

## CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

<b>Name of School:</b>	<b>TBAP Cambridge AP Academy</b>
<b>School Address:</b>	Ascham Road Cambridge CB4 2BD
<b>Hub School:</b>	The Bridge School Islington

<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 31080335
<b>Email address:</b>	jsadler@tbap.org.uk

<b>Unique Reference Number:</b>	142378
<b>Local Authority:</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Type of School:</b>	Alternative Provision
<b>School Category:</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	13-16
<b>Number on roll:</b>	30
<b>Head of School:</b>	Julie Sadler

<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Section 8 Monitoring February 2016
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	New academy no previous full inspection

<b>Date of Quality Assurance Review:</b>	7-8 February 2017
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## **QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES<sup>1</sup>**

<b>School Improvement Strategies:</b>	Good
<b>Outcomes for Pupils is:</b>	Good
<b>Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment:</b>	Good
<b>Area of Excellence:</b>	Not submitted for this review
<b>Previously accredited Areas of Excellence:</b>	None

### **Overall Review Evaluation**

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that TBAP Cambridge AP Academy appears to be making accelerated progress on the points for improvement described by Ofsted in the school's previous Ofsted monitoring report in February 2016.

1. Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

## **Information about the school**

- The school has been open since October 2015. It was previously the Cambridge Learning Base and is now part of the Tri-Borough Alternative Provision Trust (TBAP), a multi-academy trust. Since TBAP took responsibility for the premises, staff and learners, there have been significant changes to staffing and a full-time curriculum has been introduced.
- All learners have social, emotional or mental health needs and troubled educational histories. There are no learners with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan (EHCP) but all now arrive with a common assessment framework (CAF) in place.
- In January 2016, a full complement of staff and senior leaders were in post. However, following the Ofsted monitoring visit the head of school resigned; a new head of school has taken over and has been in post for nine months.

## **School Improvement Strategies**

### **What Went Well**

- Since her arrival nine months ago, the new head of school has built a strong and unified management team, with a relentless focus on meeting the needs of the learners and helping them to maximise their progress. This creation of a clear and shared vision communicated to all stakeholders has resulted in sustained improvement in all aspects of the school's work.
- A significant turnover of staff and a re-definition of roles have led to much clearer lines of responsibility and accountability. For example, a more strategic approach taken by the new student services manager has been a major factor in the improvement of attendance.
- Morale is high and a strong team spirit means staff are prepared to go the 'extra mile' for learners by, for example, attending an out of hours football match to encourage a learner to excel. All staff consistently act as positive role models for learners' behaviour. Male staff role models have proved particularly valuable for the vulnerable boys in school.
- School leaders have responded to the needs of the learners by adapting the curriculum. They have moved away from Level 1 qualifications in functional skills to a much more demanding regime of GCSEs and BTEC qualifications. At the same time, more vocational examinations such as food technology, photography and off-site college courses have been introduced. Plans have been made to extend these opportunities which really motivate learners.
- All staff and learners feel their voices are listened to and that they have opportunities to evaluate and contribute to the school's development plan. This is

shown in the Learners' Development Plan, which gives learners an opportunity to participate, and by the development of middle leadership across the school.

- The lack of play facilities raised in the Ofsted monitoring has been addressed, as far as possible given the constraints of the building, by a programme of enrichment activities and clubs.
- The TBAP multi-academy trust has provided invaluable support, particularly in the areas of collaborative working and extended opportunities for continuing professional development.
- Leaders have addressed the issue of parental engagement from the previous Challenge Partners' review by implementing a plan which has transformed the views of parents and the community towards the school. This in turn has had a positive impact on students' attendance and achievement. The school is continuing to work in this area and they welcome parents into the school to share their children's success.

### **Even Better If...**

... there was clarity in the holistic tracking of learners' progress over time to include: changed attitudes to learning, improvement in self-esteem and attendance, as well as academic progress.

... there was explicit reference at the start of the school development plan to the aim of raising progress and attainment for all learners; and the school's self-evaluation was a more succinct working document more aligned to and consistent with the school's development plan.

