

JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2026/27

Child Poverty

Summary points

- 16,233 children under 16 (19.7%) live in *relative* low-income families in Bristol, *Before Housing Costs* (2024/25), slightly higher than the UK average of 19.3%.
- 21,087 children under 16 (25.6%) live in *relative* low-income families in Bristol, *After Housing Costs* (2024/25), slightly lower than the UK average of 26.0%.
- *Before Housing Costs* - Nearly half (49.0%) of children living in Lawrence Hill ward and over a third of children living in Central (34.4%) and Hartcliffe and Withywood (33.7%) wards live in relative low income families.
- *After Housing Costs* - Over half of children living in Lawrence Hill ward (57.7%) and over a third of children living in the wards of Filwood (43.0%), Central (41.4%) and Hartcliffe and Withywood (41.5%) live in relative low-income families.

Background

Living in poverty can negatively impact outcomes for children and may mean that families make less healthy lifestyle choices than more affluent families. Data on **children living in low-income families**¹ is a good indicator of the proportion of families living in relative poverty.

Official statistics are derived from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)² [‘Households Below Average Income \(HBAI\) report’](#). For the 2025 report the methodology changed and is now based on administrative data rather than ‘Family Resources Survey’ responses. This improvement means that there have been changes to key HBAI low-income measures from FYE 2022 which replace any previously published data. Measures relating to children in low-income households include the following:

- Relative low income, which measures families and children aged under 16 living in low income in the current year ‘Before Housing Costs’ (BHC) and ‘After Housing Costs’ (AHC) – this is the preferred measure amongst the majority of users and is the main focus of this section.
- Absolute low income, which measures families and children aged under 16 living in low income in the current year (BHC only) compared with incomes in 2024/25 (reference year updated - previously compared with incomes in 2010/11).

Further clarification of definitions can be found here: [Children in low income families: local area statistics, financial year ending 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

Relative low income

Before Housing Costs (BHC)

Provisional data for 2024/25 (released March 2026) states there are 16,233 children under 16 living in relative low-income families in Bristol BHC, which is 19.7% of all children, slightly higher than the UK average of 19.3% (figure 1). This figure places Bristol as having the lowest rate of children in low-income families of all the English Core Cities.

¹ Income is equivalised to adjust for family size and composition. Low income is where a family has claimed Child Benefit and at least 1 of Universal Credit, Tax Credits or Housing Benefit at any point in the year.

² Source: [Children in low income families: local area statistics 2022 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

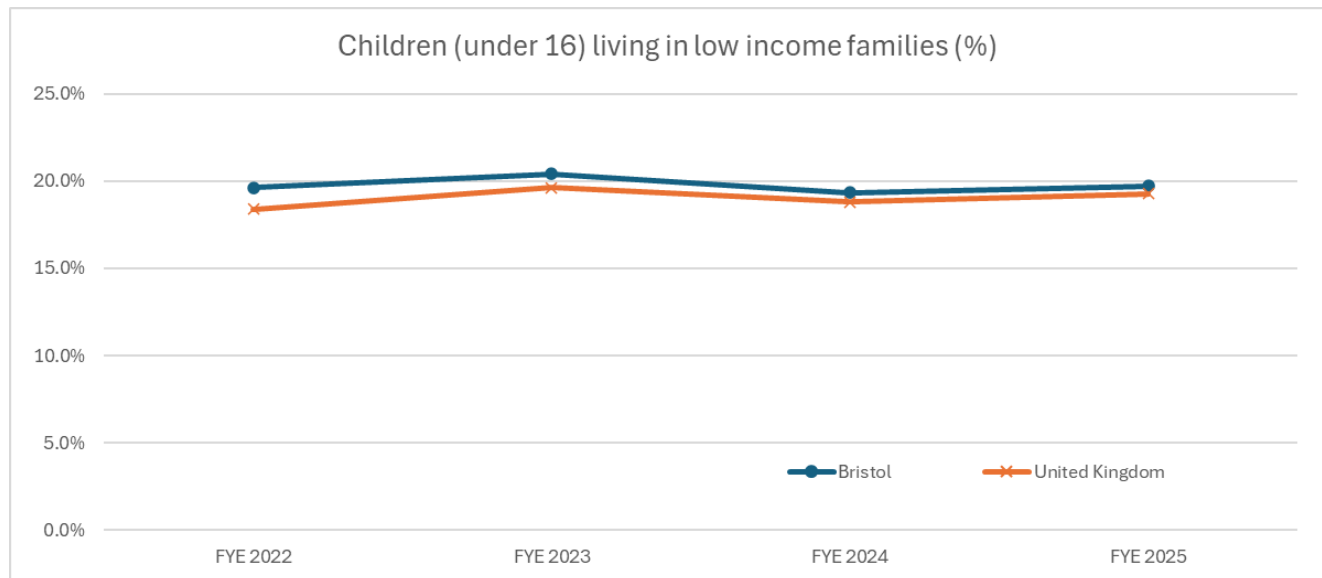


Figure 1: Children (under 16) living in relative low-income families, 2021/22 to 2024/25. Source: DWP Stat-Xplore, Nomis, National Records of Scotland

