

# TBAP Unity Academy

## Peer to Peer Review

### 25/26<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Area	The Review Team judged* TBAP Unity:
Overall	<b>Good (2)</b>
Leadership and Management	<b>Good (2)</b>
Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare	<b>Good (2)</b>
Teaching Learning and Assessment	<b>Good (2)</b>
Outcomes	<b>Good (2)</b>

\*Please note that this review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection and judgements therefore are not necessarily equivalent to Ofsted judgements



## School Context

TBAP Unity is a Special (SEMH) school that operates over two sites. The two sites are led by one Head of School and shared senior and middle leadership teams. TBAP Unity (St Neots) opened in a new building in 2016 following the amalgamation of two separate sites. TBAP Unity Wisbech is being managed on a daily basis by the Student Services Manager (an unqualified teacher) whilst the Deputy SEND/Inclusion (substantive school lead) is part time, returning from maternity leave. TBAP Unity is commissioned for up to 90 Places and all learners have an EHCP for SEMH- related needs. The places are broken down into 60 places at St Neots and 30 places at Wisbech. Ten places at St Neots are funded to provide post 16 provision. There is one Local Advisory Board for the school.

Due to the distance between sites it was agreed that Unity St Neots would have three reviewers on Day 1 and Wisbech would be visited by one of the reviewers on Day 2 in order to consolidate and triangulate findings.

During the two-day review, ten lessons were observed at Unity St Neots and three at Wisbech.

Meetings were held with senior leaders, learners and support staff at St Neots and a meeting with the LAB chair took place. At Wisbech an additional meeting was held with the senior leader in charge. On day one, the review team also attended whole staff briefing in the morning.

A considerable range of evidence was presented to the review team at the start of the review. Evidence included:

- School self- evaluation (TBAP scorecard and executive summary)
- School Development Plan
- Individual learner profiles
- Individual and Whole school progress records (tracking) from baseline testing against individual targets (academic and personal development)
- EHCPs
- Boxall Profile tracking from point of entry
- Learners' work in core/non- core subjects
- Local Advisory Board (LAB) reports
- School timetables
- SMSC/Bullying/School assembly records

The Head of School has only been in post since January 2019 and before this was the Deputy Head at the school. An initial meeting took place with the Head of School to discuss the changes that have been implemented and to allow any comments to be made. The school judges itself as Good overall.

After scrutiny of the evidence available and consideration of the schools own self-evaluation, the following key lines of enquiry were agreed with the Head of School:

1. Progress tracking: Analysis at whole-school level and of groups to secure strong outcomes.

2. How Year 12 learners are being catered for within the developing Post 16 provision with a specific focus on CIAG and destinations
3. How leaders at all levels are driving school improvement across the school and particularly across two separate sites

#### Leadership and Management strengths

The school judges itself Good in all areas.

Unity Academy has an interim Head of School who has been in post since January 2019. The senior team (SLT) has also been reorganised after the previous Head of School left in December 2018. The school retains its experienced Local Advisory Board (LAB) Chair who has also an active member of the TBAP East Regional advisory Board, the Chair of which reports regularly to TBAP Trust Board at full board meetings. The LAB Chair continues to make regular visits to the school to meet with staff and the interim Head of School.

The interim Head of School and the LAB have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development across both Unity sites. The interim Head of School is regularly on site supporting at Unity Wisbech and Wisbech site is also now better supported by the wider SLT. This was a recommendation at the last School Review in July 2018. Improved SLT support at Wisbech is starting to impact positively. For example, the curriculum offer has been assimilated leading to consistency across the two sites; has improved curriculum development support from the Director of Learning (DoL) and is encouraging better use of resources. The DoL who is also in an interim role at present, has implemented a new marking policy during Spring term and work scrutiny indicates that the policy is being adopted at both sites.

School leaders and the Local Advisory Board, and its Chair in particular, continue to ensure that the school culture enables pupils and staff 'to excel'. This is a result of high expectations set for learner progress, in respect of their personal development, as well as their academic achievement. It is clear that two years after opening, the vision for Unity has been embedded at Unity St Neots and is now being driven at the Wisbech site by the interim Head of School.

During the short time since taking on the interim role, the Head of School has put considerable effort in to driving further improvement at Unity Academy. Her vision for the school is understood and shared by staff across the school and leadership development is encouraged at all levels. The Head of school has put in place an appropriate CPD programme in collaboration with the local Primary Care Trust. All staff are encouraged to undertake 'evidence-based' research as part of the training package, which, if successful, will lead to the school achieving a mental health quality mark. The interim Head of school reported that staff across the school are willing to learn and to take on more responsibility, working 'above and beyond'.

In relation to the current Ofsted School Inspection Handbook, the School Review team feel the aspects of Leadership and Management above would be within the outstanding range although impact needs to be evidenced further over time.

