



## *The journey from early years to secondary education and beyond*

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## **Attainment**





At KS2 in 2017, **32%** of looked after children achieved age related expectations in reading, writing and maths, compared with **38%** of adopted and special guardianship children and **61%** of non-looked after children (DfE 2018)

At KS4 in 2017, **17.5%** of looked after children achieved a grade 4 or above in English and Maths, compared with **32.8%** of adopted and special guardianship children and **58.9%** of non-looked after children (DfE 2018)

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## Improving outcomes

- There is growing evidence that meeting children’s emotional needs positively affects school outcomes, including improving children’s behaviour and wellbeing and reducing the use of time out, sanctions, and exclusions (Rose, McGuire-Snieckus and Gilbert 2015).
- When we start to meet children’s needs for safety, a predictable world, emotional containment, and rich relationships, they start to learn. When we tune into children, we allow them to tune into learning. (E. Langton & K Boy 2017)

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## The importance

NICE guidelines for ITTs recommends:

*all teacher training programmes have a core training module that looks at the needs of looked-after children and young people (see recommendations 50–52) and includes an understanding of:*



*the impact of stable care and education on children and young people and how to help them have a stable education*


*the impact of loss, separation and trauma on child development, attachment and cognitive functioning*

*the value of engaging in activities outside the school curriculum and in the community.*



- Train qualified teachers and raise awareness of the extent of the issues (further information available at [www.pac-uk.org/education](http://www.pac-uk.org/education) )


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## Importance of early relationships


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## Attachment

Our earliest experiences of relationships shape our **'internal working model'** of:

- Ourselves
- Other people
- The world



We then apply this template to the world around us

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## Still Face Experiment






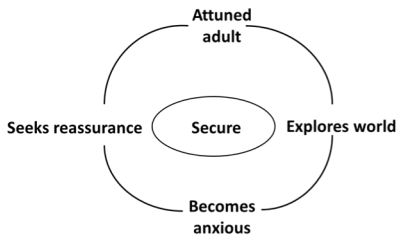
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## Secure attachment style






**Caregiver is:** available, attuned and responsive




**Child is able to:** separate & reunite, seek comfort, be appropriately independent, cope with setbacks and learn interdependence


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**Securely attached:**

I am.... 

Others are... 

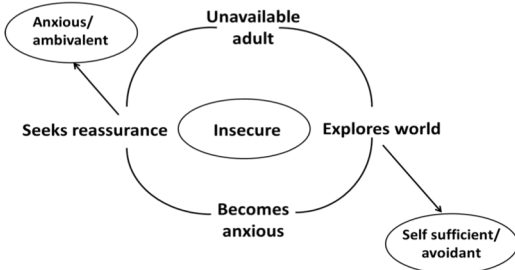
The world is... 

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## Insecure attachment styles

Caregiver is: Pre-occupied, withdrawn, unpredictable



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graph TD; UA[Unavailable adult] --> I((Insecure)); I --> AR[Anxious/ambivalent]; I --> SW[Self-sufficient/avoidant]; I --> BA[Becomes anxious]; AR --> SR[Seeks reassurance]; SR --> UA; SW --> EW[Explores world]; EW --> UA; BA --> UA; EW --> BA;
```

Child is: either self-sufficient and unable to seek comfort... or clingy, anxious and angry

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## Disorganised attachment



**Caregiver is:** chaotic, unpredictable, unsafe.

-Violates boundaries-abuse



**Child:** becomes adept at reading situation and adapts behaviour to get their needs met in each situation – no pattern – chaos.

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## Children who have experienced a difficult start in life may struggle with:



- Forming trusting relationships with adults
- Social skills and relationships with peers
- Executive functioning skills, such as planning, organising, remembering, inhibiting their impulses, focusing their attention, and initiating tasks
- Speech and language
- Learning delays
- Managing their strong feelings, such as shame, sadness, anxiety and anger
- Coping with transitions and change
- Sensory processing

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## We can help by:



- Reshaping their template for what relationships might look like
- Structured opportunities for play
- Help children learn to use checklists and prompts
- Expose children to a richness of language opportunities and utilise specialists
- Meet the child where they are at
- Using PACE, wondering, modelling and validating to support in recognising feelings
- Plan, plan, plan
- Enriched opportunities for sensory input

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## Transitions



*Any new situation involves the loss of the old, known one. Memories are particularly likely to be re-awakened by sudden or extreme changes. The more unstructured and strange a new situation, the further we are removed from what is familiar physically, mentally or emotionally, the more disorientated and terrified we tend to feel.*

**Wittenberg-** The emotional experience of learning and teaching

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## Transitioning for success



- What's ordinarily available?
- Enhanced support for vulnerable children:
  - ✓ Transitions Workbooks
  - ✓ Goodbye album/DVD/workbook
  - ✓ YP's own photo album/map of new provision
  - ✓ Buddy systems
  - ✓ Transitional objects- visual, tactile or auditory connections to family and/or to old school/college
  - ✓ Transition Summer School or holiday club?
  - ✓ Education providers website

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## Finally



- **Help the child to feel safe in school**
- Help the child to have successful relationships with adults
- Keep in mind school may be the only place of consistency for children living in unstable homes or care placements. Be the constant

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