Children living in relative low income families is available by ward³ and 2021 Lower Super Output Area (LSOA). Fig 2 highlights the inequalities across the city at ward level for children aged 0-15.

There are three wards where more than 1 in 3 children live in relative low income households. These are Lawrence Hill (49.0%), Central (34.4%) and Hartcliffe and Withywood (33.7%). There are a further three wards where more than 1 in 4 children live in relative low-income households including Filwood, Southmead and Lockleaze. In contrast, just 2.3% of children in Redland ward and 2.7% in Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze ward live in low income households.

At LSOA level, the numbers of children (0-15yrs) living in low-income families range from as high as 447 in St Philips and 405 in Easton Road to less than 5 in areas including Clyde Road, Queens Square, St Andrews Park, Alma Road, Clifton Down and Clifton Village. Additional areas of the city where more than 250 children live in low-income households include Cabot Circus, St Judes and Bishport Avenue.

Analysed by sub locality area of the Bristol Integrated Care Board (ICB), there are significantly higher levels of children living in relative low-income families in Inner City (34.3%) compared to the city average, and significantly lower levels in the North and West (Inner) sub-locality (4.9%) (Figure 3).

³ Caution, although populations estimates are the latest available at the time, some ward populations may not reflect more recent changes in the local population therefore some percentages should be viewed with care.