Safeguarding at Unity Academy is effective. Staff at all levels have received regular training and the school exercises vigilance in respect to all aspects of Safeguarding. The welfare of learners is at the heart of school's ethos. The school's safeguarding systems and procedures are a strength. Clear trackers have been introduced at both sites and the use of "My Concern" should also further strengthen process. There has

been one LADO referral in the last 12 months. LADO was satisfied with the schools internal investigation and no further action was necessary.

At learner voice meetings, learners reported that they feel safe at school and are well supported with e-safety. Pupils at the school report that they know who to speak to if they have any concerns and that any issues they have are dealt with promptly. Support is also provided by the Head Boy and Head Girl as well as through the school council. The school works effectively with external partners to support vulnerable learners and those who are looked-after or subject to formal CIN and CP plans. All staff have up to date PREVENT training and support learners through the PHSE curriculum, to discuss issues around extremism and radicalisation

The review team found Safeguarding at the school to be within the outstanding range in accordance with the current Ofsted handbook.

Since the last school review, the analysis of progress data at a whole-school level is much more thorough and supports the school's self-evaluation judgements. The recently implemented new marking policy is specifically designed to have a highly visual element that is well suited to the needs of learners at the school. This requires further embedding and must be evaluated closely, linked to work load and its impact on learner progress, however some staff are already using it to positive effect. The school makes good use of its pupil premium. Examples of this include the appointment of a peripatetic Speech and Language Therapist to assess and set targets and IT access for some learners at home when required.

The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and well-structured, meeting the diverse range of needs and abilities of learners in Key Stages 3 to 5.

The school's leaders and staff have put considerable effort into ensuring that diversity is celebrated and this is evidenced in lessons and from the high quality, stimulating displays throughout the school. LGBTQ awareness and tolerance is actively promoted at the school. This helps ensure that fundamental British values are promoted.

SMSC is very well addressed through the school's programme of assemblies as well as the taught PHSE curriculum. PHSE topics also include areas of local concern for learner safety such as:

- E-safety
- Knife Crime
- Drug misuse
- CSE
- County lines

Staff performance management is logged on Blue Wave Swift (BWS) and regularly monitored. Progress towards targets is used in decisions to award salary increments. Staff are encouraged to keep their performance records up to date with some CPD sessions set aside to input evidence. Any support required is offered via coaching and further support at the Wisbech site is ongoing.

### Leadership and Management risks and areas for development

The model of shared leadership across the two sites continues to present a challenge although The Head of School is aware of this and a more thorough plan re support, coaching and collective responsibility is evident through conversations. The Head of school and SLT must continue the dialogue around support for staff and learners at Wisbech and ensure all learners receive the high quality provision that is evident at St Neots. Staff at Wisbech stated that they felt more supported since January 2019.

The Student Services Manager has a strong understanding of all safeguarding practice and has developed strong relationships with multi agency staff. It would be beneficial for her to spend more time across both sites, rather than the majority of time at Wisbech, as this would ensure she has full overview and accountability of systems across the school.

The school's SCR is accurate although some minor elements should be checked and updated; for example, the record of staff receiving updates on "Keeping Children Safe" had not had the date changed, which suggested staff had not seen and signed for updates. It was confirmed that staff had received all updates so this must be rectified.

### Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare strengths

Learners' attitudes to learning are positive within the majority of lessons. Learners showed confidence in lessons observed and showed pride in their school and in their individual achievements. Two learners in a maths lesson discussed the progress they were making, shared their views on what they found more challenging and were confident to ask for support when it was required. One was observed asking a Learning Support Professional (LSP) if using "the bus stop method" would work and looked pleased when the LSP praised him for his choice.

Conduct around the school and in lessons is very good at St Neots. This was evident in the hall where learner behaviour was calm and respectful towards their peers and staff during break time and at lunch. Learners were happy to talk to the review team about themselves and their school. Learners were accepted by each other. One learner who had used chalk to draw a "racing track" on the yard was observed playing with cars and was confident to do so in front of peers. Social development is encouraged during breakfast and at break time when staff engage learners in conversations and when learners are encouraged to interact through a range of activities. Form time is used to good effect, providing a structured start to the day supporting learners to settle quickly.

Learners were punctual to school and lessons and there was a purposeful atmosphere around the site at St Neots. Behaviour for Learning at Wisbech was also seen as improving with strong nurturing support.

Staff address any inappropriate language promptly and consistently whilst recognising the individual profile of each learner in their approach. During a meeting with learners, they said they felt very safe at school. When asked about bullying at the school they said they knew who to speak to if they had concerns. Bullying logs are kept consistently and there were many opportunities observed where learners were encouraged to keep themselves safe. External agencies are used to support alongside staff in order to ensure learners know how to keep themselves safe online through regular assemblies and talks via the police.

