Virtual School top tips for outstanding provision and improved outcomes for Looked after Children

✓ Train staff to meet the needs of children who have experienced trauma and loss in the same way you would for a child with a medical condition.
✓ Devote time to build good quality relationships and have a key person available when needed.
✓ Make the Virtual School aware if there are any concerns around a child’s education - before the situation reaches crisis point.
✓ Ensure the Designated Teacher is a member of, or can influence, the senior leadership team to positively impact on the experience of children in care within the school.
✓ Have a named governor for looked after children who champions them and holds the school to account.
✓ Foster carers are part of the team - include them and use them to help a child progress.
✓ Manage anxieties, not behaviour.
✓ Respect the privacy of a student but keep staff alert to possible hot spots.
✓ Be sensitive to areas of the curriculum related to family, such as family trees.
✓ Don’t assume a child’s prior attainment gives a true picture of potential - they may have been unable to focus on learning when assessments were done.
✓ Listen to the views of children and young people, before reacting to a situation.
✓ Avoid shaming strategies, such as putting a name on the board, as this can trigger bigger emotions and escalate behaviours.
✓ Understand that the relationship is the main motivator, not the threat of punishment or promise of reward.
✓ Understand a child’s relationship blueprint may make it harder for them to sustain friendships.
✓ No fresh starts - maintain stability and sustain relationships.
✓ Be aware of the moves a child has had, both care and school, and understand the impact this might have had on the child’s ability to trust adults.
✓ Don’t assume a child feels safe in school.
✓ Make sure pupil premium plus is used to meet individual need and impact is seen through increased progress.
✓ The successful PEP brings people together to ensure everyone understands a child’s needs and knows their role in supporting the child’s education.
✓ Don’t cap aspirations - seeks ways to support a child to reach their dreams.
✓ Set behaviour standards and be consistent but avoid exclusions.
✓ Make sure all staff are clear about systems put in place to support a child.
✓ Differentiate behaviour policies, one size does not fit all.
✓ Provide opportunities to repair and restore.
✓ Avoid delay in assessing needs.
✓ Know what’s important to a child or young person and find opportunities to demonstrate they are ‘kept in mind’.