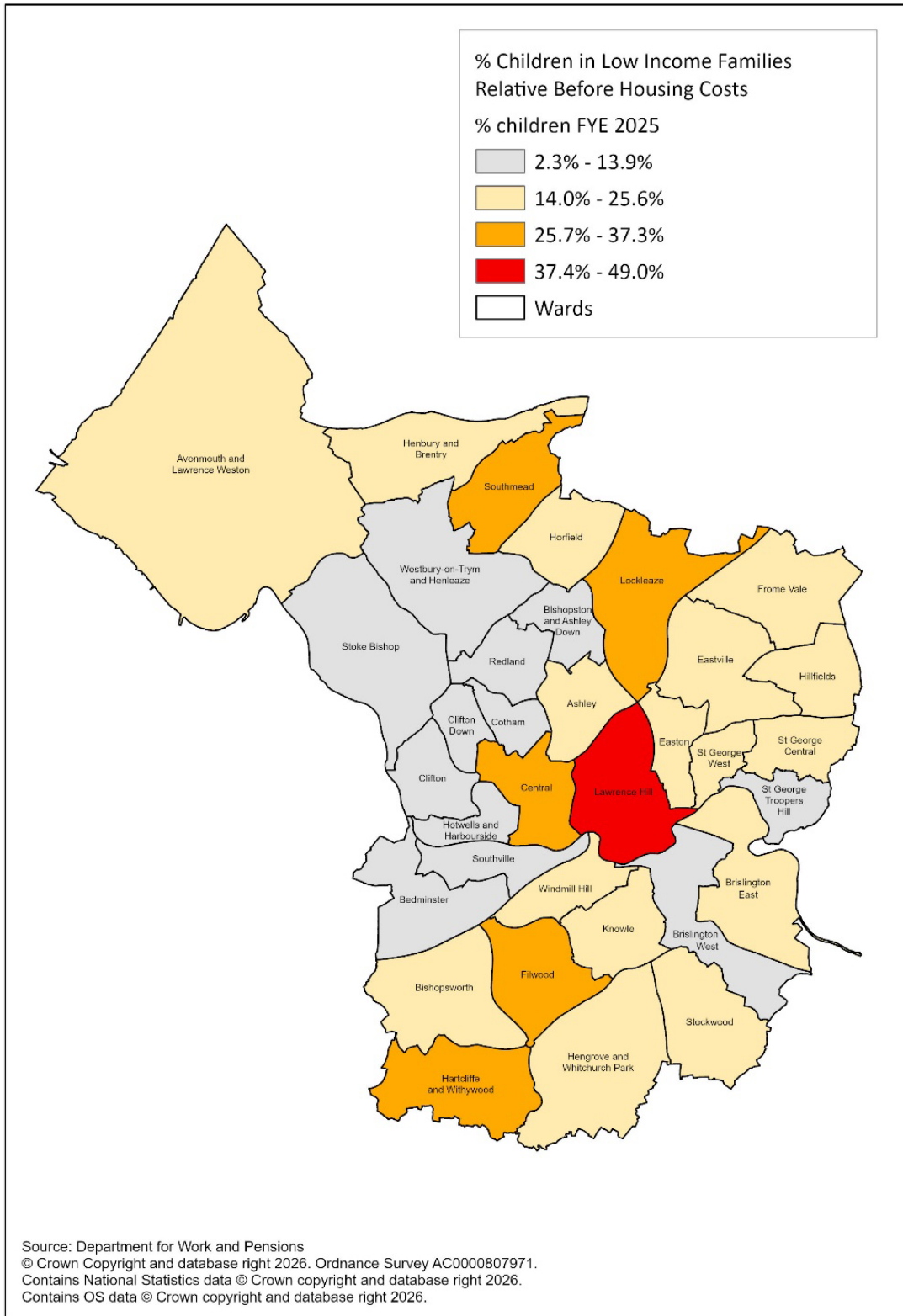


Figure 2: Children (under 16) living in relative low-income families *Before Housing Costs* 2024/25 by Ward. Source: DWP

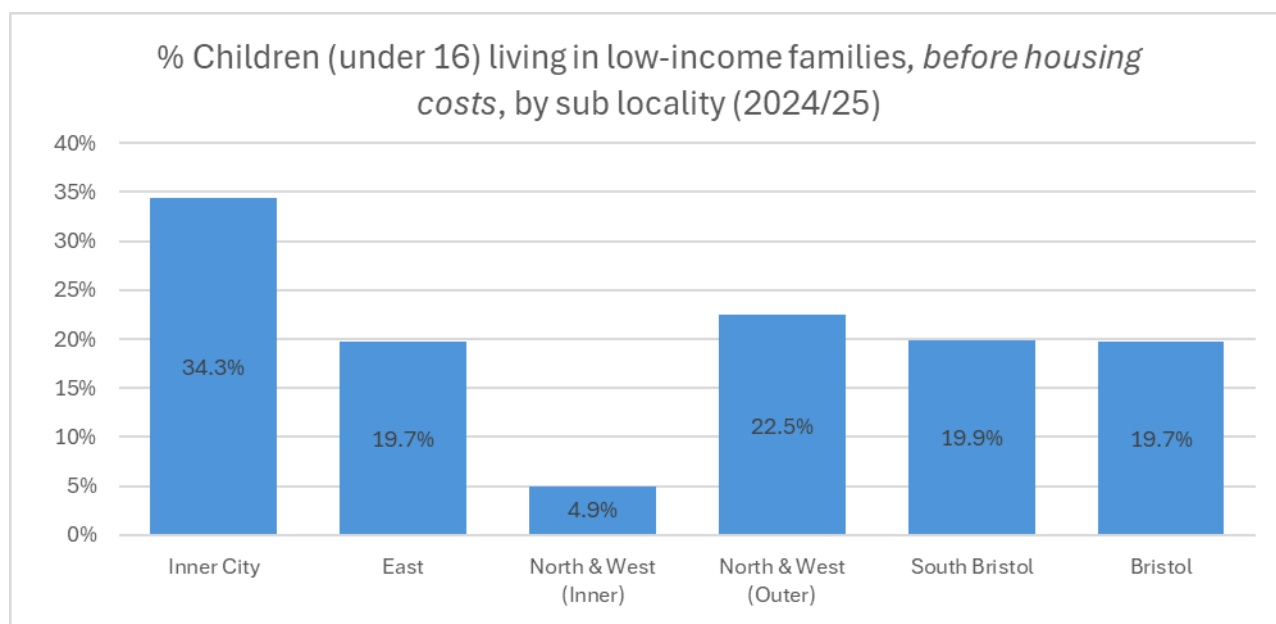


Figure 3: Children (under 16) living in relative low-income families, before housing costs, 2024/25 by ICB locality. Source: DWP

After Housing Costs (BHC)

Provisional data for 2024/25 (released March 2026) states there are 21,087 children under 16 living in relative low-income families in Bristol AHC, which is 25.6% of all children, slightly lower than the UK average of 26.0%. This figure places Bristol as having the lowest rate of children in low-income families of all the English Core Cities.

