Equalities in action

This report identifies successful action taken by providers of childcare, education and learning to promote equality of opportunity. Childminders, nurseries, children's centres, providers of day care, schools and pupil referral units did this by supporting children and young people whose circumstances made them vulnerable to underachievement. Colleges and providers of work-based learning or adult and community learning enhanced the participation of vulnerable adults in learning and improved their achievement. The report presents examples of good practice from all these sectors.

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Contents

Executive summary

The survey sought to identify successful actions taken to improve provision by promoting equality and encouraging understanding of diversity. The terms 'equality' and 'diversity' in this report refer to all the strands used by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, including social aspects such as poverty and deprivation.[1]

Between September 2008 and February 2009, inspectors visited 97 providers of care and education. They were selected either because the progress and attainment of particular groups of children, young people or adults were outstanding compared with national indicators; because adults' participation in learning and their staying-on rates were high compared with those nationally; or because of a provider's known good practice in identifying and overcoming barriers for individual learners.

Evidence was also drawn from other inspections by Ofsted and from 14 focus groups organised for the survey. The views of children and young people who were looked after or living away from home were sought through the Office of the Children's Rights Director for England.[2]

Each of the visits focused particularly on the provision made for specifically identified groups of learners whose circumstances made them vulnerable.[3] As a result of the action taken by these providers, the gap across the outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda was narrowed for the groups of learners surveyed, or the rates of participation, retention and achievement for vulnerable adults were improved. The survey found no one specific action or intervention was more or less successful for any one vulnerable group. Success derived from identifying the right intervention and support at the right time.

Robust tracking of learners' academic, personal, social and emotional progress enabled the providers to identify shortfalls in performance across different groups and to act promptly to tackle inequalities. Support ensured that individuals had equal access to learning and development, thus reducing gaps in performance. Accurate, up-to-date assessment information enabled provision to be adjusted where necessary.

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[1] The seven strands are: age, disability, gender, faith and religious belief, race, sexual orientation and transgender. For further information, see: www.equalityhumanrights.com. The term 'provider' is used to refer to those offering and providing care for children or young people or learning, education or training, whether individuals, companies or other organisations, as defined in Ofsted's *User and Stakeholder Strategy* (080015), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080015.

[2] The Children's Rights Director, based in Ofsted, seeks the views of children and young people living away from home in all types of provision, as well as those of care leavers and children or young people receiving help from social care services.

[3] Vulnerable adults are those who need protection against harm and/or who need targeted interventions or special services, as defined in Ofsted's strategic plan: *Raising standards, improving lives* (070179), Ofsted, 2007; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070179.

High expectations meant that difficulties were not accepted as an excuse for poor outcomes. The providers visited were determined and flexible in finding effective solutions. Creative thinking removed the barriers faced by specific groups and enhanced their opportunities for learning.

Care, teaching and training were at least good in all the providers visited. Skilled and experienced staff understood the needs of individuals or groups; training ensured that their knowledge was up to date and relevant. Regular communication with learners and, where appropriate, with their families meant that learners were able to influence what was provided for them. Training and support for parents helped families as a whole to improve their skills and knowledge. Close collaboration with other providers and agencies, both generally and for individuals, enhanced support for learners including at key points of transition. The providers' judgements on when and how to involve others were well considered. However, even in the best providers, access to specialist services was not always swift enough.

Other barriers to learning also remained. A considerable gap in learning emerged where hospital schools or pupil referral units were not responsible for their learners' home tuition. Distance learning through online learning networks (virtual schools and classrooms) was not always the best way to support learners because such networks reduced the opportunities for interaction, particularly for those who had mental health problems or found it difficult to socialise. Such provision was not always evaluated appropriately and did not always provide good value for money. When children who were living in temporary accommodation were moved frequently by the local authority, some of them spent too short a time at a single school for even the best schools to make a difference.

Key findings

- The providers visited were focused and determined to take whatever action was necessary to ensure equal access to learning and personal development; they persevered until solutions were found. Difficulties were not accepted as an excuse.
- In all the providers visited, the quality of care, teaching, or training for the groups identified was at least good and in just over half of them it was outstanding. The providers judged well when adaptations to teaching and learning were required or when alternative or additional intervention strategies were needed.
- Robust monitoring of individuals' academic, personal, social and emotional progress, which identified shortfalls in performance quickly, was a feature of the outstanding providers.
- Points of transition were planned carefully. Close collaboration took place across the providers and with other agencies, and a high level of monitoring continued after the transition.

- A key feature of all the providers' success was a high level of trust established with learners and, where appropriate, with their families. Learners were listened to and their views were valued.
- In the best providers, staff were highly trained, skilled and experienced, with a comprehensive understanding of the needs of individuals and the community or group that the providers served. Investment in staff training was matched well to the learners' changing needs.
- Parents and carers received consistent training and extensive informal personal support so that they could help their child and improve their own skills. This was seen as investing for success irrespective of the time it took.

Some barriers remained even for the very best providers.

- The use of distance learning through internet online learning networks (virtual schools/classrooms), which is not subject to external monitoring, sometimes hindered interaction between learners, particularly for those who had mental health problems or found it difficult to socialise.
- A minority of the schools visited found that access to specialist services such as therapy intervention, access to Ethnic Minority Achievement Grants and, in one case, support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, was not quick enough to be sufficiently effective.
- When unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, children of asylum seekers and looked after children who were living in temporary accommodation were moved frequently by the local authority, they underachieved. This was because the disruption to the roots that they had been establishing and movement away from the initial support they had received counteracted the progress they had made.

Recommendations

Local authorities should:

- improve the speed and timeliness of access to children's services to support those in vulnerable circumstances
- ensure that unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, children of asylum seekers and looked after children have stable living arrangements so that they do not change schools unless absolutely necessary.

All providers should ensure that:

- internet online learning networks (virtual schools/classrooms) are safe and provide good value for money
- the examples of good practice in this report are used where appropriate to support improvement.

Groups identified as vulnerable

1. The survey aimed to illustrate the most successful actions taken by providers to promote equality of outcomes for those who were deemed to be vulnerable. The survey defined 'vulnerable' to mean children, young people and adults who needed protection against harm, or who needed focused interventions or special services; those who were at greatest risk of underachievement, or any combination of these circumstances. The vulnerable groups identified for the purposes of the survey are set out below in Table 1.

Table 1. Vulnerable groups identified for the survey

learners in areas of widespread poverty
learners in hospital or with severe medical needs, including mental health needs
children in the care of councils, 'looked after children'
learners who attended more than one provider
learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities[4]
learners at points of transition in their education, including late arrivals to education, those affected by so-called 'managed moves' and excluded pupils and students
homeless children and young people, as well as those living in temporary accommodation, including women's refuges
young carers [5]
children and young people who had committed offences
children and young people dependent on alcohol or drugs, or those whose parents or family members misused these substances
learners experiencing or at risk of homophobic harassment
learners being bullied, either directly or through 'cyber' bullying
bereaved learners
learners of Traveller heritage,[6] including those of Irish, Gypsy and Roma heritage [7]

[4] 'A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities' – Disability Discrimination Act (1995).
[5] Young carers are children and young people who look after someone in the family with major care needs, often a parent.
[6] All other types of Traveller children including those travelling with fairgrounds (showman's) and circuses and the children of new Travellers or those on the waterways.
[7] This category includes all children of a Gypsy/Roma ethnic background, irrespective of whether they are nomadic, semi-nomadic or living in fixed accommodation. The term 'Gypsy/Roma' will also include many people whose immigration status will be asylum seeker or refugee, and/or migrant worker.

learners who were new arrivals in England who were learning to speak English as an additional language
children and young people from refugee and asylum-seeking families
unaccompanied children and young people seeking asylum, including those who were victims of trafficking

2. There are many causes of vulnerability, ranging across education, social care and health. They might be:

   - short-term, long-standing, or permanent
   - specific to an individual, such as a medical need or bereavement
   - a result of social inequality or prejudice, such as disadvantages associated with gender, race, social class and poverty
   - related to the way health, social care and educational services provide support at particular times, such as at major points of transition
   - cultural, such as falling school attendance in cultures where teenagers are considered, at that point, to be adults.

   Many children, young people and adults may be deemed to be vulnerable for more than one of these reasons.

Data on vulnerable learners

3. It is impossible to be precise about the numbers of vulnerable children, young people and adults, since their circumstances can change rapidly. In some cases, it is likely that only those closest to the individual know what is happening, such as those who are bereaved or suffering family trauma. These events are often not recorded in any statistics.

4. The Annual Schools Census takes place in January and the information it collects is used by the DCSF, other government departments, local authorities and others.[8] However, even pupils who are eligible for free school meals, which is often taken as a proxy for family poverty, will be recorded in the census only if their families take up the entitlement to this benefit.[9]

[8] The census collects information from every school in England under Section 29 of the Education Act 1996 and Section 42 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act.
[9] Statistical First Release: Attainment by pupil characteristics, in England SFR 31/2009; www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000889/SFR312009KS2AttainmentbyPupilCharacteristics.pdf.

5. In addition there are insufficient data for:

   - young carers, when their caring duties are unknown to their school
   - pupils of Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller heritage.

   Pupils of these heritages are also disproportionately identified as having special educational needs. The numbers of pupils in these groups appear to decline at each key stage. It is estimated that many are not recorded in the Annual Schools Census. They are not present when the end of key stage national tests take place and they leave the education system early. Data on the attainment of these groups of learners are therefore likely to be misleading.

