

Meeting: Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

Date: Monday 20 June 2016

Title: The Education of Looked After Children

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Service: RHELAC Team / Virtual School

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to raise awareness of the needs of looked after children, understand the factors that impact on outcomes and update the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee on the services offered by The RHELAC Team / Virtual School.

2. Recommendations

To note the information presented in the report and make any recommendations as necessary.

3. Information

- 3.1 Outcomes for looked after children are significantly worse than their non-looked after peers but since the publication of The Rees Centre / Bristol University Report, 'The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data' we have a much better understanding of what we might do to improve outcomes.
- 3.2 In North Tyneside we have small cohorts that make the data unreliable due to the high levels of SEND disproportionately impacting on the figures. In 2015 our KS2 results were below the national outcomes for attainment but progress in Reading and Maths were above the national figures for CLA (Children Looked After). At KS4 our results were below for both attainment and progress but this was a particularly difficult cohort with a high proportion attending non-mainstream provision and with significant mental health needs.
- 3.3 Combining the research and our local knowledge of our looked after cohorts we have been able to target support more effectively and have been working to raise awareness of the key factors that impact on attainment and progress across the local authority. Type of care placement, stability, age entering care, SDQs (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires) and type of school all impact significantly on outcomes and there are often factors that we can have influence over.
- 3.4 Pupil Premium Plus has been used to provide additional resources to support CLA. Schools are given £900 per looked after child but we also retain a central pot for crisis

support and have employed a counsellor, educational psychologist and apprentice Teaching Assistant (care leaver). This has enabled us to provide more support to schools when a child is at risk of exclusion, provide emotional support and direct classroom support. We also have a couple of teachers within the team funded centrally.

4. Appendices

- i. Educational Outcomes for CLA in North Tyneside 2015
- ii. The Rees Centre / Bristol University – summary of report ‘The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data’
- iii. Ofsted Stability Graph

Outcomes 2015

Summary

2015 Results	North Tyneside OC2 LAC (in care 12 months or more) (cohort size in brackets)	NT All Pupils	National All Pupils (2015)	National LAC (2015)
EYFS GLD	50% (2/4)	64%	66%	
Yr 1 Phonics	54% (7/13)	78%	77%	
KS1 Reading	75% (6/8)	92%	90%	71%
KS1 Writing	63% (5/8)	87%	85%	63%
KS1 Mathematics	75% (6/8)	93%	93%	73%
KS2 Reading	56% (9/16)	91%	89%	71%
KS2 Writing	56% (9/16)	88%	85%	61%
KS2 Mathematics	50% (8/16)	87%	87%	64%
KS2 RWM	44% (7/16)			52%
KS1 – 2 Progress (2+ levels) Reading	86% (12/14 with KS1 data)	93%	91%	82%
KS1 – 2 Progress (2+ levels) Writing	79% (11/14)	95%	93%	84%
KS1 – 2 Progress (2+ levels) Mathematics	79% (11/14)	90%	89%	77%
KS4 5+ A*-C incl. English & Maths	8% (2/24)	61%	53%	14%
KS4 5+ A*-C	21% (5/24)	68%	63%	37%
KS4 5+ A-G	42% (10/24)	96%	91%	
KS4 1+ A-G	79% (19/24)	97%	98%	
A-C English	17% (4/24)	73%	65%	
A-C Maths	17% (4/24)	72%	65%	
KS2 – 4 3+ levels of progress English	19%	74%	71%	37%
KS2 – 4 3+ levels of progress Maths	23%	67%	68%	29%

The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data

Research Team: Professor Judy Sebba, Professor David Berridge, Professor Steve Strand, Professor Sally Thomas, Dr Nikki Luke, Dr John Fletcher, Dr Karen Bell, Professor Ian Sinclair, Aoife O’Higgins

This research project, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, was jointly undertaken by the University of Bristol and the Rees Centre, Department of Education, University of Oxford.

It is the first major study in England to explore the relationship between educational outcomes, young people’s care histories and individual characteristics. It links the National Pupil Database and the Children Looked After Database for the cohort who were eligible to take GCSEs in 2013.

The main analysis concentrated on the progress at secondary school (Key Stages 2-4) of young people who had been in care for over a year at the end of Key Stage 4. Detailed statistical analysis was complemented by interviews with 26 young people in six local authorities and with adults significant in their educational careers, including foster carers, teachers, social workers and Virtual School headteachers.