Meaningful trend data is not available - AHC statistics are available for FYE 2024 and FYE 2025 only as the proportion of families with unknown housing costs is higher than the threshold for which reliable statistics can be made.

Data at ward level⁴ for 2024/25 highlights the inequalities across the city for children aged 0-15 (Figure 4). In Lawrence Hill, 57.7% (2,480) of children live in relative low income households and more than 1 in 3 children live in relative low income households in Filwood (43.0%), Central (41.4%) and Hartcliffe and Withywood (41.5%). In contrast, just 3.2% of children in Redland ward and 3.5% in Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze ward live in low income households.

At LSOA level, the numbers of children (0-15yrs) living in low-income families range from as high as 543 in St Philips and 486 in Easton Road to less than 5 in areas including Canford Lane, Elmlea, Zetland Road, Queens Square, Alma Road, Clifton Down and Park Row. Additional areas of the city where more than 250 children live in low-income households include Iminster Avenue West, Whitchurch Park West, Cabot Circus, St Judes, Barton Hill and Bishport Avenue.

Analysed by sub locality area of the Bristol Integrated Care Board (ICB), there are significantly higher levels of children living in relative low-income families in Inner City (42.5%) compared to the city average, and significantly lower levels in the North and West (Inner) sub-locality (6.5%) (Figure 5).

⁴ Caution, although populations estimates are the latest available at the time, some ward populations may not reflect more recent changes in the local population therefore some percentages should be viewed with care.