Characteristics of the very best provision

Ethos

6. The survey found that the following features characterised the ethos of the providers visited.

   - Diversity was celebrated and used to improve outcomes.
   - Difficulties for individuals were tackled as quickly as possible.
   - Staff would do whatever was necessary to ensure that all learners maintained access to a good education.
   - High achievement was expected and no excuses were made.
   - Learners and their families were welcomed and respected.
   - Learners and their families trusted the staff; they felt that the staff listened to them and that their views were valued and acted upon.
   - Regular communication, including electronic communication, ensured that learners and their families were involved and well informed.
   - Senior leaders had high expectations and they communicated these to all staff.

   The following sections investigate these characteristics in more detail.

Diversity as a strength

7. Of the 97 providers visited as part of this survey, 50 of them were judged to be outstanding in terms of the quality of their provision to promote equality. They actively used diversity within their community to create a positive ethos. The care and education they provided responded directly to the needs and interests of their learners.

8. The distinction between 'difficulties' and 'differences' was clear. Differences were seen positively as opportunities for improving and broadening learning, for

example dance, drama, music and the arts. These providers were characterised by their welcoming atmosphere and learners' high levels of involvement. Celebrating diversity was used to create a sense of learners being valued and of belonging. Staff built on learners' enthusiasm, commitment and confidence to improve achievement in all areas of learning. Staff emphasised that success was not only possible but also expected.

Resolving difficulties

9. A straightforward 'can-do' approach extended from senior leaders to the staff who supported learners. Individual learners' difficulties were resolved as quickly as possible. These were seen merely as obstacles to be overcome and were dealt with immediately, consistently and without fuss. If an educational provider could not resolve them, the provider did what was possible to reduce the effects and made timely contact with specialist agencies. This is illustrated in the examples which follow.

> A parent of a child with severe physical disabilities needed childcare provision, but the childcare setting lacked the appropriate aids, accessibility and training.
>
> The manager said, 'We wanted to do everything we could to accommodate the child. We were happy to make whatever adjustments were needed.' The setting obtained equipment, including a standing frame, to enable the child to have access to resources and participate in activities. Good multi-agency arrangements were put in place and staff were trained to use the child's gastric feeding tube. An effective diary system ensured clear communications between the staff, parents and the 20 professionals working with the child.
>
> Important information was shared routinely to ensure that the child's welfare and learning needs were met. She made significant progress in her learning and could enjoy and achieve alongside her peers. Her family were very well supported and involved. Good working relationships with the child's parents established trust and built confidence.

> School-aged mothers, having had their babies, were not attending their home school because of difficulties with childcare. The hospital school they did attend, working with the local authority, set up a nursery on the medical school site, funded by grants. The result was that the students were able to leave their children in the nursery and focus on learning. In the year before the survey took place, all except one student had achieved qualifications; during the year of the survey, they were making good progress towards achieving recognised qualifications.

Equal access to a good education

10. A striking feature of the 50 best providers visited was their persistence and creativity in solving problems, whether they had only a few vulnerable learners or many. A student in Year 12, who was looked after, said: 'All I have ever experienced is good stuff and help. They treat me like there are not 2,000 kids in the school… They don't go the extra mile; they go an extra 10 miles.' A Year 10 pupil from a deprived background said, 'I wanted to go to Spain with the school but my circumstances meant I couldn't afford to go. The staff helped me to raise funds and did so themselves so I could go.'

11. Health or medical difficulties for young people should not be a barrier to their learning or the progress they can make. Key staff working together and listening to the views of the young person make a difference.

> A hospital school was supporting a young person with a recurrent medical condition. Her increasingly regular stays in hospital meant that her ability to keep up with her work was reducing, she was feeling socially more isolated, and her links with friends were very difficult as the hospital was far away. Her main school was not providing work for her or supporting her enough to catch up when she returned.
>
> Teachers from the hospital school therefore visited the main school, even though it was some distance away, and met the headteacher and the person responsible for inclusion. They made it clear that the main school was not meeting her needs and not complying with legislation and guidance. They asked what support the hospital school needed to give to resolve the problems.
>
> Together they identified key staff so that contact between the two schools could be maintained. The hospital school set up internet network links so that the pupil could talk to and see her friends using a laptop. This regular contact meant that she did not find it as difficult to settle when she returned.
>
> The pupil dropped one subject to make more time for the others. Her coursework was supported by the hospital school and the main school made sure that catch-up lessons were put in place. Although teachers of some subjects still did not provide work as readily as others, through the contact at the main school, the hospital school knew the syllabus and could adapt work, so that she could succeed and make good progress.

> Different community languages prevented easy communication between children, their parents and the staff of a children's centre. The centre therefore made excellent use of photographs of the children playing to

show what they had been doing. This also provided a resource for children and parents to talk about what they had enjoyed, in their home language. When children were upset when their parents left, the photographs showed the parent how the child was happy later on. The children also took the camera home to take photographs. These were copied and provided an excellent resource for discussion and for extending the children's home language as well as English.

Expectations of high achievement

12. The best providers visited did not accept difficulties as an excuse for low achievement. They also learned from the experiences of individuals to anticipate similar difficulties and act accordingly. The following quotations represent the work of the outstanding providers visited.

> 'We believe the biggest influence on a child comes from the home and that is the rationale for working with families and focusing on all issues that affect the child and their family. … Our business is raising achievement which, along with excellent teaching, requires the child to be in the right frame of mind.' (Headteacher.)

> 'The school really helped me; the teachers were always encouraging. I wanted to do extra GCSEs and the school arranged it and teachers even took time during lunch hours to help with my studies.' (Former pupil, who arrived at school with no English, now studying biomedical science at university.)

> 'I am in foster care and have been all my life. I used to get bullied for it. I've moved foster placements frequently and have missed school and fallen behind. In this school I now get loads of support and I am predicted [grade] Bs and Cs.' (Year 11 student.)

13. The outstanding providers in this survey provided structure and support for individuals who had specific difficulties. The learners understood that they had a right to equal opportunities in education, as illustrated in the following example.

> Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities in residential accommodation were having difficulty communicating with each other and the adults who were supporting them. This curtailed their independence and limited their understanding about each other's needs, leading to some discriminatory behaviour and unkindness.
>
> A designated link worker was therefore assigned to each one, whose job was to liaise between parents, the social worker and the home. Social workers, community nurses, a consultant paediatrician and general practitioners provided good external support. There was a strong emphasis on involving parents and carers in supporting their children.

Each individual had a document, 'About Me', listing things which were important. For instance, 'My name is Glen and I like... If I am sad, you should…' Documentation was available using pictures, signs and symbols.

All the staff received training in equality, diversity and cultural awareness. Discrimination was taken seriously and the staff were confident in challenging negative opinions or discriminatory language. The staff actively promoted the rights of young people and, by being good role models, encouraged them to develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Promoting a 'can do' culture helped to raise the young people's expectations. They were actively supported to express themselves, for example through their choice of fashion. They learnt respect for themselves and the needs of others.

Promoting community cohesion

14. All the most successful providers contributed significantly to community cohesion.[10] In one of the secondary schools visited, for example, harmonious relations existed between the different groups because the trust and respect that the school cultivated spread into the wider community. Two Year 9 students said: 'Our birth countries are at war, but we are not... our school helps us to understand about living in England as well as about each other's backgrounds.'

The community outside a primary school was culturally very diverse. Unease and the potential for friction existed between minority ethnic groups. At school, through their behaviour and attitudes, the pupils reflected the tensions in the community. Parents were reluctant to become engaged with the school.

The school recognised that a concerted approach was needed to encourage parents of all groups to be more involved. It appointed a teacher with specific responsibility for community liaison and set up a range of simple but effective strategies, including:

- establishing an 'open door' policy for parents and carers
- providing coffee mornings for different groups of parents
- celebrating a wide range of religious festivals to which parents were invited
- inviting parents to a free lunch with their children

[10] *Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion* (DCSF-00598-2007), DCSF, 2007. For further information about community cohesion see: www.publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00598-2007&.

- improving meetings for parents, for example at transition for Year 6 pupils
- providing translators
- supporting parents' access to external agencies
- providing literacy classes for adults
- gaining support from the local authority's language service for pupils in class and their parents.

The families became more involved in their children's education. They were better informed about the school's expectations and felt more at ease in discussing their concerns. Attendance at parents' evenings, curriculum meetings and social events increased. Their better involvement improved their children's attendance and progress. Relations between the different groups in the school were more harmonious.

An unaccompanied young man, arriving in England seeking asylum, did not have a passport or a birth certificate. This caused difficulties when enrolling him into a school. English was his fourth language and, on arrival, he spoke little of the language.

He had experienced trauma and suffered from so-called 'survivor's guilt'. Both his parents were dead. For some time he had lived on the streets with young people who were older than him, before being placed with foster carers for two years. The foster carers found a Refugee Support team; this team, in turn, found those who spoke his language and had a similar heritage, so he was able to talk about things in his own language. The team helped the foster carers by getting copies of documents from his home country and translating material.

He gained GCSEs, including English and mathematics, in his fourth language. The foster carers helped him to get an apprenticeship and acted as advocates for him at the local college to ensure that he had an individual plan. This support put him on the road to qualifying as an architectural stonemason.

15. Through the focus groups during the survey and through other inspections, learners and their families described how providers had developed their confidence and trust through celebrating their heritages and traditions, and through using staff who spoke community languages. This was particularly true for families who were refugees or seeking asylum and for those with young children. In a children's centre, for example, an outreach worker supported several groups including a Somali women's group, a 'baby massage' group, a 'stay and play' toy library, toddler groups, and a group for fathers.