Enrichment was evident with the opportunity for learners to attend music lessons (external provider) on Tuesdays and also have the chance to take part in activities such as swimming, horse riding and football/athletics tournaments. There is also a residential overnight opportunity offered at “Ringstead Hall.”

Both sites have a school council. As a result of learner voice, initiatives have been implemented across the school. An example of this was “sausage bap” Wednesday when all children and staff are offered a sausage bap breakfast on arrival, cooked by staff and pupils.

Learners are supported to make informed choices about their future through impartial CIAG. The Local authorities that work with the school come in to offer advice at key transition points and work experience is set up as appropriate. All learners have EHCP’s and as such, appropriate plans to support school leavers (post 16) are incorporated in the review. The school has good links in the local community and employability links are encouraged.

Nurture group learners are well supported to develop their independence and life skills. An example of this included the group shopping for ingredients for their cooking lessons.

Learners’ SEND needs are well met by the school’s use of highly individualised learning programmes. LSPs and teachers input to programme planning. LSPs are involved in communication with parents and interventions to support reading and maths. Each learner has a key worker who knows him or her well. The use of a school counsellor (Mental Health First Aid trained) also ensures that learners’ needs are met effectively.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was evident across the school with it clearly embedded within the school culture. On the day of the review, the focus of lunch was “food from Spain” and we enjoyed sharing paella with the children.

Attendance at the time of the review was 75.59% at St Neots and 79.4% at Wisbech. Unauthorised absence at St Neots was 12.03% which is an increase of 4% from last year.

The Student Services manager has excellent relationships with external agencies and continues to work with the Education Welfare Officer to support PA learners. Medical evidence requests are made when appropriate and the school will support moves towards fixed penalty notices and prosecution if required. No groups are identified as disadvantaged by attendance although more detailed tracking would support this. All attendance coding is appropriate.

Exclusions are on a downward trajectory.

St Neots FTE – 89 days (average 1.48 per learner)

Wisbech FTE- 53 days (average 1.76 per learner)

#### Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare risks and areas for development

The school should consider benchmarking against national figures for SEMH provisions in the area of exclusions and attendance. Whilst whole school data formats have significantly improved since the last review,

it would be beneficial to use a detailed attendance tracker that allows for consistent recording and analysis whole school so interventions can be planned in a timely manner.

### Teaching, learning and Assessment-strengths

At St Neots, it is evident that significant work has been invested into developing behaviour for learning across the school. Strong positive relationships and trust between learners, teachers and learning support professionals results in learners being in lessons, engaged and on task with limited behavioural issues. When behavioural issues do occur they are managed effectively. At the Wisbech site a change in the timetabling and layout of the school, as well as increased support from the SLT at St Neots is helping to address behaviour for learning, however, this is still a work in progress.

During the Induction process each learner has a highly detailed individual profile created which draws together a comprehensive range of baseline assessments including WRAT4 and Boxall profile, as well as information from the learners' EHCP's. Learners are then tracked using B squared to evidence curriculum coverage and progress. The Director of Learning measures progress against age related expectations and the Boxall measure. Learners who are making below expected progress are highlighted and the Director of Access and Inclusion formulates interventions. The interventions are then presented in case studies and monitored over time.

Since changes to the SLT team made in January 2019 there has been a focus on implementing strategies to drive teaching, learning and assessment forward. These strategies include the use of a 5 minute lesson plan, new lesson observation, lesson evaluation and work book scrutiny proforma. These strategies are in their infancy at St Neots and are in the process of being introduced at the Wisbech site.

There is evidence that lessons are well planned across both sites, however, the implementation of the 5-minute lesson plan is not yet consistent. Work book scrutiny evidenced that learners take pride in their work and are producing good quantities of work. The Science teacher at Wisbech has produced doodle notebooks for the learners to accompany their workbooks; these are innovative and beautifully presented.

Subject knowledge is strong in most subjects, supporting learners to make expected progress from baseline. When a support need is identified such as for non-specialists, appropriate support plans are put in place and include peer to peer support with regular opportunities for evaluation and feedback. This is currently evidenced at the Wisbech site where the science teacher is supporting the humanities teacher. There is a culture of developing their own classroom practitioners; this was very much evident in Maths at St Neots where the unqualified teacher is being supported to complete her teacher training due to the positive relationships and strong impact that she is having in the classroom.

Both sites work very well with their nurture groups. During observations at Wisbech it was evident that the nurture teacher has built up excellent relationships with the learners and presents learning in a way that is innovative and engaging.

