

Developing Quality Tuition

Effective practice in schools



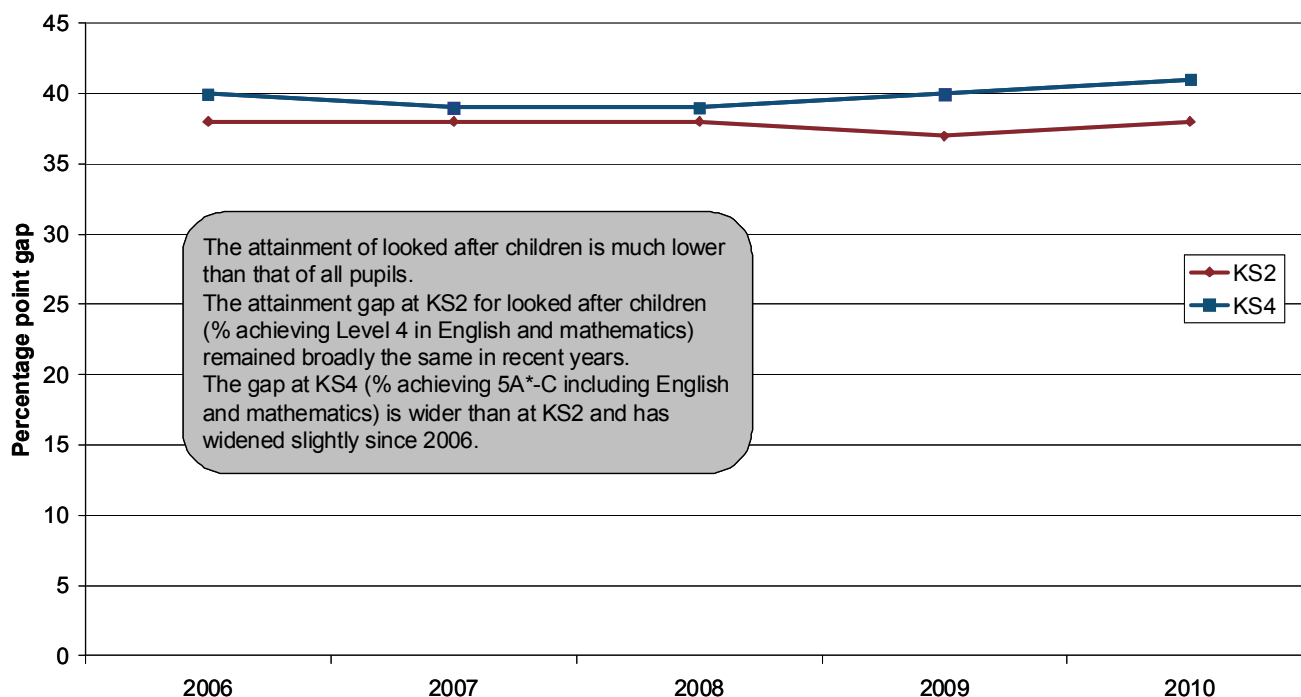
Looked After Children

How Schools Tailor Tuition for their Looked After Children

There are approximately 65,000 looked after children (LAC) at any time. Children can become looked after for many reasons - in 2010 61% entered care because they suffered abuse or neglect, 12% because of family dysfunction and 9% because the family was in acute stress.

As a group, looked after children do not achieve as well as their peers. In 2010 only 12% achieved 5 A*-C at GCSE including English and mathematics. The "gap" between looked after children and their peers is not narrowing.

