



## TBAP Residence Evaluation Summary

### Background and aims of the intervention

The Tri-borough Alternative Provision (TBAP) Multi Academy Trust provides education for young people who have been excluded from mainstream schools. The Trust has developed an innovative intervention in a residential educational setting outside London (“the Residence”). This intervention is intended to support young people who attend one of its Academies and who are in or on the edge of care, and/or involved in the youth justice system. The aims of the innovation are to enable improved behaviour, educational achievement and family relationships, reduce youth offending, and reduce the number of young people entering care.

Since its opening in January 2016 a total of 15 learners have stayed at the Residence for varying periods of time, typically between 1 and 3 half-terms. For some terms learners stayed at the Residence full-time, while during other terms it was closed at weekends. Learners were all male and aged between 12 and 16. 7 were under a child protection order (CP) and 3 were children in need (CiN); the remaining 5 learners were referred for reasons relating to youth offending or extreme behaviour. At this stage none of the learners at the Residence have been looked-after children.

### Evaluation

The evaluation used a mixed methods approach. Initially, the evaluation team conducted interviews with learners and their parents at the TBAP Bridge Academy exploring attitudes towards the introduction of the Residence. In addition, to date, a total of 22 interviews have taken place with 12 young people staying at the Residence; 8 of these young people have been interviewed more than once to understand changes over time. Staff at the Residence were interviewed at each termly visit; in total 31 interviews were carried out with 14 members of staff. The evaluation team has also analysed Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) scores for learners and records from the TBAP database on learners’ behaviour, achievement and attendance. However, a very small sample size means that findings should be considered with great caution.

### Findings

Analysis of TBAP learner data indicates that the Residence has a positive effect on behaviour in comparison with a group of Academy learners who had been referred to the Residence but not yet attended. Those in years 8 or 9 who attended the Residence experienced a higher positive change than learners of the same age who did not attend. The same pattern is not found for learners in years 10 or 11. Average SDQ scores for the cohort of learners in terms 3 and 4 show improvement in all areas of the SDQ except for emotional difficulty; however, average scores for learners who attended in terms 1 and 2 show little change over time.

Staff, parents and learners themselves provided examples of learners’ improved behaviour, including attending and participating in lessons, helpful behaviour, and being politer and more respectful to parents and staff. Staff observed learners being more willing to try new things at the Residence and some learners reported that their engagement with learning had increased. However, some learners express concern about the absence of

academic work at the Residence, feeling that this might affect their GCSE studies. Residence staff have recently introduced more tuition in academic subjects based on the needs of individual learners.

Staff form a skilled and cohesive team and, importantly, are liked by the young people attending the Residence. This has helped staff engage learners in activities they would have otherwise refused or been reluctant to engage in. Offering family therapy to parents during learners' time at the Residence helped to develop improved family relationships and support reintegration for the small number of families who took up this offer.

Learners' return home needs to be well-managed if the progress observed at the Residence is to be maintained. Staff and learners express concern that once learners move on from the Residence, it can be difficult for them to maintain the positive changes they have achieved. The experiences of learners moving on from the Residence have been mixed. Some learners have made sufficient progress to move on to mainstream school, which had not initially been anticipated as an outcome. Another learner is being supported to train as a car mechanic. However, 2 learners were excluded from the Residence and 2 others were reported to have shown a deterioration in their behaviour on their return to their home Academy.

## Costs

The ongoing operating costs of the Residence are estimated to be around £859,500 per year. These costs include lower-than-market rents for the use of the Residence building, which was already owned by DfE. Deducting the cost of educating the equivalent number of young people in Alternative Provision gives the additional cost of the Residence intervention over and above existing provision: £733,700 annually. This is equal to £104,800 for each of the 7 places, or £2,690 per place per week for a 39-week year. In practice, there has been an average of 4 learners staying at the Residence each term, with 2 additional learners for part of the term, meaning that costs per place are effectively higher. In addition to operating costs, the set-up costs of the Residence have been calculated to be approximately £877,600.

## Recommendations

In order for this intervention to continue to be financially viable, TBAP will need to demonstrate to commissioners that the Residence is having an impact on the number of temporary placements and placement breakdowns avoided, the number of young people considered to be on the edge of care, and on youth offending. Should further evaluation indicate the Residence has a positive impact on longer-term outcomes, the following conditions will be necessary for the innovation to be embedded:

- develop and implement a robust strategy for re-integrating learners to school and to their homes following a stay at the Residence, in particular by continuing to work with learners' families
- develop effective working relationships with other schools, both within TBAP Academies and outside, to improve transition for learners moving on from the Residence
- ensure that the curriculum at the Residence is sufficiently challenging for all learners, including those working towards GCSEs
- retain an effective and motivated staff team and ensure the size of this team is adequate for the demands of staffing the Residence
- continue working to engage staff at TBAP Academies and further develop working relationships with Tri-borough children's services

This evaluation study was carried out between July 2015 and November 2016 by Ipsos MORI. The final evaluation report will be available later in 2017.

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