

Department of Education
Public Seminar

Monday 30 November 2015
5:00 – 6:30 pm
15 Norham Gardens
Seminar Room A



The educational progress of looked after children in England: linking care and educational data

Professor David Berridge

University of Bristol

Professor Judy Sebba, Dr Nikki Luke and Professor Steve Strand, Department of Education

Respondent: **Ms Emma Ing**, Senior HMI Ofsted

Convener: **Professor Judy Sebba**, Rees Centre for Research into Education and Fostering

This study investigates the relationships between young people's experiences in the care system and their educational achievements in secondary school. Using a mixed methods approach, we explored the relationship between educational outcomes, young people's care histories and individual characteristics by linking the educational data collected annually in the National Pupil Database (NPD) and the care history data (SSDA903) for the cohort of children in care who completed exams in 2013. Outcomes for children with different characteristics and the relationships between outcomes and placement type and stability, school stability and length of time in care were explored. These statistical analyses were complemented by in-depth qualitative interviews with young people in six local authorities and with adults significant in their educational careers, to explore what might be done to improve the progress of secondary school pupils in care.

The presentation will cover the key factors that were associated with young people's educational outcomes, including individual characteristics, early environment, and experiences in care and at school. We will also discuss the potential for the resulting evidence to inform policy and practice, as identifying the relationships between care experiences and educational progress will enable schools and services for children and young people to better support their education and improve outcomes.

A response will be provided by Emma Ing, Senior HMI Ofsted, East Midlands Region.

Copies of the overview report to be published on 30 November will be available on the day and three technical reports will be available on the Rees Centre, University of Bristol and Nuffield Foundation websites.

Sebba, J., Berridge, D., Luke, N., Fletcher, J., Bell, K., Strand, S., Thomas, S., Sinclair, I. and O'Higgins, A. (2015) *The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England*. Oxford, Bristol and London: The Rees Centre, The University of Bristol and The Nuffield Foundation.