

About the Rees Centre

The Rees Centre undertakes research and evaluation on fostering and education in the Department of Education, University of Oxford. Initially set up in 2012 with funding from the Core Assets Group (an international children's services provider), funding now comes from a range of sources.

The Rees Centre works to improve the outcomes and life chances of children and young people in foster care by:

- **reviewing existing international research** so as to help young people, foster carers, practitioners and policy makers make better use of current evidence
- **conducting new research projects** to address gaps identified by above reviews and issues raised by adults and young people involved in foster care
- undertaking commissioned **evaluations** of provision, interventions and innovations.

Key Principles of our work

- The Rees Centre focuses mainly on fostering though our work spans the full range of services for children and young people.
- The research we undertake uses a wide variety of rigorous methods.
- We have established consultation groups of fostering providers, carers and care-experienced young people and regular briefings with policy makers, to ensure that we are asking the right research questions and that reports of our findings are relevant for policy and practice.
- Both foster carers and care-experienced young people, trained in research, work on projects with us.
- Our knowledge exchange work includes researchers working alongside practitioners for example in fostering teams, in order to encourage the use of evidence in decision-making.

Recent Publications

The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data [pdf](#)

Evaluation of the London Fostering Achievement Programme [pdf](#)

The Impact of Unproven Allegations on Foster Carers [pdf](#)

Teenagers in Foster Care: A Handbook for foster carers [pdf](#)

Research Reviews

- motivations to foster
- foster carer peer support
- instruments used in the selection of foster carers
- the impact of fostering on carers' own children
- effective parent-and-child fostering arrangements
- the role of the supervising social worker
- what works in preventing and treating poor mental health in looked after children?
- the recruitment, assessment, support and supervision of LGBT carers
- the relationship between being in care and the educational outcomes of children
- the placement experiences of and outcomes for siblings in foster care

Research Projects

Completed

The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data. Funded by the Nuffield Foundation, this study explored influences on educational outcomes of placement stability, school stability, length of time in care and care histories;

Evaluation of the London Fostering Achievement Programme funded by the Greater London Authority – to raise educational outcomes of children in care across London;

People's motivation to foster: a prospective study of those inquiring about fostering in 10 fostering providers (8 Local Authorities [LAs] and 2 Independent Fostering Providers [IFPs]);

Foster carer peer support: evaluating the benefits of foster carer support groups in 3 LAs including specialist groups, for example of male carers;

Teenagers in foster care: a Research Council-funded seminar series that generated a handbook for foster carers on fostering teenagers and a special edition of a journal;

Allegations: the impact of unproven allegations on foster carers funded by FosterTalk and the Sir Halley Stewart Trust;

Bringing siblings together who are placed in care apart: an evaluation of the impact of this contact, funded by Siblings Together;

Evaluation of Attachment Aware Schools training programme in Bath and NE Somerset;

Mental health of looked after children across the school transition, Universities of Sussex and Surrey, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Virtual Schools and schools.

Ongoing

Evaluation of Birmingham City Council's Step Down programme for children moving from residential to foster care until 2019;

Evaluation Coordinator for the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme: funded by the DfE until June 2017;

Evaluation of Attachment Aware Schools training programme in Stoke, Birmingham, Leicestershire;

Improving matching in foster care: creating and developing an enhanced matching process that will then be rigorously evaluated in a small number of LAs – with Fostering People and Rotherham LA;

Developmental trajectories of children in care: secondary data analysis looking at a range of SDQ profiles and academic performance, Dr Eran Melkman funded by the Haruv Institute.

Get Involved

We are committed to making our findings accessible and inviting debate about them.

Join our mailing list. Email us at rees.centre@education.ox.ac.uk to receive our bi-monthly e-newsletter and research publications directly to your Inbox.

Come along to one of our seminars or lectures or join an online webinar. Write a guest post for our blog or write a book review for our newsletter. Watch recordings of seminars, read our free reports and browse our resources section on our website: <http://reescentre.education.ox.ac.uk>

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