In an area of widespread poverty, the centre created an atmosphere of trust and respect for diversity. Parents emphasised to inspectors that they

felt no-one was judging them. The crèche was used by families, often in crisis, and from a wide variety of backgrounds, including Travellers, refugees and single parents. It dealt promptly and practically with specific difficulties, for example, not all the children were able to use the outside area in bad weather because many of them lacked outdoor clothing. It applied for funding so that it was able to buy appropriate clothing for the children and volunteers. Everyone was able to use the provision, even in bad weather; photographs showed children and adults enjoying heavy snow. As a result of such action, the centre developed high levels of involvement from parents in the crèche and in their children's learning.

16. Parents, carers, children and young people had much to say about how well their schools valued them and made them feel secure. The following comments exemplify this.

> 'The school provides a great deal of support for parents. It's a homely school, you feel you belong and you feel comfortable sending children to school. They get in touch with you and you feel that you are not alone.' (Parent of a child with severe medical needs.)

> 'There have been no problems with discrimination. People are helpful. They give us information. The school is welcoming. I stay. I like to know what is going on from time to time. The teacher updates me about what is going on. If they set up a meeting, the teacher tells me what I need to do. She is teaching me what to do with his problems as well as teaching him! He is like a second son to the school. It is like a family.' (Parent with a child who spoke English as an additional language.)

> 'This school is good because they let us in and help us. Schools need to let Travellers in, because not a lot do, but we need to learn.' (Year 5 pupil of Traveller heritage.)

17. The settings were positive communities which celebrated diversity and success, often through outstanding displays and purposeful cultural events. The approach was one where the needs and cultures of different groups were built in from the start. Day-to-day activities reflected and celebrated different traditions. In the words of one headteacher: 'It is not about festivals; we have moved away from that. It is about getting parents involved regularly and then their children will follow and share more.'

Listening to learners and their families

18. A key feature of success in all the providers visited was a high level of trust established with individuals and, where appropriate, with their families. Children and young people were listened to and their views were valued.

19. All the 97 providers visited worked hard to ensure that parents and families were involved. They regularly sought views, both formally and informally, and acted on them. The survey found numerous instances of providers making arrangements at the request of individuals, and developing initiatives in response to representations. A parent said: 'If you have got an idea, it will be taken seriously and acted upon.'

20. The 56 schools surveyed supported new arrivals very effectively, particularly through buddying pairs of learners, including those who were new to England. This communicated values and local 'know-how' and, where appropriate, also helped with translating. One new arrival said that this had provided 'a first best friend that you did not know you would have'. One of the playgroups visited also supported new children by matching them with a child who spoke the same language.

21. In the best schools visited, Traveller children and young people received excellent support. However, their parents felt less at ease with secondary schools in general. Many said they had experienced difficulties themselves at school and felt intimidated by the environment, the language and the culture. They lacked the sense that, unlike in primary schools, there was someone to whom they could talk directly.

Regular communication

22. Across the whole range of different settings, the 50 very best providers shared information regularly, both formally and informally. A parent of a new arrival who spoke English as an additional language said, 'You know you're safe... you can come in any time... They act quickly on information.' Parents often said during the survey how much they appreciated being told good news, not just problems, such as through a quick telephone call to say their child had done something well.

23. In the best providers, communication was enhanced by technology such as text messages. This ensured a speedy exchange of information and a sense that communication was in the control of users as well as providers. A foster carer identified being able to 'text at any time' as one of the major strengths of her communication with a teaching assistant. In one of the schools visited, pupils created podcasts to keep in touch with those who were not able to attend, for example, when they were in hospital or travelling.

24. In cases where a group was very small, providers found creative ways to give support, as in this example.

> A family, at the very early stages of learning English, was the only family in a rural location that was not White British. There were no other families of a similar heritage or background within 25 miles. The school and local authority provided a video conference link so that the family could talk in their own language to other families in England. This helped them to

create links, learn about life in England and develop their English through support from their peers.

Leadership

25. Leaders and managers were determined to make a difference. Their commitment to equal opportunities was shared by their staff, as shown in the following example.

> In a children's centre, where 80% of the children lived with lone parents, almost always the mothers, some of the support workers were male. This gave the children good opportunities to talk to and interact with men in ways which most of them did not experience at home. While the children learnt how to keep themselves safe from 'stranger danger', having men in the centre they could relate to helped them to build a sense of trust so that they could understand that not all men were dangerous.

26. The providers used data intelligently to make changes, as in the post-16 providers visited. They had a clear view of national trends and acted to improve the education and employment of under-represented groups.

> A provider of adult and community learning found that male students, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds, were significantly under-represented, in the college and nationally, in adult and community learning. Staff worked with the Local Skills Council and community groups to recruit them to an accredited security skills course. Jobcentre Plus advertised the course in the Jobcentre.
>
> Around 150 male students on the Skills for Work project were mainly first generation migrants from minority ethnic backgrounds who had never worked in Britain. Many had not attended any vocational training course in Britain, although some had done so in their own country. By attending a short skills-based programme in security, with English language as a key focus, they had entered an educational environment where they could succeed. All those who took the examination passed. Some progressed to other courses in the college, such as customer services, and many of them found work.

Outcomes

27. In terms of outcomes for learners, consistent key characteristics were that:

- attendance was seen as paramount to success
- there was accurate monitoring of learners' progress and participation
- hospital schools, schools with Traveller pupils and pupil referral units took responsibility for home tuition or distance learning

- providers monitored carefully the impact of distance learning via internet learning networks (virtual schools/classrooms) and their procedures for safeguarding learners were robust
- the impact of policies to improve outcomes and the rates of participation and retention for vulnerable groups were audited regularly
- care plans and other documentation were matched closely to the needs of individuals.

Attendance

28. All the most successful providers visited saw good attendance as vital to improving life chances, including gaining accredited qualifications where appropriate, as illustrated in this example.

> Young people with medical or mental health needs at a hospital school, who had previously missed a great deal of school, were not improving their attendance, particularly on Mondays and Fridays. Expectations of their attendance were low and support for them was insufficient.
>
> To tackle this, their previous attendance was recorded and individual targets were set in discussion with the pupils and their families. The school tracked the attendance regularly and shared the information with the pupil, as well as with the adolescent mental health services team. This was to check that the focus on targets was not having an adverse effect. Key staff contacted the pupils' homes with regular calls and encouragement. Small improvements were praised, with the expectation that pupils would build on these. The timetable was adjusted so that the more favoured lessons, including music and drama, were timetabled for Mondays and Fridays.
>
> All the pupils except one improved their attendance markedly, in two cases from 0% to 87% and 97%. Once attendance in part-time placements had improved, the school built on this success, raising expectations to work towards full-time attendance.

29. As well as promoting attendance, the providers visited were aware of difficulties which might prevent attendance in the first place. The 11 outstanding early years providers visited encouraged families who were in circumstances that made them hard to reach through consistent personal support and welcoming activities,. Some of the providers were able to offer financial subsidies so that vulnerable children could have access to much-needed play and development. All the very best providers were flexible in terms of admitting vulnerable learners, as the following example shows.

> An unemployed parent with an autistic child attending a mainstream school quite a distance away wanted her son to join the out-of-school care group, but the facility was available only for parents who were employed.

Because of his autism and his reluctance to cope with change, the centre made an exception and admitted him. Had his mother found employment first, before he was admitted, it would have been extremely unlikely that she would have been able to continue with it because he took almost 12 months to settle into the group. Each day he arrived at the centre before the other children and a member of staff was appointed for an hour to help him to adjust. His behaviour improved immensely and, when the rest of the children arrived, he was able to accept this without becoming distressed.

30. All the 19 post-16 providers in the survey actively recruited students from potentially vulnerable groups and were successful in retaining them, often adapting provision to encourage their initial attendance. One of the colleges visited was particularly skilled at identifying invisibly excluded groups, such as people with 'unspent' criminal convictions, and improving access to learning.[11]

31. The following example shows how a college responded to an identified problem in the local area and adapted its facilities and provision accordingly.

A general further education college, reviewing why school leavers and local people who were not in work, training or education did not want to attend courses, found they lacked confidence to approach the main college site.

As a result, one of the campus sites was reconfigured. It offered vocational courses at level 1 in a setting that allowed the students to feel safe and capable of achieving. The Connexions service, the youth offending team and schools referred those who might benefit from the provision. A year later, the centre was offering courses in interactive media, fashion, childcare, business administration, motorcycle maintenance, motor vehicle maintenance, and hair and beauty. A pathway to employment option at entry level 2 and 3 recruited people needing to develop their literacy and numeracy skills within vocational activities before taking level 1 programmes. Team-building and volunteering activities, very high levels of support and frequent celebrations of small steps of achievement contributed to students' success.

For the 69 new students in 2007/2008, the retention rate was 78%; of those, 98% successfully completed their courses and all but one of the 49 students moved on to higher-level courses at the main college sites or to

[11] The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 outlaws discrimination against ex-offenders. It is intended to help people with few and/or minor convictions. Certain criminal convictions are 'spent' (forgotten) after a rehabilitation period which varies according to the offence. Rehabilitation periods are halved if the offender was under 18 when convicted.

employment. In the year of the survey (2008/09), 120 new students were enrolled, double that of the previous year.

32. Even the best schools, however, could not compensate for short periods of attendance when unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, children of asylum seekers and looked after children did not have stable living arrangements. This was particularly the case if, after arriving in England, they changed school after attending for under a year. This was because moving away from the initial support and the disruption to the roots they had been putting down counteracted the progress that they had made.

Home tuition and distance learning

33. During the survey, in the 10 focus groups for families from Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller heritage, and in the visits to schools that featured this group in their cohorts, the parents said how much they valued schooling. At the same time, however, they spoke about keeping their children at home for key events such as birthdays, funerals and weddings. They said that their wider family priorities took precedence, that these were culturally important and that, sometimes, the schools did not fully appreciate this. The fairground and circus families who were interviewed during the survey said that their children would be out of school annually for quite a bit of time and that secondary schools were less helpful than primary schools about providing work when they were not in school.