### **Pupil Outcomes**

- Learners arrive at the school at different times in their school career and at very different starting points. The school makes a clear and effective initial assessment of their prior experience and gaps in learning. The assessment is used to determine a personalised induction programme. The learner profile provides detailed information to inform all teachers of the needs and the best strategies to support the learners. The academic and personal development targets for learners reflect these detailed assessments.
- All learners feel cared for and have a sense of belonging to the calm and settled school community, resulting in improving self-esteem and confidence to learn. They now enjoy school and have developed positive attitudes to learning and their attendance has improved.
- The focus on all learners accessing GCSE and certificated qualifications has underpinned the improving academic outcomes. In 2015, very few GCSEs were taken, alongside some functional skills qualifications at Level 1. In 2016, all learners followed at least one GCSE course and 35% achieved 5 A\*-G, with 95% achieving at

least one GCSE. Currently, most learners are following 5 GCSE courses and 93% are expected to achieve 5A\*-G with all learners predicted to achieve at least one GCSE. This represents very good progress, given the starting points of these learners. Literacy and numeracy are embedded across the curriculum.

- Behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved hugely. The Community Police Officer reports that he rarely has to come to the school now, when previously he was a regular visitor, and vandalism has ceased. Community relations have improved as a result. Learners behave very well in class and around the school site and are keen to engage in lessons. This is reflected in a 39% reduction in the number of fixed term exclusions, compared to a similar period one year ago. Learners have demonstrated that they are able to respond positively to learning challenges. They ask questions and articulate their views in a mature way, demonstrating respect for the views of others.
- Attendance is improving rapidly, with a 34% improvement compared to a similar period one year ago. Attendance is currently at 75% for this academic year and targeted strategies and efforts to improve contact with parents are resulting in continued improvement. Better attendance leads to better progress. However, although mostly learners arrive punctually for lessons and are ready to learn, this is not always the case especially after lunchtime.
- The high expectations of staff and a strong and effective programme of careers education and guidance have raised the expectations of learners. These have led to learners going on to college courses, traineeships or apprenticeships. The Academy has built strong partnerships with local businesses and colleges so that most learners have opportunities for work experience and preparation for training. All learners in Year 11 have a planned route for further learning and training for September 2017.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **What Went Well**

- Excellent relationships were seen in all lessons and teachers used their personal knowledge of the learners well to motivate and encourage them.
- High quality classroom displays demonstrate challenging aspirations and create positive learning environments. Lessons utilise a range of resources, activities and settings very effectively to promote engagement and learning; for example, in photography, where the learners were taken outside to engage with the natural environment to emulate work done by a photographer they had studied.
- Lessons demonstrated calmness, good pace, purpose and, in most cases, there was clear evidence of excellent planning based on individual learning needs. Teachers use previous assessment data and knowledge of learners' strengths and interests to plan skilfully differentiated and personalised lessons. Teachers plan and deliver

interesting and adventurous lessons and there is good use of key words and technical language.

- All opportunities for learning are seized very effectively by teachers. This was evident in the very effective links made with personal, social and health education in a media studies lesson and particularly in the use of various engaging literacy resources linked to E-safety in Breakfast Club.
- Learners are much more vocal and articulate than at the previous review. There was positive encouragement to work collaboratively and learn from peers, particularly in open discussions. This led to learners being prepared to take risks in learning and to challenge each other constructively. In particular, in a Year 11 mathematics lesson, learners worked as a team to answer a quiz very effectively.
- The use of learning support professionals is extremely effective. Teachers direct them with skill and they are equally highly skilled at challenging and stretching learners.
- There was clear scaffolding and support for learners; for example, in English, when there were scaffolding questions to produce extended writing. There was ample evidence in English and media studies of students producing good quality written work.
- In many lessons, there was clear use of praise focused on learning and an encouragement for learners to be proud of their progress. Students were keen to discuss their work and spoke clearly and articulately about what they were learning. There was very clear evidence of high quality finished products; for example, in food technology, media studies' coursework and the photographs produced by the Year 10 class.

### **Even Better If...**

... there was further use of targeted and developed questioning to extend learning.

... the excellent practice seen in some areas, notably in English, to monitor and track student progress and use this data to plan learning was extended consistently to all subjects.

### **What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?**

Following discussion with the headteacher, the school would like to reflect further about what support they might like.

**This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.**

