

## Appendix 3

### Data and Insights

#### Wider context

The borough contains two Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that fall into the most deprived 10% nationally (parts of Hesters Way and St. Pauls). These areas have long been associated with higher deprivation levels.

The Indices of Deprivation 2025 measures seven domains:

- Income & Employment: Hesters Way and Springbank show high levels of income and employment deprivation.
- Education, Skills & Training: St Paul's and St Peter's score poorly, indicating challenges in educational attainment.
- Health & Disability: Some areas in west Cheltenham have above-average health deprivation.
- Crime: Urban wards like St Paul's and parts of Lansdown show higher crime-related deprivation.
- Barriers to Housing & Services: Cheltenham is okay with this domain, but affordability remains an issue in some areas.

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families. Cheltenham 8 areas that are ranked in the most deprived 20% nationally for this indicator. These areas are:

- Hesters Way 1
- Hesters Way 2
- Hesters Way 3
- Oakley 2
- Oakley 3
- St Mark's 1
- St Paul's 2 (ranked 946 out of 32,844 LSOAs ie top 3% most deprived nationally and second top in the County) This puts this part of Cheltenham in a similar bracket to parts of Blackpool, Sheffield and Birmingham.
- Swindon Village 2

[Inform Gloucestershire – Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index](#)

LSOA ref	IDACI national rank
St PAUL'S 2	946
HESTERS WAY 3	1,304
OAKLEY 2	4,334
SWINDON VILLAGE 2	4,628
HESTERS WAY 2	4,755
St MARK'S 1	4,804
HESTERS WAY 1	5,604
OAKLEY 3	6,012

### Cheltenham children's needs analysis – October 2025

- 15% of children under 16 are living in absolute low-income families (households whose income falls below a fixed threshold that represents the minimum needed to maintain a basic standard of living), with this rate increasing post-pandemic.
- Single parent households on Universal Credit have increased significantly since 2021, indicating growing financial vulnerability.
- 40.5% of children known to social care receive Free School Meals (FSM).
- There has been a significant net increase (c.25%) in referrals to the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service between 21/22 and 24/25 with the greatest increase in referrals of 5-11 year olds.
- There has been a significant increase in the rates of children with neurodiversity, social, emotional and mental health needs and speech, language and communication needs.
- There is a significant attainment gap of 34% between FSM pupils and the overall cohort in English and Maths GCSEs (FSM 22.2% vs overall 56.5%)
- Percentage of school population that have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) in Cheltenham is 5.59 slightly higher than Gloucestershire which is 5.12%, however the percentage receiving SEN support is 14.21% which is lower than Gloucestershire's overall percentage of 15.8%
- Fixed term exclusion rates per 1,000 for pupil with no SEN support are 51.3, but rise to 334.6 for those with SEN support and 235.1 for those with an EHCP
- Permanent exclusion rates per 1,000 for pupils without SEN support are 0.2 again rising significantly to 9.0 for those with SEN support and 5.1 for those with an EHCP.

Cheltenham school leaders have told NCLB that local data closely aligns to the national picture. National data shows that attendance declines steadily across secondary school, from around 93.5% in Year 7 to 91.0% in Year 11, while persistent absence rises from 21% to 26% over the same period.

This pattern coincides with a marked drop in pupil engagement and satisfaction after transition: enjoyment scores fall from 6.0 in Year 6 to 3.8 in Year 7, and continue to decline through Year 8 and 9, with feelings of safety and belonging also reducing significantly. By Year 10 and 11, engagement stabilizes but remains well below primary levels, and motivation to learn is a concern for nearly a third of pupils.

These trends highlight a strong link between declining engagement and worsening attendance, particularly for vulnerable groups such as pupils with SEND or those eligible for Free School Meals, and underline the need for support for children and families during the transition from year 6 to year 7 and then in the early years of secondary school to stop disengagement.

### **Pupil Wellbeing Survey -July 2025**

- Pupils eligible for FSM were significantly more likely to report missing 10% or more of school sessions in the previous term (40.5%) compared to those not eligible (27.2%) in Cheltenham.
- Pupils eligible for FSM were more likely to report being in trouble with the Police (5% vs. 2%); more likely to report carrying a weapon (4.7% vs. 2.7%) and joining a gang (0.9% vs. 0.3%).
- Pupils eligible for FSM (10.3%) were almost twice as likely to report they were receiving professional mental health support at the time of the survey than non-eligible pupils (6.1%)
- Almost 1 in 3 pupils in secondary and post-16 settings eligible for FSM report ever self-harming compared to 1 in 5 of their less vulnerable peers. They were also significantly more likely to report having an eating disorder (17.4% vs. 8.8%)
- 78.5% of pupils eligible for FSM reported the food available at home enabled them to eat healthily, this was significantly lower than those not eligible (86.2%).

### **Engagement findings**

At a recent youth voice engagement event held in June this year, young people told us that they wanted:

- More free and affordable activities in town for young people
- More jobs for young people
- More apprenticeships opportunities

- More places to go, instead of hanging out in the town centre
- More disabled and neurodiverse youth clubs-important for everyone to feel included
- More low-cost spaces for teenagers
- More evening safe spaces after 5:30pm in town centre

NCLB has also worked with teenage girls at risk of exploitation through Pittville School, All Saints Academy, The Children's Society and Youth justice team to gather their experiences of living in Cheltenham.

**Key issues raised include:**

Harassment and personal safety concerns:

- Catcalling, being followed and inappropriate touching
- After-dark, in parks and during raceweek

Barriers to seeking help:

- Judgement and stigma
- Professionals' responses and lack of trust
- Complexity of services

Challenges teenage girls face in the town:

- Exposure to violence and fighting
- Emotional and social pressures
- Pressure to try drugs and alcohol