34. To ensure that these children and young people maintained their education, the best schools kept in touch via internet learning networks (virtual schools) and email.

> A primary school provided carefully tailored work related to the area being travelled to and the activity that the family was engaged in. The parents particularly appreciated the ability to send work by email to be marked.
>
> As a result, the pupils who spent time travelling with their families were extremely well supported and made very good progress with their learning. The parents were integral to the success of this work. They ensured that the set work was completed daily and to a good standard. On their return, the pupils were quickly reintegrated and accustomed to school routines. They had good friendships and enjoyed school very much.

35. Alternative provision was made for children and young people who could not attend mainstream school, for example for medical reasons or pregnancy. The four outstanding providers visited (hospital schools and pupil referral units) were responsible for home tuition. This meant that when the pupils were not in school, during periods of hospitalisation or rehabilitation, they continued with their education as well as they could. This often involved internet learning networks (virtual schools/classrooms) provided through the local authority's education service. However, not all of them audited these thoroughly,

sometimes simply assuming that such provision was a good use of resources and that safeguarding was robust.[12] On occasions, the virtual schools and classrooms got in the way of interaction between learners, particularly for those who had mental health problems or who found it difficult to socialise. This did not always provide good value for money.

36. Post-16 providers took advantage of internet learning networks by providing virtual classrooms. These enabled students to widen their knowledge and to improve their communication skills, as shown in the following example.

> Following the monitoring of the attendance of different groups of vulnerable students, a college noticed that those with mental health difficulties needed more support. In some cases, students with mental health problems found it difficult to attend college regularly.
>
> Funded by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, the college developed software that allowed students to see, from their computer at home, the interactive whiteboard being used in the lesson or lessons they were missing.[13] The students could also hear the teacher and the other students and could contribute by writing on the whiteboard from their home computer. As the student was 'in' the lesson, virtually, the social benefits of college and the continuity from one lesson to the next were retained. The flexibility of the virtual learning environment was coupled with one-to-one pastoral support from the specialist tutor.
>
> The support widened participation and, ultimately, progression to higher education for this under-represented group. Through the project, students with mental health difficulties learned how to manage their situation. This allowed them to enter higher education or the workforce when previously this would not have been possible. Importantly, other students became more informed about the barriers to learning created by mental health difficulties.

Auditing the impact of policies on equality

37. While the good providers monitored their work carefully, the 50 outstanding providers included performance indicators and targets in relation to equalities as a matter of course. Their policies on equalities emphasised the importance of learners' views; these contributed directly to and influenced change. Knowing what the learners thought helped to evaluate the success of policies qualitatively as well as quantitatively. In the next example, an independent

[12] Ofsted reported a similar concern about safeguarding learners when they are online in *The safe use of new technologies* (090231), Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090231.
[13] For further information on the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, see: www.lsis.org.uk.

specialist college made changes following its evaluation of how it conducted multi-agency reviews.

> Multi-agency reviews in an independent specialist college
>
> The college's evaluation of multi-agency reviews found that these were very formal and could be intimidating for students with complex needs, their parents and carers.
>
> As a result, it established a 'person-centred' review system to enable the students to make their own choices about their learning and their destinations. Using adaptations where required, the students took a key role in leading the reviews alongside the teaching staff. The students identified what they liked and did not like, and what was and was not working for them. The reviews enabled them to build up their own programmes. There was a strong focus on their likely destinations and what was needed to enable them to achieve their goals. Detailed action plans were drawn up.
>
> The students understood and agreed with the decisions made as a result of the review; this increased and supported their independence.

38. One of the providers of workplace learning monitored each employer rigorously each year, in relation to equality of opportunity. This was done through scrutiny of the application processes, recruitment procedures and retention rates. The results were published in a newsletter that showed what each employer was achieving, highlighted good practice and celebrated the success of former apprentices. The best companies liaised exceptionally well with subcontractors, anticipating the barriers which might prevent participation by vulnerable adults from under-represented groups. They looked for ways to retain them on courses and solved problems by providing what was needed, such as uniforms.

39. Nationally, Black people and minority ethnic groups, particularly women in these groups, are under-represented in the rail industry. The following example shows how a work-based learning provider worked with the rail industry to help recruit those from under-represented groups.

> In conjunction with London Underground, the provider developed a programme which lasted six weeks. This involved:
>
> - shadowing London Underground workers for two weeks
> - an improving key skills level 1 course in communications and adult numeracy for four weeks
> - employability training
> - a level 1 customer service qualification.
>
> Fourteen students started on the first course: seven were from minority ethnic backgrounds and three were women. Five students gained

employment with London Underground as customer service assistants and three others found employment elsewhere. In addition to the five with London Underground, a further five students gained qualifications in employability and personal development, key skills application, and communication.

Individual care plans

40. In the 78 providers for children and young people visited during the survey, the staff understood their complex care needs fully. Care plans were matched closely to individual needs and were used effectively to supplement the continuing informal assessments. These derived from excellent relationships between staff and families.

41. Some of the early years staff in the settings visited found that once they had become accustomed to using the Common Assessment Framework, it speeded up responses from other services.[14] The Common Assessment Framework also helped with intervention and support in other providers. Few of the schools visited were using it. However, the following example from one of the secondary schools shows how the framework can be successful when used swiftly.

> A male student began showing signs of psychological problems. Unexpectedly, he started to make racist comments and began harming himself. His outbursts, including name-calling and fighting, were having a negative effect on his learning and that of other students.
>
> The school responded speedily. Using the Common Assessment Framework, it involved the student and the adolescent mental health service team. His curriculum was adjusted: he was withdrawn from main class lessons to have one-to-one work with teaching assistants and he joined a nurture group in the school.[15] His homework was stopped because of apparent conflicts at home. His parents were invited to parenting classes.
>
> At the beginning, the school had listed 30 different types of incidents in which he had been involved. As the interventions were introduced, results were immediate. The number of incidents, which had been rising, plummeted. The interventions were slowly withdrawn and the student

[14] The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a generic tool for practitioners working across all children's services. For further information see: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/caf. Examples of the CAF being used in early years settings can be found in *Children in need in childcare* (080248), Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080248.
[15] For further information on nurture groups, see: www.nurturegroups.org.

began to take part much more in the curriculum, in class, as his behaviour improved significantly.

Early identification and setting goals

42. Consistent key characteristics were that:

- providers knew each child, young person or adult well; additional needs or gaps in performance were identified early, often before she or he arrived
- providers monitored learners' progress robustly across academic, personal, social and emotional areas of learning and targets were set
- they provided interventions and support swiftly, often anticipating need, monitored them regularly to evaluate their effectiveness and adjusted or removed them as needed
- accurate assessments were made of learners who were learning English as an additional language, in order to judge their proficiency and literacy in their first language and to assess their capabilities thoroughly.

Knowledge of individuals

43. The 50 outstanding providers identified individuals who were at risk of underachieving very early on. This was often done before the learner was admitted, as in this example.

> A secondary school recognised the challenges that a pupil joining the school with an anti-social behaviour order might present. The school felt it was important to support him and build a relationship with him and his family while he was still in primary school.
>
> The senior teacher in charge of inclusion and the coordinator for special educational needs visited the pupil and his teacher in primary school. An action plan was written, involving his parents and other agencies, including the local authority's social services staff.
>
> When he joined the secondary school, he was placed with a strong form tutor. A learning support assistant, trained in dealing with pupils with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, was allocated to his class. He joined the school's nurture group and the boys' relaxation technique group.
>
> He settled well. When his emotional and behavioural progress was measured, using a commercial scheme, it showed he had improved. He built a good relationship with the learning support assistant, and his responses to the nurture group and the relaxation classes were excellent. As he developed self-confidence and as his behaviour improved, he asked for his support to be taken away; he was able to sustain his progress without this.

44. The childcare providers knew individual children well because they built and maintained excellent partnerships with parents and carers. For example, before a child arrived, they visited the child's home, with bilingual staff where appropriate. In one of the children's centres visited, each child had a learning journal. The staff observed the children skilfully, linking the observations and assessments to the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and using the information to record the children's 'learning journeys'. Planned activities then used the children's interests. This effective system meant that the children's experiences of play were exciting, challenging and culturally appropriate. The 'learning journeys' were discussed regularly with the children's parents and they were invited to contribute their observations.

Accurate assessment and robust monitoring of progress

45. The very best providers judged learners' progress in three contexts: individually, including medical conditions where appropriate; the family and immediate peers; and the community, as well as the next stage in the learner's life. This careful understanding was important in ensuring a coordinated response to removing barriers to learning and ensuring the best possible progress.

46. In these providers, assessment and target-setting took account of personal, social and emotional needs as well as academic achievement. Targets were specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. Senior managers' detailed and thorough monitoring of a wide range of indicators contributed to successful outcomes. While nominated staff took responsibility for the progress of individual learners, all staff who supported them were aware of the targets. As one headteacher said, 'Every child is everybody's responsibility.'

47. A strong focus on monitoring the progress of individuals did not detract from the importance of knowing how different groups were making progress, with action taken where necessary.

> In 2006/07, following data analysis, a provider of adult and community learning found that Black students were achieving less well than other groups on an information and communication technology course. Success rates were 5% lower than those for Asian students.
>
> Investigation revealed that those who were underachieving did not have computer facilities at home and the college's own facilities were poor. An ICT drop-in workshop improved the provision markedly. The students used the improved facilities during the year and the outcomes for 2007/08 showed that Black students were achieving at a similarly high level to other students.

