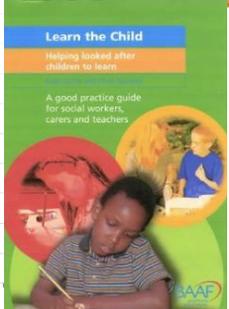
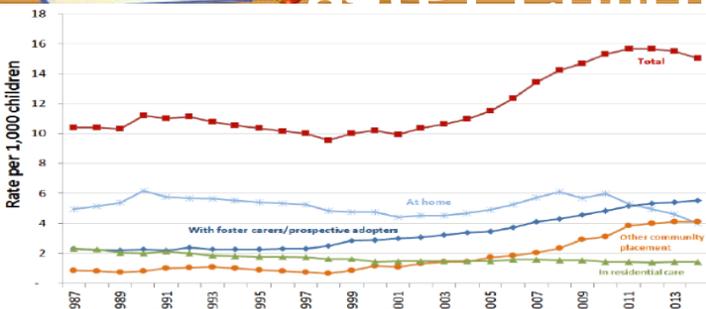
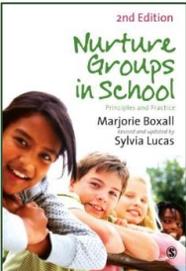


Supporting the wellbeing of looked after children



Recommended Reading: Learn the child – Kate Cairns

According to statistics released by the British Association for Adopting and Fostering (BAAF) in March 2014, 68,840 children in England are classified as LAC of which 57% (or 39,060) are primary school age. This is an increase of 12% from 2009. Worryingly, Kassem et al. (2006) propose that 75% of looked after children will leave education with no formal qualifications with only 12% going on to further education (in comparison to 68% of the general population). a 2011 report by the Department for Education also suggested that LAC pupils were “three-and-a-half times more likely to have SEN.” Indeed, a previous report by the same public body proposes: “they (LAC) may find it harder to trust adults; their educational experience may have been disrupted; and their capacity to build and maintain friendships may be impaired.” In looking to provide an intervention in order to support LAC in their learning environment, there are several schemes, often supported by research, which look to support these pupils in the classroom. Schemes such as Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL), engagement profiling and nurture groups all have evidence to support their integration into teaching methodologies and ethos’.



Recommended Reading: Nurture Groups in School – Marjorie Boxall

- Children’s learning is understood developmentally including knowledge of key ‘attachments.’
- The classroom offers a safe base where they have fun.
- Nurture is essential for the self-esteem of children.
- Adults act as “Human Bridges” helping children to ‘cross over’ their difficulties with support.

Cheminais (2012) argues that, when working with LAC pupils, it is crucial that one addresses pupil’s social and emotional well-being before beginning to address pupil’s engagement with academic attainment (this is hardly surprising when one considers that the these factors are intrinsically linked). The term ‘nurture group’ was devised by Boxall (2002) who proposed that pupils who were unable to access school on a social/interpersonal level need an alternative environment within their school where their curriculum is designed around missing personal and social development goals. The concept, therefore, postulates that nurture groups should accelerate the pupil’s social and emotional development, promoting independence which, in turn, leads to greater academic attainment. There is strong evidence to suggest that, for teachers working with LAC pupils, a strong knowledge of how social disengagement can effect academic attainment must be understood. With this knowledge teachers can then look to use effective methodologies, suited/tailored to that individual, in order to give the LAC pupil the best chance at academic attainment and self-actualization.

- Recommended Websites:
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/children-in-care/> - NSPCC’s LAC information page
 - <https://nurturegroups.org/> - The Nurture Group Network – For information and support on working with LAC