'Vulnerable' Groups

We have identified a large group of 'vulnerable' children in our school using specific criteria that are relevant for us. These children are not grouped in any of the 'standard' categories i.e. FSM, SEN etc. but we still feel they are worth highlighting as a vulnerable group. I thought others may be interested to know the criteria so here is a list:

- children with child protection issues / cause for concern forms raised

- children where the parents have learning difficulties or struggle to cope

- children in homes where there is domestic violence

- children with older siblings where we had previous parental concerns

- children with issues as a result of bereavement / divorce

- sudden death or suicide of a parent

- children with medical issues possibly impacting on their learning

- children from lower income families not eligible for FSM.

- children with housing issues

- children with attendance issues.

- children where there are temporary issues – illness of grandparent, temporary parental unemployment, etc.

- 'borderline' SEN

- regular absence or lateness not amounting to 'trigger' levels

- noisy or chaotic home life short of concern levels (e.g. no quiet place to do homework or time on own, siblings who are being difficult, e.g. 'late teenage' issues, etc)

In our efforts to identify why neither progress or attainment (the latter being less surprising), we have identified a few things: teachers do not always have the skills to scaffold the learning for SEN; they often have very low expectations of the children; the children are often given to the LSA instead of receiving quality first teaching; targets are not SMART.

Lid on the jar: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-Dn2KEjPuc

Travellers. Some things we tried at my previous school which did help;

-offering them to come in early and use our showering facilities to cut down bullying

-getting parents in for breakfast club to engage in conversation and value 'school life'

-supported purchase of uniform and sometimes kept clean spare set in school

-for one, where parents said it was compulsory they do their chores first, we changed the timing of the school day, they came later and left later

-had support at lunch times to complete, homework as this was not possible at home

Things to do to close the gaps:

I have listed the things we are doing to close our gaps (white boys, SEN, FSM)

Our biggest gaps are with the children who are all three.

Analyse data thoroughly.

Why are the children SEN - here I find that the SEN label can be a big hindrance. In the past, I have worked with teachers who use the label as an excuse for poor performance. The children inevitable ended up with an LSA and received poorer teaching than they should have!

Identify gaps (look at RoL).

Who are the vulnerable children? Why are they vulnerable? (More than one reason?)

(We produce a VC list that each member of the team can see. This highlights any issues that may make a child vulnerable.)

Half termly pupil progress meetings. Link to CPD/appraisal.

Targetted interventions that must show impact.

Diagnostic learning walks.

Planning and work scrutinies.

Robust monitoring.

Impact and evaluation - evidenced!

Tight targets.

Ownership - no excuses.

SBS
Educational