48. A significant feature was the rigorous monitoring of the impact of changes in provision on learners' progress and the use the providers made of that information.

> An early excellence centre in an area of widespread poverty was concerned about children's development because of the effects of poverty and the lack of space for play where most of the children lived.
>
> The centre's assessment procedure was developed to monitor children's progress in considerable detail and to identify any underachieving groups. For example, despite providing a wide range of outdoor activities, resulting in an improvement in children's curiosity and physical awareness, children from the local flats and some children from minority ethnic backgrounds did not improve to the same level as the others. Three areas of focus were therefore identified: curiosity, awareness of diversity, and healthy living. The centre therefore increased access to the local 'forest school', a wooded environment offering exciting opportunities such as climbing, and developed a new risk assessment policy. This supported staff in helping the children to manage the inherent risks.
>
> The more frequent visits to the forest school led to measurable improvements in the physical development of the children from the flats, and progress in their confidence, social and emotional development, behaviour and language. One child, 30 months old, who had not been walking, responded to the physical challenge of the forest and made dramatic improvements in his physical development. This helped his mother to be less protective and more encouraging. A group of children with learning and emotional difficulties, who visited the forest school three times a week as part of the forest therapy group, made similar progress.

49. The most effective providers ensured that learners were given effective extra help in developing personal and social skills. In the 19 outstanding schools visited, this was done through nurture groups, quality circle time[16] and materials related to the social and emotional aspects of learning.[17] In one of the schools, the nurture group took place in the afternoons to ensure that all pupils took part in as much of the curriculum as possible. This very effective strategy was required only for about a term before the pupils returned, with improved skills, to a full timetable.

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[16] For further information on quality circle time, see: www.circle-time.co.uk.

[17] *Developing social, emotional and behavioural skills in secondary schools* (070048), Ofsted, 2007; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070048a. Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) is a voluntary programme designed to develop the social and emotional skills of all pupils. For further information on SEAL, see: www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/socialandpastoral/seal_learning/.

In one school visited, vulnerable pupils were the first group to try a well-prepared programme called 'The Ambassadors Club', for transfer to secondary school. By being the first to make the visits, they gained not only a head start themselves but also status among their peers. This had a positive effect on their self-esteem and personal development.

50. In the best providers seen, individual children and young people praised the attention staff gave them in the way they monitored their progress across a range of Every Child Matters outcomes. For example, through the Office of the Children's Rights Director, one young person living in a children's home said:

> 'The staff that work with me to help me do well try to give me as many opportunities to shine as possible by trying to make me come to certain clubs: like, at school, it would be revision sessions and at home it would be things like joining cadets and continuing horse riding.'

51. A secondary school realised that it needed to do more to track the emotional development of its students who were in circumstances which made them vulnerable.

A successful secondary school, reviewing its knowledge of its students' emotional awareness, realised that its methods to measure emotional awareness, raise self-esteem, improve behaviour and celebrate improvement were not meeting the needs of some vulnerable students.

A six-week course was introduced, focusing on emotional literacy, assessment and intervention, with mentoring by specialist staff. This was supported and monitored by the local authority's educational psychological service. The course consisted of 'Smart Study' sessions, from 4.30pm to 7.00pm, a 'twilight' computer club and early evening drop-in sessions for parents and carers. Evaluation forms related to emotional literacy were given to the students and subject teachers before and after the course. A completion letter was sent home to parents and carers for them to comment on their child's development. The collated results were discussed.

The course increased understanding throughout the school of students' previous behaviour. Those who took part had a greater understanding of the needs of others, and some close friendships were formed where students previously had had none. Within the students' families, it improved understanding of their emotional development. The course created a shared understanding so that that the school and the families could understand clearly what the children were learning or needed to learn and could celebrate successes.

52. The 19 post-16 providers visited for the survey were selected because they had identified explicit needs for specific vulnerable groups of young people and

adults. Interventions were focused directly on raising the achievement of particular vulnerable groups. Value-added measures, progress indices and success rates demonstrated their success since the changes to the approach and support. [18]

53. The Workstep programme supports adults with complex disabilities to build independence, learn skills for daily life and develop confidence.[19] One such provider deployed support staff for on-the-job training using a system known as 'systematic instruction'.[20] All the core routines and goals specific to a job were identified and analysed and learning goals were broken down to appropriate levels for individuals. Workplace aids (such as those for communication), adaptations such as job coaching, and 'access to work' funding also provided well-matched support. The employment officer worked alongside the adults in the workplace full-time until they felt confident enough to be left for short periods; the support was phased out at a rate which was appropriate to individuals' needs. The employment officer also responded rapidly if problems arose between visits, rather than waiting for reviews to take place. An annual monitoring visit was made even when the individual was working unsupported. Support included home visits and close liaison with parents, carers and other family members. The quality of relationships was a significant factor in the programme's success.

English as an additional language

54. For those learning to speak English as an additional language, the best providers visited were careful to assess learners' proficiency and literacy in their first language and to find out their knowledge in other subjects and areas.

55. The 11 outstanding early years providers used a wide range of approaches to encourage language acquisition in the home languages and in English. For example, for parents who spoke more than one home language, staff encouraged them to maintain one language for a complete conversation; this showed children how language flowed and therefore helped their fluency. Staff communicated with children through signing, pictures and music, and there were on-site classes in English for parents and children together. In one of the children's centres visited, staff had a 'sign of the week' to learn and used interpreters where necessary.

56. The early years providers emphasised children's language development and their knowledge and understanding of the world, including other cultures. Activities, visitors and visits to local places of interest gave the children

[18] The success rate is the number of students gaining a pass in a qualification compared with the number who started the course, generally expressed as a percentage.
[19] See *Improving progression to sustainable unsupported employment: A review of strategies developed by Workstep providers* (080258), Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080258.
[20] www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk/profile.asp?guid=01f4e94f-7032-48b4-8d7a-d55af3a39c43.

extensive opportunities for learning. They saw their own and others' backgrounds portrayed in ways which helped them to learn how to acknowledge differences positively.

> At a children's centre in an area of widespread poverty, many refugee families and children spoke English as additional language. Parents were encouraged to participate in the pre-school, first as volunteers and then to follow childcare qualifications. As a result, it was able to 'grow its own talent'. Increasingly, the staffing reflected the local community and included those who spoke the relevant languages. Parents found this reassuring and it helped to support learning. Their children settled quickly into the pre-school and became confident in acquiring English.
>
> There was a strong emphasis on staff training and excellent use of national and local programmes, such as 'Every child a talker'.[21] Simple visual aids and games made singing nursery rhymes active and fun for children who spoke little or no English and they were able to participate fully. Staff supported children's communication skills with signing and community languages. Free training from the local authority kept staff up to date with developments in the Early Years.

57. The inspection report of a secondary school which had recently admitted a number of Polish students revealed that Polish-speaking parents greatly appreciated that they could speak to Polish-speaking staff in their home language. Further analysis during the survey showed that the students were able to study Polish at GCSE level when they were ready, and not just at Key Stage 4. The school took great care to find out what the students had been studying in Poland and how well they had been doing so that they could transfer smoothly. This also helped the school to assess individual needs and talents. The parents and students were highly committed to the school, work was very well matched to needs, and achievement was outstanding. The number of Polish students who continued with education or training when they left the school increased markedly.

58. All the providers visited where English as an additional language was a focus for the survey used speakers of community languages in day to day provision. They also used translation services and interpreters so that parents could participate fully in reviews of individual learning plans.

[21] *Every child a talker* (00854-2008 DOM-EN), DCSF, 2008; for further information, see: nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/153355.

Supporting learning for individuals

59. Consistent key characteristics were that:

- provision–care, teaching and training–was at least good
- provision was adapted for individuals as necessary through changes to content or teaching
- curriculum and enrichment activities promoted respect for diversity and improved equality
- individuals were helped to increase their independence
- individuals learnt about their own heritage and the community in which they lived
- members of the community enhanced provision for others.

Good provision

60. The survey found that individuals who were at risk of underachieving or who had special educational needs and/or disabilities made good and often outstanding progress because there were no dips or delays in their development and learning. They settled in quickly to a purposeful environment. Where there were high levels of mobility, or where attendance was intermittent, they were reintegrated effectively.

61. Imaginative teaching had a demonstrable impact on progress. Good teaching provided a secure foundation for new initiatives or major adaptations, so that these contributed positively rather than destabilised provision.

62. Professional development supported staff to respond to the needs of particular groups and leadership teams made the most of individuals' skills —teachers and teaching assistants. Staff had high levels of subject knowledge or specialist expertise and therefore were able to adapt activities or course content skilfully. High expectations were reinforced consistently, whether it was about dealing with the behaviour of a young child in a nursery or the prompt submission of coursework for older learners.

> In an adult learning centre, tutors worked with individuals to help build their confidence and ensure that they had the help and information they needed to be successful. For example, programme matrixes were displayed on the classroom walls so students could see at a glance how they could progress from their current programme. Support extended to the flexible timing of the programmes, including evenings and Saturdays. There was excellent support for skills such as writing curriculum vitae and applying for jobs. This free service was available to anyone in the community and not just students on the programme.

Adapting provision

63. All the providers visited during the survey made sure that teaching and learning met individuals' needs, and not just for learners who were vulnerable to underachievement. Adjustments to provision were made, for example, in planning courses, grouping learners for teaching, and in making changes to support individuals, as in the example below. Precise target-setting underpinned such provision, with rigorous, regular tracking of progress.

