Raising the Aspirations and Achievement of Looked After Children

What do we do?
- Ensure that every child has an effective Personal Education Plan that is regularly reviewed and which guides the management of their education
- Ensure that the pupil premium is being used effectively particularly to achieve good progress in English and mathematics
- Make sure that everyone in a child’s life works together to help them learn successfully
- Provide challenge, support and intervention to ensure our children attend, engage with learning and make good progress

How can we help?
- Training and advice for social workers, foster carers, school staff and other professionals
- Support for transition from one school or phase of education, to another
- Learning mentoring and one-to-one tutoring
- Regular support for the learning culture in our own children’s homes
- Revision workshops
- On-line advice and learning
- Provision of an exciting range of extended activities including Summer arts and outdoor learning courses, work experience weeks and targeted programmes for individuals and groups
- Rewards for GCSE success
- Interim funding in advance of the pupil premium
- Specialist advice on special educational needs
- Specialist packages of provision for those struggling to engage
- For Oxfordshire partners, access to a range of helpful guides and other documents on our intranet site. These can be shared by email or post with those in other counties
- Conferences where a variety of professionals and young people can explore ways of removing barriers to success
- Work with Virtual Schools in other local authorities to support the needs of our learners together
- An induction programme for unaccompanied asylum seekers
- Monitoring the quality of education commissioned from independent providers

What is going well?
- More children are getting more GCSEs
- Children are attaining better at the end of primary school than previously
- Attendance levels overall are higher than those of Oxfordshire’s children not in care and above average for children in care
- No Oxfordshire child in care is permanently excluded – ever. The number of fixed term exclusions is reducing
- Our lively Children in Care Council keeps us well informed and on our toes
What happens when children leave care to go home to families, into adoption or Special Guardianship Orders?

- The Virtual School remains available to all professionals, parents and carers for advice by phone or email.
- All children leaving care are assessed by the Virtual School for their level of need. As a result many continue to be invited to participate in activities such as revision days, retain their learning mentor and continue to have PEP meetings.

What about children in care to other Local Authorities and in Oxfordshire Schools?

- We work closely with the network of Virtual Heads nationally, attending regional meetings and national conferences.
- Where children in care to other LAs are struggling to engage with learning we support the corporate parent and the child by convening cross-professional meetings, attending PEPs or making referrals to other services.

What are we working hard together with partners to improve further?

- Achievement at the higher GCSE grades: still below average for children in care
- Exclude exclusions
- Attendance, attendance, attendance – if you don’t attend you can’t achieve
- Finding long term solutions to keep our most needy children near us and supporting the implementation of the social care placement strategy.

What are we looking forward to?

- The successful development of the charity VIP+ which we started with our partner schools
- Implementing a successful strategy for age 0-25 when we join up with our partners the RAISE team who currently lead on education, employment and training for care leavers
- Launching our new primary reading project, based on a successful international model, which trains foster carers to develop the literacy of younger children
- Providing a day’s training in education for those preparing to become foster carers
- Adding a full time data manager and intervention manager to our team

We love to hear from Designated Teachers, other school staff, social workers, parents, foster carers and all our other partners. Please contact us any time you need to talk to us about anything. If we don’t know the answer, we know someone who does.

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