote and recognise innovation in flexible working arrangements by businesses
- Explore the use of TfL assets (land above stations) as spaces for childcare
- Support a campaign to promote the value of working from home (to ease pressure on transport infrastructure)

HEALTH

- Introduce city-wide exclusion zones for new fast food outlets within 400 metres of a school as part of the London Plan
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SCHOOLS

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Ade Sofola is the Strategic Manager of the 4in10 programme which is hosted at Children England. She was one of the 12 experts on the 'State of Children's Rights in London' a report by Children's Rights Alliance England examining the extent to which public bodies in London are ensuring that children enjoy their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. With a background in human rights law, she has many years of experience in community action and working with young people in voluntary organisations in the UK and in Africa.



4in10 was set up after the last Child Poverty Commission in London to raise awareness, collate, and share good practice to tackle the high levels of child poverty in the capital. It is a network of over 300 voluntary and statutory organisations across London.



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