> A childminder was asked to care for a child who had seizures, speech delay and sleep apnoea[22] and had recently had a gastric feeding tube inserted. The childminder's attitude was very positive. She talked to the child's parents and the childcare professional from the local authority to assess the child's needs. She was trained to manage the gastric feeding tube and used the same language techniques as the speech therapist. Review meetings with the parents and the professionals were held at her home so that the child could play while the discussions took place.
>
> The childminder made sure that the child could participate in the full range of activities: sand and water play, construction, role play and creative activities. She organised these to ensure that the child's feeding tube was not knocked or disrupted. When the child was having a bad day, her physical abilities, such as balance and grip, could be affected. The childminder took the child's needs into account and provided activities that she could manage.
>
> The child was settled and happy in the placement. She played successfully with the other children and made good progress. She benefited from good relationships and consistency between the childminder, her parents and the professional staff who supported them.[23]

Curriculum and enrichment activities

64. In one of the secondary schools visited, young carers participated in whole-school assemblies, so that all pupils understood about caring for others and also became aware of the support available for young carers. They met every Friday lunchtime so that they could give each other support and build confidence for the weekend. They appreciated this and said that it made a significant difference. It also mattered to pupils who were not carers. A Year 8 pupil said, 'It makes you feel really good inside, knowing your school helps people who need it most.'

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[22] Sleep apnoea is a condition which causes interruptions in breathing during sleep.

[23] *Children in need in childcare* (080248), Ofsted, 2010, provides other similar examples of how childcare settings adapted provision to meet children's needs; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080248.

65. One of the secondary schools visited had a wide range of extra-curricular activities, often set up after requests from students. These added to their engagement with learning in a general sense, but it was particularly so for those who were more vulnerable to underachievement. In one of the secondary schools, those who had joined the school speaking very little English developed language skills quickly and fluently, conversing clearly and confidently with inspectors during the visit, despite having started at the school only a few months previously. This was attributed to the excellent training of staff and the integrated strategies used to support the students, such as the lunchtime philosophy club which created a passion for sharing views and opinions.

66. In the 58 providers for those of school age that were visited, vulnerable pupils benefited from sports activities. These engaged them when they were at risk of disaffection and the schools provided role models, particularly but not exclusively for male pupils. For girls who were not engaged by traditional sports, two of the schools visited provided activities such as trampolining and Bollywood dance.

67. Other examples of support in the schools visited included:

- weekly mentoring sessions, with work that focused on helping pupils to achieve their academic targets
- a programme for a small number of bereaved pupils where they could discuss their feelings and understand that others felt the same way
- a stress management programme run at the transition stages for Year 7 and Year 11 students
- innovative provision for play therapy: as a result, pupils who were refugees or new to England improved their problem-solving and social skills, both in and outside the classroom.

68. Often, initiatives grew well beyond the original intention and benefited large numbers of learners. In one school, what started out as a withdrawal group for those with special educational needs became a whole-school project, with an impact on the attainment of all pupils. The inclusion programme allowed those who would otherwise be isolated to work with their peers and also with pupils who would find it very difficult to work wholly in a mainstream class. This allowed pupils across the ability range to mix and make good progress.

69. For children of Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller heritage, the outstanding schools provided a wide range of opportunities for practical investigations and subjects that built on the children's own strengths and reflected the real world. One Year 9 student said:

> 'I like to meet new people and learn new stuff in different subjects like in drama we're doing a play with masks and we're doing the BBC News. People have different parts to play, reading the news and the weather.'

70. The providers in all phases focused strongly on developing learners' independence, appropriate for their age and ability, as a prerequisite for achievement. The early years providers and schools emphasised the development of good communication. Augmented communication, for example, signs and symbols, story boards and information and communication technology, was used excellently to support children with communication difficulties.

71. Learners were supported to become independent and responsible for their own choices. They learnt how to stand up for themselves and make their views known, appropriately but assertively. One school's focus on UNICEF's 'Rights of the child', for example, enabled pupils to develop the courage and skills they needed.[24]

72. In an independent specialist college, learners developed their independence and confidence remarkably well and had genuine opportunities for working in catering, horticulture and retail. These opportunities provided excellent contexts for developing their interpersonal skills and skills for employment, as well as their understanding of the relevance of literacy and numeracy to real life. In 2008, all the learners on the college's employment preparation programme found jobs when they left. It challenged preconceptions of what the young people might accomplish and raised expectations.

73. The providers for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities focused on preparing them for the world of work or created purposeful employment for them.

> A general further education college, reviewing its provision for learners with learning difficulties, studying at or around level 1, found that it was not sufficiently practical and did not reflect national priorities.
>
> It revised its programmes in line with the national strategy, 'Learning for living and work'.[25] The students spent much of their time in employment-related activities, developing their skills in realistic settings, such as selling fruit and vegetables to staff and students or working in the café. They improved their numeracy skills, for example, by deciding on prices for individual fruits and developed their communication skills through contact with the public. They were expected to be punctual, to wear an appropriate uniform and observe health and safety regulations.

[24] UNICEF and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; www.unicef.org.uk/pages.asp?page=92&nodeid=convent&section=2.
[25] *Learning for living and work: improving education and training opportunities for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities* (LSC-P-NAT-060523), Learning and Skills Council, 2006; readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/learning_for_living_and_work_complete_2.pdf.

All the students on the employment-related programme who left in 2008 found employment.

74. These examples show how the action taken for these learners closed the gap in terms of expectations about the employability of students with moderate learning difficulties. Collaboration with other agencies had been an important factor in helping to identify placements for them.

Working with and learning in the community

75. The survey also showed the importance of learning that extended beyond the individual to encompass the community. Individuals started to understand that they were part of a community that extended beyond their own families or their immediate context.

76. One of the colleges visited had developed a 10-week 'Living in my community' course:

> Classes were focused on practical activities such as learning about protecting the environment through recycling, including a visit from the waste management team. Other classes covered the legal requirements for activities such as driving. Expectations of behaviour (such as not spitting in public) were explained. The programme was effective in breaking down barriers, each group being made up of students from different communities. It enabled the participants to share information and helped them to understand and respect cultural differences.

77. At a children's centre, Somali women who were new to the area (often refugees who had left main family members abroad) were encouraged to use the centre for the 'baby massage' group, organised by local midwives and health visitors. This taught them how to calm their baby, but the staff at the centre gradually offered the full range of facilities, such as courses for parents or for parents and children together to learn English.

78. Peer mentoring and coaching in the schools visited enabled older pupils and students to support younger ones who may have been experiencing similar difficulties to the ones they had overcome themselves. Students spoken to during the visits gave examples:

> 'I was bullied a lot at primary school. Here I learned about peer mentoring. We get training for one hour a week for seven weeks. We learn about body language, posture and about approaching other pupils. This boosted my confidence as I had a mentor and I knew I had a friend. I didn't worry about coming to school every day. I've also been trained in mediation and we now operate this ourselves. (Year 11 student.)

Being a mentor is really rewarding. Everyone wants to help the younger children along and you don't have to go straight to a teacher.' (Year 10 student.)

79. The most effective learning mentors seen were those who had benefited from specialist support that their school had provided, especially those who had been at risk of exclusion themselves. They were exemplary role models, demonstrating how, in spite of previous difficulties, they had succeeded academically as well as socially. Pupils took responsibility for their own actions and helped to tackle negative attitudes.

> Some Year 9 students in a secondary school had lost interest in learning, exemplified by some poor behaviour, low levels of interest in school, and mental health difficulties for some students.
>
> The school introduced peer listening and mentoring.[26] Students in Year 9 were interviewed by peer listening mentors in Year 10. If they were successful at the interview, they were trained by specialist staff, supported by current mentors. They mentored students in all year groups, including potentially vulnerable pupils in Year 6 in the primary schools, before they joined the secondary school.
>
> Behaviour and attendance improved dramatically in all year groups. Students told the inspector during the survey that they enjoyed listening and mentoring and had made many new friends.

80. In one of the primary schools visited, pupils who felt lonely or vulnerable could choose to attend the lunchtime games club as part of a peer listening system, helping them to deal with problems and make new friends. It was also another way for staff to identify those who might need extra support.

81. 'Therapeutic horticulture' was a successful and imaginative solution for vulnerable students in one of the secondary schools, where gardeners were trained as counsellors. They worked with the students in the glasshouse and gardens. In the year before the survey, over 40 students had taken part. Attendance improved and contributed to improved progress across the curriculum. The project encouraged them to stay in school, enabled them to realise the value of education and improved their life chances.

82. In the colleges visited, learning mentors worked with vulnerable students who were at risk of not completing their courses, to keep them at college and provide support with problems related to housing, sexual health and claiming

[26] Peer listening schemes train pupils to listen to other pupils' problems and to provide support. For further information, see: www.ssatrust.org.uk/innovation/studentvoicenetworks/Pages/peermentoring.aspx.

benefits. The colleges' own surveys indicated that the students valued the support and retention rates improved.

83. Peer mentors were also effective as role models in all the colleges visited.

> One college had a very effective 'Young professional' scheme. Successful former students returned to the college and made presentations to inspire current students. They also returned to the schools they had attended to do similar presentations for pupils. Using minority ethnic students as positive role models in the marketing and other literature for the 'Young professional' initiative communicated powerfully to the community.

84. Minority ethnic staff in the college described above also visited local schools to help encourage young minority ethnic pupils to go on to further education. As a result, the numbers had increased markedly. In 2007/08, 400 students went on to further and higher education, a steady increase from the 160 students four years previously.

85. One of the colleges visited funded community representatives from estates with high levels of poverty and from community centres to work within their communities. They publicised provision and ran local taster courses in order to make contact with those in contexts which made them hard to reach.