Key Findings

What are the key factors contributing to the low educational outcomes of young people in care in secondary schools in England? The analysis reveals that controlling for all factors, the following contribute to the educational progress of young people in care:

- **Time in care.** Young people who have been in longer-term care do better than those ‘in need’ but not in care, and better than those who have only been in short term care – so it appears that care may protect them educationally.
- **Placement changes.** Each additional change of care placement after age 11 is associated with one-third of a grade less at GCSE.
- **School changes.** Young people in care who changed school in Years 10 or 11 scored over five grades less than those who did not.
- **School absence.** For every 5% of possible school sessions missed due to unauthorised school absences, young people in care scored over two grades less at GCSE.
- **School exclusions.** For every additional day of school missed due to fixed-term exclusions, young people in care scored one-sixth of a grade less at GCSE.
- **Placement type.** Young people living in residential or another form of care at age 16 scored over six grades less than those who were in kinship or foster care.
- **School type.** Young people who were in special schools at age 16 scored over 14 grades lower in their GCSEs compared to those with the same characteristics who were in mainstream schools. Those in pupil referral units with the same characteristics scored almost 14 grades lower.
- **Educational support.** Young people report that teachers provide the most significant educational support for them but teachers suggest that they need more training to do this effectively.

Policy and Practice Implications

- The progress of children in care shows much variation, which suggests that any interventions need to be tailored to the characteristics and experiences of the individual.
- Education needs to be supported at a much younger age and while children are still living with their birth families, in order to reduce later difficulties relating to adolescence.
- Greater focus on *progress* over time is needed and recognition that some young people take longer to make significant progress.
- When placement moves are essential, school moves should be avoided especially in the final years of schooling.
- Children in care should be placed in mainstream schools with appropriate support wherever possible.
- We need to support young people in care to achieve high attendance at school and we need to support schools not to exclude them.
- Schools that benefit all children are likely to benefit those in care so prioritizing their admission is justified.
- Teachers need better understanding of children's social, emotional and mental health problems; social workers need better understanding of the education system.
- Schools and local authorities should use extra help such as paired reading and one-to-one tuition that are supported by evidence.
- The Virtual Schools, schools, social workers and foster carers should work closely together and involve the young person in decisions affecting them.

Further Information

To find out more about the research:

<http://reescentre.education.ox.ac.uk/research/educational-progress-of-looked-after-children/>

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/sps/research/>

<http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/educational-progress-looked-after-children>

The overview report is available in hard copy and on the websites of the Rees Centre, University of Bristol and the Nuffield Foundation. To request a free copy, please send an email to rees.centre@education.ox.ac.uk

Contact

Professor Judy Sebba, University of Oxford judy.sebba@education.ox.ac.uk

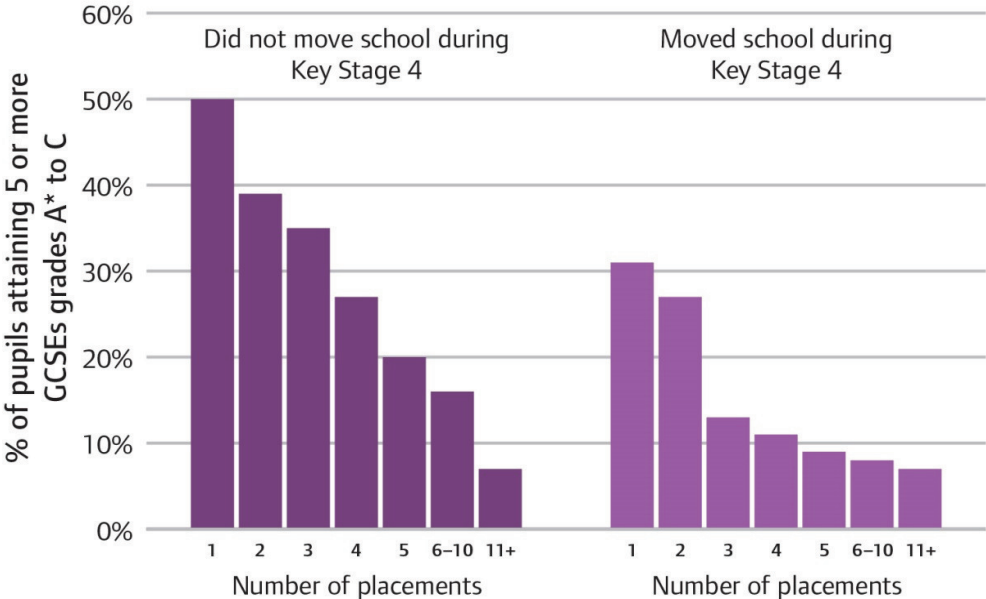
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Figure 28: GCSE attainment for children looked after by a local authority, by number of placements and whether they moved school in Years 10 or 11



Only children who have been looked after continually for three years or more are included.
 Placements are only counted if they occurred in the three years prior to the pupil taking their GCSE examinations.
 GCSE attainment is for pupils who took the examinations in 2011, 2012 or 2013, and is based on five or more A* to C grades in any subject.
 Some percentages are based on small numbers.
 Pupil information, including the length of time children have been looked after, is taken from the 2013 national pupil database.
 Source: Department for Education