

Ofsted advice relating to children in care

Effective practice identified by Ofsted includes:

- using assessment and knowledge of prior learning to identify pupils' learning needs and develop individual learning plans to match them
- rigorous target setting and monitoring of *academic* progress in the same manner as other pupils (ie paying attention to attitudes to learning not just behaviour)
- involving pupils in decisions about their targets and learning in their Personal Educational Plans which helps build self confidence in lessons
- minimising permanent exclusions by working closely with the local authority to develop programmes to manage behaviour
- the importance of looking after pupils' *basic* needs, whether talking through problems or providing material to participate in lessons such as paper and pens
- understanding the importance of stability– particularly during Years 10 and 11 when pupils do not want too many changes in their lives whilst studying for GCSEs

Ofsted also found that some schools employed effective strategies to support pupils to become independent learners which included:

- Integrating emotional, social and behavioural skills routinely in lessons
- Allowing the carer to contribute to the personal education plan
- Reviewing the personal education plan every three months to reflect on successes and changing needs
- Giving children in care opportunities to complete homework in school
- Being sensitive to the circumstances of children in care and respecting their confidentiality

Schools used increased flexibility in the curriculum to support children in care by adapting it to better match individuals with appropriate courses. Also, schools were willing to adjust the curriculum for pupils in special circumstances – in particular refugees and asylum seekers.

Parents and carers were best engaged through regular communications and opportunities to share ideas. They valued being involved in the PEP, being given guidance on how to support learning and information on homework.