

Written Report

CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	TBAP Cambridge AP Academy
School Address:	Ascham Road Cambridge CB42BD
Hub School:	The Bridge School Islington

Telephone Number:	020 31080335
Email address:	jsadler@tbap.org.uk
Unique Reference Number:	142378
Local Authority:	Cambridgeshire
Type of School:	Alternative Provision
School Category:	Academy
Age range of pupils:	13-16
Number on roll:	37
Head of School:	Julie Sadler

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

Date of Quality Assurance Review:	15-17 June 2016
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES¹

School Improvement Strategies: Good

Outcomes for Learners: Requires Improvement

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Requires Improvement

Area of Excellent Practice: Not submitted for this review

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that TBAP Cambridge AP Academy appears to be making good 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. It is now part of the Tri-Borough Alternative Provision Trust (TBAP), a multi-academy trust. Since TBAP took responsibility for the premises, staff and pupils there have been significant changes to staffing and a full-time curriculum has been introduced.
- All learners have social, emotional or mental health needs. There are no learners with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan 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 but after the Ofsted monitoring visit the head of school resigned. An acting head took over and the present head of school has been in post for six weeks.

School Improvement Strategies

What Went Well

- The acting head and the new head of school, in an extremely short time period, have had a measureable impact on improving the quality of education in the school and raising standards. As a result, staff, learners and parents are able to confidently commit to the school improvement agenda.
- Staff are being developed as a team and demonstrate a keenness and freshness of approach which instils confidence in the future of the school. The morale of staff has greatly improved and is a reflection of the positive and purposeful leadership now in place.
- Key issues have been clearly identified by the head of school with robust measures being developed to secure implementation. Improvement points from the Ofsted monitoring letter have been addressed; by moving tutor time to the afternoon and introducing more structured activities, setting up clubs and enrichment activities at lunchtime such as football coaching with local clubs. The safety and security of the site has been improved with additional fencing, reinforcement of gates and locking systems. A positive learning environment has been created with redecoration and stimulating classroom displays.
- The school is working hard to develop and secure a range of services needed by learners and their families which previously has not existed.
- The head of the school has overseen a significant improvement in behaviour. Exclusion data records a clear, and statistically significant dip since the new leadership has been in place. The Ofsted monitoring had as a point for improvement, rewarding appropriate behaviour. The school has made progress by setting up a points reward system, more effective use of praise and frequent phone calls home.
- The curriculum has undergone significant revision and is now more closely aligned to the needs of the learners. The assessment of learner need and the bespoke

curriculum and support is coordinated in groups according to the intensity of need. Each group has a team dedicated to those particular learners.

- The executive headteacher and TBAP systems have offered support to the head of school in further securing school improvement. The TBAP project menu has been adapted for the school, allowing the head of school to tap into the essential support measures needed. Whole school TBAP targets have been adapted to reflect the context of the school.
- Parents' views of the school have improved. In interviews parents have endorsed the changes at the school and cited a range of direct and practical improvements that have benefited their children. Parents say that bullying has been reduced, behaviour in and around the school has improved, learner engagement in lessons and learning has improved along with the schools communication of learner progress in termly reports home.
- Evidence and data about the progress of learners has been validated by TBAP externally. This is important for the school given the stage of development and the need to show verified learner progress information.

Even Better If...

... short-term practical measures to improve learner attendance were improved and immediately implemented

....parental engagement was strengthened further to capitalise on successes, building a more engaged parental base to work from to secure improvement in the future.

Outcomes for Learners

- In the previous school last year no learners achieved five A-G GCSE grades. This year it is predicted that 30% of learners will achieve 5 A-G GCSE grades. This would represent a dramatic increase in qualifications.
- There has been a marked move away from less robust qualifications towards GCSE level, particularly in science.
- Extensive measures have been put into place to support Year 11 learners' access to GCSE. For example, 14 different invigilators in 11 different locations and sending taxis to collect learners to attend their examinations.
- Observations show that learners are being challenged in their learning. In lessons learning objectives were specifically related to GCSE and teachers explained this clearly to the learners.
- All learners in Year 11 are on track to achieve positive destinations. For example, all learners have made applications for further education places.
- Two learners in Key Stage 3 are being reintegrated into mainstream provision. This represents an enormous achievement by the learners and the school.

- There has been a significant improvement in learners' behaviour compared to the last year. This is shown by a dramatic decrease in fixed term exclusion from 24 days to 10.4 days between this term and last.
- During the visit, those learners who attended, showed high levels of engagement in their learning, promoted by strong relationships with staff. Next year the school is hoping to introduce holistic assessment mechanisms and tracking to show learners' personal development.
- Learners' outcomes are not yet good because attendance and punctuality are not where they should be.

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

All teachers were observed.

What Went Well

- There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching from 58% inadequate in October to 87% good or better by May.
- The lessons seen during the review were well pitched to the needs of the learners. Assessment and use of data ensures that learners achieve well. Learning objectives were challenging and the pace of the lesson was adapted to support learner's understanding.
- The school has made progress since its last Section 8 Monitoring visit in increasing praise and rewards for learners, through a whole school reward system, praise and certificates and regular phone calls home to recognise achievements.
- Many lessons were creative, building on interest areas and using interactive activities, books, slides and exciting resources to support learning. Learner engagement was high, supported by excellent relationships with staff. For example, a highly personalised lesson in a Year 10 learner's home was carried out with structure and sensitivity, building a high level of trust for positive learner outcomes.
- Literacy is developed in many areas of the curriculum. Learners are encouraged to read, and explain key words and develop their confidence in sharing ideas, but this is difficult in such small classes.
- Teachers are supported in developing experimental learning activities to engage with and interest learners. In one dynamic Year 10 information technology lesson, a learning support professional developed a plenary Nintendo Wii game so that the learner could show his understanding at the end of the lesson. There was one excellent example of innovative marking which could form the basis of a bespoke marking policy.
- The coaching model is working well and is having an impact on teachers previously assessed as requires improvement. In one lesson, a teacher who had been coached to develop challenging learning had this identified as an area of strength by the Review Team. The continuing professional development programme is effective. A Thursday afternoon, whole staff, training session was observed which reflected the

interests and requirements of the staff. The TBAP model is being used to support two unqualified teachers on their journey to gaining full qualified teachers status.

- Teachers and learning support professionals generally work closely together to provide the best experience for their learners, and are able to experiment and develop with support and quality assurance from the leadership team.
- Areas for development have been identified by the senior leadership team and are the subject of whole-school training for 2016-2017.

Even Better If...

... teaching and learning were not hampered by lack of regular attendance

... learners came on time to lessons

... learners were given more opportunities to respond verbally in lessons

... learners' progress in lessons was supported with a sufficient quality and quantity of work in their books

... learning support professionals were consistently deployed efficiently to avoid over staffing.

Quality of Area of Excellent Practice

Not submitted for this review

Partnerships

How have you used Challenge Partners schools to address your previous 'Even Better Ifs'?

This was the school's first Challenge Partners review.

How have you worked with, or supported, other schools in Challenge Partners?

TBAP, as a multi-academy trust, have been actively involved in Challenge Partners for over six years. The evaluations and reviews have proved extremely useful and have helped the schools prepare for Ofsted inspections. One of the ex-headteachers at the Bridge School was on the board of Challenge Partners. A majority of senior leaders at TBAP are signed up as reviewers and have participated in the review of other schools, both mainstream and alternative provision.

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.

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. The local support they receive from TBAP may require some gap- filling support. The school is also interested in a further Challenge Partners review in six months time.