External partnerships

86. In the providers visited, consistent key characteristics of effective partnerships were:

- purposefulness and focus
- close collaboration and extra support across a range of agencies at major points of transition
- swift access to specialist services
- creativity
- effective support for learners with disabilities or severe medical needs through excellent multi-agency partnerships and protocols between parents, providers and other agencies such as the local authority and health services.

Using partnerships creatively

87. Creative and flexible provision could contribute substantially to the quality of support for children, young people and their parents, as in this example.

> A nursery was situated very close to a children's hospital. Families who had a very sick child sometimes had to move and live at the hospital for months at a time. The nursery offered sessions to the siblings of the sick children to bring some normality into their lives. Appropriate attention was given to safeguarding arrangements. Observations by staff in the nursery

showed that the siblings benefited from this experience. Their parents said that the walk to the nursery each day gave them a sense of perspective and relaxation at a very stressful time in their lives.

88. The providers in this survey frequently drew upon sources from other organisations, sometimes at no cost to themselves, such as schools that used the Skill Force programme.[27] The most vulnerable students or those at risk of exclusion followed a programme that drew together vocational qualifications, community work and life skills, both in and outside the classroom. Alongside a flexible curriculum, which involved other education providers, the schools visited were effective in re-engaging vulnerable students in their learning. The quality of their work steadily increased and more of them undertook further education or training when they left school.

89. In one school, students had taken part in a residential summer course with a view to a career in medicine; others had experienced an 'Is teaching for me?' course, aimed particularly at minority ethnic students. Such provision contributed effectively to broadening horizons. Several potentially vulnerable students had gone on to university and aimed to pursue professional careers in, for example, medicine, accountancy and law.

90. Evidence from the parents of pupils of Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller heritage interviewed as part of the survey, showed that some of them had been significantly involved in producing DVDs aimed at raising awareness of their culture and aspirations for their children. The DVDs, organised and produced through local authority Traveller Education Services, helped considerably to develop understanding of different types of Traveller heritages and lifestyles, as well as improving attendance and attainment in schools. One student from the travelling community, in Year 9 at a secondary school, said:

> 'When I was at home I was just cleaning and staying indoors, being really bored, and now I'm back in school I really enjoy it because I like meeting my friends and the teachers really like all the stuff I'm doing. They send letters home to my mum saying how good I am.'

Support for transition

91. Children, young people and learners in circumstances that made them vulnerable were given extra support at major points of transition, such as when they moved within their institution, between providers, or from a provider to employment.

[27] For further information on Skill Force, see: www.skillforce.org/skillforce.aspx?ID=2.

92. Sometimes the transition within a large secondary school can feel daunting for some students. The following example shows how one such school eased transition:

> Transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4
>
> Every Year 10 student attended a five-day residential at a nearby centre at the start of the academic year. This focused on team-building and social integration. Daily transport was available for students who were not able to or did not wish to stay overnight, although almost all did.
>
> The regular event was very successful and was also popular with staff. New staff valued the opportunity to develop relationships with students and other staff. The school saw the event as pivotal in cementing effective relationships, particularly for those who were most vulnerable to underachievement at the start of Key Stage 4.

93. Close collaboration between providers and agencies, as well as between community leaders and voluntary organisations, also eased problems with transition, as in this example:

> Work placements near to home
>
> In an independent specialist college, progression to employment had been generally good, but the time taken for students to find work was unacceptably long. As they came to the college from across the country, at a distance it was difficult to secure employment for them at home.
>
> The college's transition officers worked with parents and social services staff in the students' home areas, arranging for those who were due to leave to have two weeks' work experience in a placement near to home. The parents and the students were closely involved in the work placements, along with social services in finding accommodation which reflected the students' levels of independence.
>
> Students' success in finding employment improved greatly. By the end of the September of the academic year in which they left, 11 of the 17 students in Year 11 had found work in their home areas, much faster and earlier than similar groups of students in previous years.

94. In one of the schools visited, the concept of rights, respect and responsibilities, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, was at the heart of its work. It gained accreditation as a Rights Respecting School and this had helped to improve the lives of children and young people who were

potentially vulnerable.[28] Because all the schools in the area used a similar approach, transition and continuity between the schools and the progress that pupils made were improving. In particular, the approach had reduced the anxiety of those with social and emotional needs when they started secondary school and had improved their readiness to learn.

Specialist services

95. Swift and effective access to specialist services was important to ensure that appropriate interventions and support were available when they were needed:

> In one of the schools visited, a number of female students lived with members of their extended family or friends. These arrangements often ended when the girls were 16 and it was expected that they would move out and make their own plans. The school had full-time support from a member of the Connexions service, who had a caseload of approximately 30 students in similar contexts. He gave advice on benefits and grants and provided relevant and up-to-date information, advice and guidance.
>
> He worked closely with other members of staff to ensure a coordinated approach and, if appropriate, acted as an advocate on behalf of students, within the school or with outside agencies. For example, one student had to move from her family home. Through the school, arrangements were made to check whether her accommodation was appropriate. The school gave practical support, ensured that her education maintenance allowance was paid and helped her to apply for grants for clothing and other items. She was also given extra support when applying for university places and helped to attend interviews. She was expected to achieve the highest grades at A level and had been offered a university place. Speedy access to support services was vital in this success story.

Disabled learners

96. The survey found that, when responsibility for individuals' home tuition was placed with the hospital school or the pupil referral unit that the pupils attended, they made considerably better progress in their learning when their work was set and marked by their main school.

97. Where learners were attending more than one provider and the funding allocated to that main provider was used to fund a learner's provision, it was used in the learner's interest. However, this arrangement for funding was not common, even in the best pupil referral units. For example, one unit visited found great difficulty in ensuring that the 'home' school of a student who was

[28] For further information on the Rights Respecting School Award, see: www.unicef.org.uk/tz/teacher_support/rrs_award.asp.

looked after funded the student's college course; the school held the funding for the student and would not release it to fund provision elsewhere.[29]

98. In the two outstanding hospital schools visited, education and learning were seen as improving the quality of life. Pupils' and students' aspirations were raised; challenges to them to improve their progress were judged well in terms of their needs. Even though students' life expectancy might be limited, the staff worked hard to make sure they had access to education at all levels. Where appropriate, they encouraged enrolment to university, even when the likelihood of a student's completing the course was very low.

99. Teamwork across professionals was an important factor in producing positive outcomes. For example, in the secure unit attached to one of the hospital schools visited, the consultant psychiatrist who led the medical treatment viewed education as a critical part of the programme and had high regard for the education staff who were involved in it.

The quality of staffing

100. The consistent key characteristics and outcomes in terms of the quality of staffing and training were that:

- staff were well qualified and trained, to level 3 or above, and were therefore well placed to understand the complex needs of children, young people and adults whose circumstances made them vulnerable
- regular training updated the skills and knowledge of staff [30]
- the training promoted awareness of cultural similarities and differences; it enabled staff to promote respect for equality and to tackle prejudice and discrimination; participation and attainment increased
- training and support were provided for families, so that they could be integral to their child's learning and could also enhance their own.

Qualifications and training

101. The quality of staffing was fundamental to the progress that learners made. The outstanding providers had established staff who were well qualified, provided support effectively and were highly motivated. This created trust and credibility with parents, the local community, other services and organisations. Strong, well-established relationships existed between all those concerned.

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[29] The unit was inspected under section 5 of the Education Act in autumn 2009.

[30] In terms of the survey, 'well-qualified' was taken to mean qualifications at level 3 or above. These include A and AS levels and a wide range of vocational accreditation: level 3 NVQs, advanced GNVQs and precursors (BTEC national certificate or national diploma, City and Guilds Diploma of Vocational Education at national level), advanced vocational certificates of education. These can be found on the national database of accredited qualifications: www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/index.aspx.

Communication and coordination were informed by the personal knowledge of staff rather than simply by systems. Interventions were therefore prompt, effective and proportionate.

102. The providers who had more staff qualified to level 3 were better placed to support the most vulnerable learners. In the best providers this included support staff where higher levels of learning and training gave them a greater understanding of individuals' needs, as well as skills and knowledge. Learners with emotional difficulties benefited most when staff had received specialist in-house training, for example from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as illustrated in this example.

> The skills of staff in one of the schools visited had been developed through different levels of training. First, the training raised awareness of the early signs of mental illness and how to help pupils develop positive mental health and resilience. Second, staff had developed their knowledge of more specific disorders such as depression, self-harming and anxiety. Third, some staff had embarked on a specialised, 15-credit course devised by the CAMHS and a university. As a result, staff met the emotional needs of pupils more effectively and referrals to the CAMHS fell. This meant that the CAMHS staff were able to focus on more complex cases.

103. Ofsted's report on children in need who were being cared for in childcare settings also noted:

> 'A recurrent strength in the childcare settings visited was the high number of practitioners, including childminders, who had a degree in early years and childcare, or child development, or had a management qualification gained in a related sector.'

It went on to record:

> 'Many of the improvement plans seen during the survey placed particular emphasis on enabling staff to become more skilled in working with children who had a range of needs or a specific need such as delayed development in language and communication.' [31]

Bridging cultural gaps

104. In all the outstanding providers seen, a genuine respect for equality showed itself in excellent professional relationships. Good training gave staff confidence to uphold the positive ethos and, where necessary, challenge discrimination directly. In a play centre, for example, staff provided effective role models in

[31] *Children in need in childcare* (080248), Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080248.

the way they talked to and engaged themselves with the children and challenged any discriminatory remarks from children or parents.