There are three local literacy leads across the two sites. Learner's literacy needs are tested on induction and intervention plans are put in place and evidenced in the learner case studies. WRAT4 is used to test literacy

rather than YARC, to fit better with their current battery of baseline assessments. Lexonic sound training is used as strategy to assist learning of subject-specific vocabulary, with word walls in classrooms and around the school. Learners in the Nurture group are all taught Lexonic strategies as a specific reading intervention.

Parents and carers are provided with regular feedback about their child's progress through termly structured conversations and additional weekly and in some cases 'daily' positive communications.

#### Teaching, learning and Assessment- risks and areas for development

Written feedback to learners continues to be a focus for improvement. In general, there is little evidence that learners are acting on feedback provided in their books. This has been identified by the Director of Learning in the work book scrutiny. As a result a new marking sheet to identify areas for improvement and elicit a learner response has been created. This work is very much in its infancy and will need time to be embedded. However, it was felt that this feedback sheet required significant teacher time and therefore may prove difficult to embed. Potentially, it could be used for summary marking rather than every lesson.

There is evidence of many new initiatives being rolled out to improve teaching and learning since January 2019. However, these initiatives will require time to become embedded and refined as required to ensure teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve.

Efforts to appoint a qualified English teacher for the Wisbech site have not yet been successful, in the meantime English is taught by a learning support professional who would benefit from observations as part of a coaching process.

B-Squared continues to be used to track progress as this is the most suited assessment tool for the needs of the schools learners. However, this assessment tool cannot track GCSE and BTEC work. Pupil Asset is an assessment tool that could be used to do this, however, running two different assessment tools in a school could complicate procedures and duplicate work.

#### Outcomes strengths

Due to their needs, learners' attainment is generally below age-expectations.

At St Neots whole school tracking indicates that there is good progress in Maths (88%) and Science (71%) with room for improvement in English (54%). The FSM cohort in Mathematics, English and Science make the same progress in relation to their peers. Looked-after learners (LAC) make better progress than their peers in Mathematics but do less well in English and Science, however it should be noted that the LAC cohort is small.

At Wisbech whole school tracking indicates that best progress is in English (62%) with room for improvement in Maths (52%) and Science (38%) The FSM cohort in Mathematics, English and Science make less progress in relation to their peers. Looked-after learners (LAC) make better progress than their peers in English, Mathematics and Science.

Detailed case studies were provided for learners who have made little academic progress and included details of interventions and strategies used to support learners to access learning and for their personal development. Interventions for all learners demonstrate clear links to needs identified in EHCPs.

Progress made in lessons was good in most subjects. Progress over time evidenced during work scrutiny was good, however more work needs to be done around getting learners to respond to feedback.

Academic outcomes for KS4 have improved since September 2016, with greater opportunities for higher ability learners to achieve GCSE's.

**St Neots 2017-18 Examinations:**

Measure	No. learners (cohort size:3)		National 2016/17 AP's
At least 1 GCSE or equivalent	3	100%	57.7%
5 or more GCSEs or their equivalent	2	66%	12.3%
At least 1 GCSE A*-C or their equivalent	3	66%	-
5 or more A*-Cs or their equivalent	0	0%	1.5%
Accreditation achieved*	3	100%	-

**Wisbech 2017-18 Examinations:**

Measure	No. learners (cohort size:3)		National 2016/17 AP's
At least 1 GCSE or equivalent	3	100%	57.7%
5 or more GCSEs or their equivalent	2	57%	12.3%
At least 1 GCSE A*-C or their equivalent	3	0%	-
5 or more A*-Cs or their equivalent	0	0%	1.5%
Accreditation achieved*	3	85%	-

**Outcomes- risks and areas for development**

The school can demonstrate through individual learner progress tracking, that learners make progress overtime against personalised academic and personal and social development targets.

At the St Neots site progress in English is not as strong as the other core subjects. At the Wisbech site more work needs to be done around the core subjects to ensure learners are making good progress.

A large number of the strategies put in place to improve learner outcomes were implemented in January 2019. Therefore, time is needed to monitor the impact these strategies have on learner outcomes.

Dynamic School Review Summary

Area	The School judged themselves:	The Review Team:
Overall	Good	Agreed
Leadership and Management	Good	Agreed
Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare	Good	Agreed
Teaching Learning and Assessment	Good	Agreed
Outcomes	Good	Agreed

The team agreed with the school's own self-assessment, however there were certainly descriptors within Leadership and Management and Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare that support elements of outstanding practice. These should now be built on to continue to drive the school forward.

Peer to Peer Review Team

The Review Team (St Neots):

(26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> March 19)

**Samantha Rigby-White (Lead)**

Krishna Purbhoo

Richard Rushton (26<sup>th</sup> March only)

The Review Team (Wisbech):

(27<sup>th</sup> March 19)

Richard Rushton