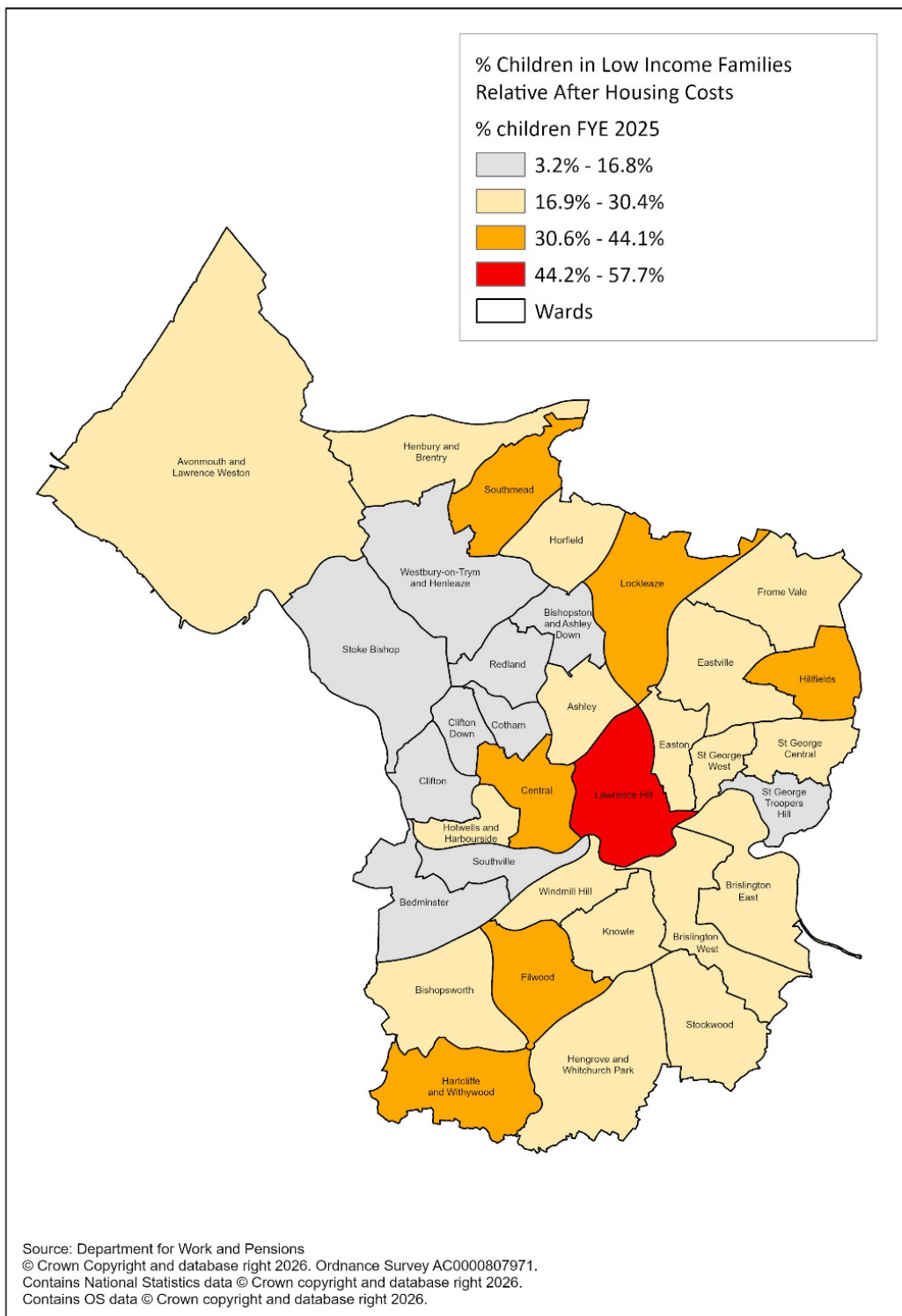


Figure 4: Children (under 16) living in relative low-income families *After Housing Costs* 2024/25 by Ward. Source: DWP

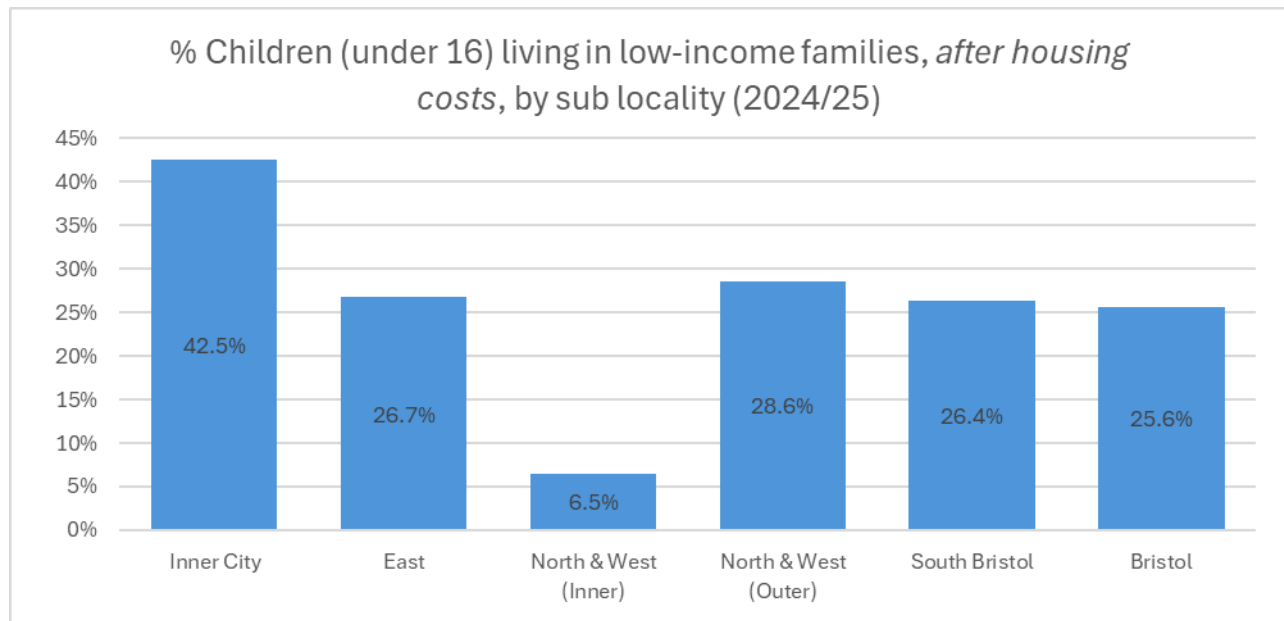


Figure 5: Children (under 16) living in relative low-income families, after housing costs, 2024/25 by ICB locality. Source: DWP

Equalities data:

All data analysis here is by geographical area. There is no Equality Group data available.

Further data / links / consultations:

- Data: [Children in low income families: local area statistics 2022 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- Ward Level data available for both Relative and Absolute low income in [Ward profile data - bristol.gov.uk](https://www.bristol.gov.uk) (select the “Child Poverty” Topic).
- [Households below average income: for financial years ending 1995 to 2025 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Covid-19 impact:

The Department for Work and Pensions notes that “While the data for FYE 2021, FYE 2022 and FYE 2023 has undergone extensive quality assurance prior to publication, we recommend that users exercise additional caution when using the data, particularly when making comparisons with previous years and for local areas across countries”.

Date updated: April 2026

Date of next update: April 2027