105. Children of Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller heritage who achieved very well in examinations and had good attendance records had been supported effectively by staff who appreciated a child's heritage fully. They understood the distinctions in culture and heritage between different types of travelling communities, including those who were settled. Such understanding had often been gained through high-quality training provided by Traveller Education Services in local authorities. Through focus groups during the survey and through other inspection evidence, the parents and their children said that this was unusual. They felt that primary schools were more effective than secondary schools in ensuring that staff understood their lives and adapted the curriculum to suit their needs. In areas where this was the case, far more children of Gypsy, Roma and Irish traveller heritage were recorded as attending secondary school. A student in Year 9 said:

> 'My mum wanted me to get back into school because my brain is not working as much at home as it would be in school because the teachers are telling you what to do. With the help of Traveller Education I got into this school; I am happy that I am in this school.'

Families' own learning

106. In the schools surveyed, where parents and other adults had the opportunity to learn alongside pupils, many gained qualifications and skills that led to employment. In the most successful schools visited, there were well-established family learning groups that showed how effective they were in promoting aspiration within their communities. One of the schools successfully involved the parents of pupils with poor attendance in workshops by continually making home visits or working with other agencies supporting families; these initiatives increased parents' understanding and involvement, with the result that pupils' attitudes and attainment improved. For example, a school's evening event which explained how it used its target sheets meant that the parents had a greater understanding of their child's progress. In another example, a children's centre, where families using the crèche spoke 19 different languages, involved parents by encouraging them to take part in training. Where possible this was done in the parents' own languages or with language support. This included a five-week introduction to the Early Years Foundation Stage, child protection and protective behaviour training.

107. Family learning courses in adult and community provision were often very successful in encouraging parents with low levels of literacy and numeracy to take a greater interest in their children's education. The outstanding providers visited gave training and support to families at the earliest stage. This meant that the whole family was involved in encouraging participation and continued engagement with education or training and, ultimately, in raising achievement.

Awareness of religions and cultural needs

Foster parents who cared for those who were not of the same heritage or ethnicity received high-quality training from the local fostering agency to improve their awareness of the religious and cultural needs of the Muslim young people who were unaccompanied asylum seekers.

The foster carers took the young people to the mosque, provided a prayer mat and somewhere to pray, and used Halal butchers. One family took their Eritrean child once a month to an Eritrean restaurant for authentic food. They encouraged him to discuss his customs, while the foster carers took on the roles of parents at a family meal in Eritrea, such as the mother's role during the coffee-making ceremony.

Such experiences were valued by the young people, promoting not only their well-being but also their self-confidence so they could take better advantage of opportunities for learning.

Notes

Between September 2008 and February 2009, inspectors visited 97 providers of care, education and skills where progress and attainment for learners in circumstances which made them vulnerable were outstanding compared with national indicators, or where the provider had known good practice in identifying and overcoming barriers to individuals' participation or achievement. Visits took place to 20 early years and care settings, 58 maintained schools and 19 post-16 settings. The sample as a whole represented a range of geographical contexts, including urban and rural locations. The Annex lists all the providers visited except, for reasons of confidentiality, the children's home and the five childminders.

Each visit focused on the provision made for a specifically identified group of children, young people or adults whose circumstances made them vulnerable. The providers ranged from those with a very small proportion of vulnerable learners to those where they were all vulnerable. The groups were not mutually exclusive; learners may well have belonged to more than one group.

Inspectors observed the work of the providers, including a wide range of activities for learners of different ages. They held discussions with headteachers, principals, senior staff, employers, teachers, support staff, parents and carers, learners, governors and representatives from local authorities.

The survey also drew on evidence from 215 survey visits conducted during 2008/09 and from data from 82 school inspections, carried out under section 5 of the 2005 Education Act between September 2008 and February 2009. The 82 inspections were chosen because they showed that learners from specific groups were making good or

outstanding progress and their attainment was better than their peers in similar groups nationally, namely: those of Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller heritage; children who were looked after; those learning English as an additional language. The evidence from inspections and survey visits was also used to validate some of the qualitative evidence.

Inspectors held 14 focus groups for parents or carers and their children who were: looked after; of Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller heritage; asylum seekers, and unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, migrant workers and/or refugees. Ten of the focus groups were held for those of Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller heritage. The views of children and young people who were looked after or living away from home were sought through the Office of the Children's Rights Director for England, based in Ofsted.

Further information

Publications by Ofsted

Narrowing the gap: the inspection of children's services (070041), Ofsted, 2007; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070041.

Parents, carers and schools (070018a), Ofsted, 2007; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070018a.

Pupil referral units: establishing successful practice in pupil referral units and local authorities (070019), Ofsted, 2007; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070019.

Developing social, emotional and behavioural skills in secondary schools (070048), Ofsted, 2007; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070048a.

Looked after children: good practice in schools (070172), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070172.

Supporting young carers (080252), Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080252.

Support for care leavers (080259), Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080259.

Improving progression to sustainable unsupported employment: a review of strategies developed by Workstep providers (080258), Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080258.

Children in need in childcare (080248), Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080248.

Other publications

Excellence and enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning: Early Years Foundation Stage (00840-2008), Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008;
http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00840-2008.

The inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people (DCSF-00063-2008), Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008;
http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00063-2008.

Annex: Providers visited for this survey

Early years and care providers

Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project Playroom	Brighton and Hove
Coram's Fields Play Centre	Camden
Fairfield Play Centre	Camden
Fairhills Playgroup	Salford
First Steps Pre-school, Driffield	Sheffield
Hurley Pre-School	Lambeth
Redcliffe Early Years Centre	Bristol
Regents Park Nursery Centre	Camden
131, Rochester Road	Stockton-on-Tees
Rusholme Children's Centre	Manchester
St Margaret's Resource Centre (for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities), Brotton	Redcar and Cleveland
Stockwell Park Early Years Pre-school Children's Centre	Lambeth
Tinsley Children's Centre Nursery	Sheffield
Victory Nursery	Lambeth

Providers for children and young people of compulsory school age

Abbeydale Primary School	Sheffield
Allanson Street Primary School	St. Helens
Annie Lennard Infant School, Smethwick	Sandwell
Aston Comprehensive School, Sheffield	Rotherham
Belgrave CofE (C) Primary School	Stoke-on-Trent
Berkeley Primary School	Hounslow
Blackburn Primary School	Rotherham
Blean Primary School	Kent
Blenheim Primary School, Leigh-on-Sea	Southend-on-Sea
Brimington Junior School, Chesterfield	Derbyshire
Canon Palmer Catholic School, Ilford	Essex
Cardinal Newman Catholic School	Brighton and Hove
Cardwell Primary School	Greenwich
Chelsea Children's Hospital School	Kensington and Chelsea
Chingford Foundation School	Waltham Forest

Churchdown Parton Manor Junior School	Gloucestershire
Clifford Holroyde Centre of Expertise	Liverpool
Greasbrough Primary School	Rotherham
Haling Manor High School	Croydon
Hall Cross School	Doncaster
Harrow High School and Sports College	Harrow
Haybrook College PRU	Slough
Haybrook College	Slough
Hazel Grove High School	Stockport
Heckmondwike Grammar School	Kirklees
Hospital and Home Education PRU	Nottingham
Hurlingham and Chelsea Secondary School	Hammersmith and Fulham
John Hanson Community School	Hampshire
Joseph Rowntree School	York
Kew Riverside Primary School	Richmond upon Thames
Lindley Church of England Voluntary Aided Infant School	Kirklees
Manchester Hospital Schools and Home Teaching Service	Manchester
Molehill Copse Primary School	Kent
Mulberry Bush School	Oxfordshire
Ottery St Mary Primary School	Devon
Oxfordshire Hospital School	Oxfordshire
Parkdale Primary School	Nottinghamshire
Parkside Community Primary School, Canterbury	Kent
Parliament Hill School	Camden
Priestnall Secondary School	Stockport
Ralph Allen School	Bath and North East Somerset
Sandown Primary School	East Sussex
St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Eccles	Salford
St Anne's Fulshaw C of E Primary School	Cheshire
St Joachim's Catholic Primary School	Newham
St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, Littlemore	Oxfordshire
St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Horsforth	Leeds
St Patrick's RC Primary School	Manchester
St Paul's CofE Primary School, Astley Bridge	Bolton

St Peter's RC High School	Manchester
Stanley Infant and Nursery School	Richmond upon Thames
The Freeston Business and Enterprise College	Wakefield
The Heath School	Halton
The Heathfield Foundation Technology College	Sandwell
The St Marylebone CofE School	Westminster
Tibshelf School	Derbyshire
Villiers Primary School	Wolverhampton
Waterloo Primary School	Blackpool

Post-16 providers

Blackburn College	Blackburn
Blackpool and The Fylde College	Blackpool
Four Counties Training	Ealing
Foxes Academy (Independent Specialist College)	Minehead
Hull College	Hull
Newcastle College	Newcastle upon Tyne
Orchard Hill College of Further Education	Sutton
Open Door Adult Learning Centre	Sheffield
Pure Innovations Ltd	Stockport
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (ACL)	Rotherham
Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Hospitals Trust	Birmingham
South Cheshire College	Crewe
South Leicestershire College	Leicester
Walsall College	Walsall
West Nottinghamshire College	Mansfield
Winstanley College	Wigan
Working Men's College	Camden

Focus groups

Ash Grange Primary School	Surrey
Foster Care Associates - Bristol	Bristol
Foster Care Associates - Bromsgrove	Worcestershire
Traveller Education Team	Cambridge

Essex Traveller Education Services	Essex
Lonesome Primary School	Surrey
Foster Care Associates - Manchester	Manchester
Foster Care Associates - Nottingham	Nottingham
Passmores School and Technology College	Essex
Roydon Primary School	Essex
Shirley Community Primary and Nursery School	Cambridgeshire
Traveller Education Service - Sutton and Merton	Surrey
St Marks Church of England Academy	Merton
The John Fisher School	Sutton