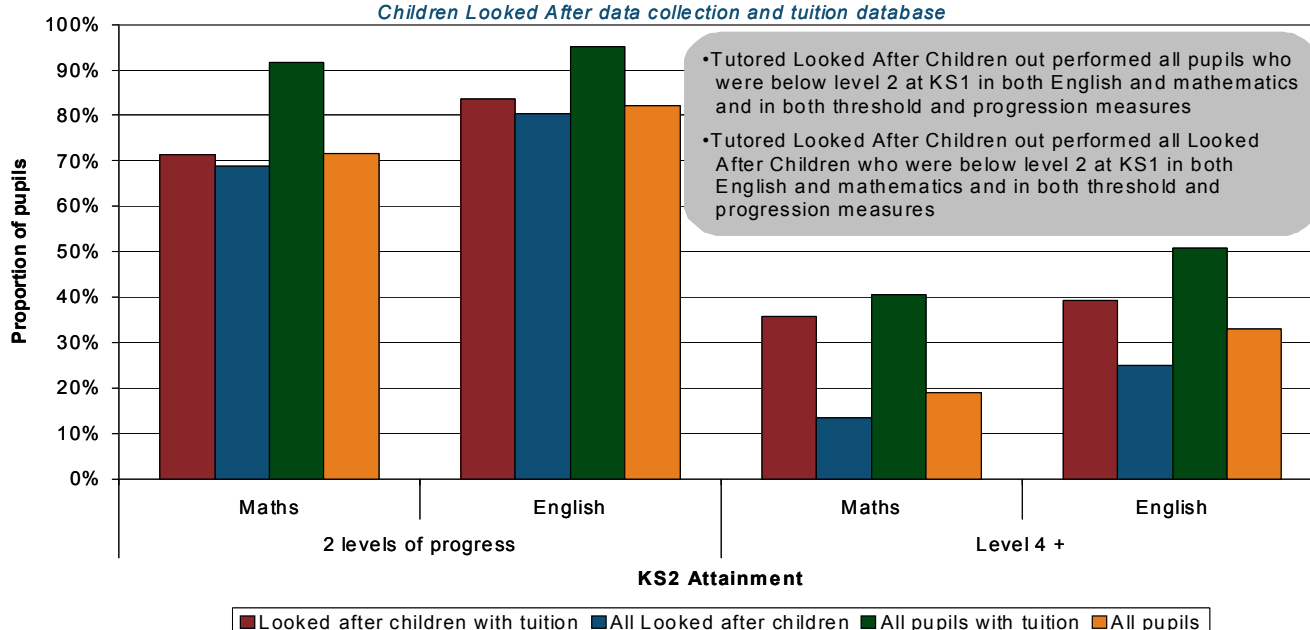
Gap in attainment for children looked after continuously for 12 months



However impact analysis from national KS2 data* shows that one-to-one tuition can significantly improve both the progression and attainment of looked after children:

2010 KS2 attainment of pupils who were below L2 at KS1 (Looked after Children)

source: 2010 KS2 National Pupil Database, Children Looked After data collection and tuition database



* Similar data is available for KS4 (see KS4 Tuition Data Pack, March 2011)

How do schools tailor tuition for their looked after children?

“The ‘historic underperformance’ of looked after children is kept in sight - staff get a regular update on our looked after children” (Headteacher)

When planning for one-to-one tuition for a looked after child, it is important to:

- ensure that the school’s Designated Teacher for looked after children is kept informed;
- make clear reference to one-to-one tuition in the child’s Personal Education Plan (PEP) and;
- maintain communication links with the carer(s), as with parent(s), so that they can offer encouragement and support with tuition. The lives of looked after children are often complicated and the carer will need to keep the school and tutor informed about anything that might have an impact on the tuition.

Findings from the schools visited

Senior leaders and teachers identified the following common characteristics of looked after children:

Pupils often;

- have specific social and emotional needs as a result of being separated from or unsupported by their natural parents; they may feel excluded from ‘normal’ family life and opportunities.
- feel isolated and have low self-esteem which results in difficulties making relationships with their peers and teachers.
- have very good attendance, despite having had disrupted education and regular periods of instability.
- live in more than one home during the week or at weekends.
- have considerable gaps in their learning due to missed schooling and/or numerous changes of school.
- Have difficulty stating an opinion; they are often shy and may be unwilling to contribute orally in class.
- need more reassurance and consistency of approach than some other pupils.
- prefer to be treated ‘just like other pupils’ and not singled out for special attention.

“Until I came here I didn’t trust nobody, ’cos I kept thinking I was going to get moved again” (Year 6 pupil)

“We make sure that there are no obstacles to their learning” (Headteacher)

In order to meet these specific needs, tuition for looked after children had the following common features:

- Time was taken to ensure that the pupils understood *why* they had been chosen for one-to-one tuition and what it would involve.
- Tutors observed the pupils in class before tuition to familiarise themselves with pupils’ learning behaviours e.g. independence, relationships with peers and adults etc.
- Tuition was offered during the day so that travel arrangements to various home destinations did not disrupt attendance.
- Tutors made special efforts to get to know their pupils in advance of starting the tuition sessions.
- Sessions were held at the same time as those for other pupils, often in a shared area to emphasise that a range of pupils were in receipt of tuition.
- The schools were emphatic that all tutors’ expectations of looked after children should be as high (if not higher) than for all other pupils.

- Tuition sessions offered many opportunities for discussion and extended oral contributions.
- Tuition homework was rarely set, if at all, in recognition of the fact that pupils may be living in more than one home concurrently.

“My tutor was in school all the time...I could stop him anytime in the corridor and say ‘Sir, I’m having problems with ...’ and he could either help me there and then or deal with it in the next tuition session” (Year 8 pupil)

This publication is available for download at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/inclusionandlearnersupport/onetoonetuition/b0056257/one-to-one-tuition-guidance-and-resources/resources>

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