

Evaluation of The Diana Award's Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme in Primary Schools

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



We are pleased to present key findings from an external evaluation report of our Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme (ABAP), conducted in 2021-22. Together with researchers from the University of York and made possible with support from Nationwide Building Society, we are delighted to showcase the impact of our flagship ABAP. Thanks to Nationwide Building Society, the ABAP has trained 10,000 students across the UK as Anti-Bullying Ambassador, working to make schools a safer, kinder and more respectful place to be.

The ABAP engages young people, parents/carers, and educators to change the attitudes, behaviour, and culture of bullying by building skills and confidence to address different situations, both online and offline. It is delivered through interactive, multiple-school, online or in-person events in which selected young people are equipped with the skills and knowledge to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (ABAs). The schools are then offered a year of personalised support whilst young people lead impactful whole-school anti-bullying campaigns. The Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme is youth-led, with pupils becoming the agents of change within their school community and is offered free to schools across the UK.

The evaluation¹ concluded that the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme has a positive impact on bullying behaviour in the following ways:

01. Impact on Bullying Attitudes

Survey data shows the ABAP training day increased young people's understanding and knowledge of bullying, confidence in reporting bullying and tackling bullying in school, and confidence in running anti-bullying campaigns in school. Similarly, link teachers reported improvements across all areas of supporting pupils and dealing with bullying behaviour due to involvement in the Programme. Furthermore, focus group data suggests the Programme improves young people's understanding of the nature, cause and impact of bullying.

The evaluation¹ concluded that the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme has a positive impact on bullying behaviour in the following ways:

02. Impact on Pupil Behaviours

Survey data suggests reports of bullying behaviour increased at 3 months post-training compared to before training. Indeed, focus group data and responses to the parent/carer survey confirm a continuation of bullying behaviours within trained schools. However, this increase may be due to greater awareness and improved reporting procedures. Other data suggests that over three months, the ABAP has a positive impact on pupil behaviours, making schools safer, kinder and more inclusive.

The evaluation¹ concluded that the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme has a positive impact on bullying behaviour in the following ways:

03. Impact on Bullying Cultures

Focus group data show that young people identify three key areas around where Ambassadors achieve a positive impact 1. improved school experience 2. more effective/broader awareness about bullying, and 3. greater readiness to respond to bullying behaviour. Further discussion with link teachers revealed the extent to which Ambassadors are held in positive regard by peers, have a positive impact on the wider school community through their work and use their skills and experience to continue engaging in social action after they have left the school. Findings also show that Ambassadors have a deep understanding of what 'Respect' means and how their own behaviours can influence others to be more respectful, whilst link teachers report that the Programme promotes respect. Additionally, the importance of a pupil-friendly anti-bullying policy to establish a shared understanding amongst all pupils, staff, and parents/carers is highlighted, with the ABAP encouraging and triggering work towards this end.

A case study conducted with a school that had taken part in the Programme for several years details the long-term impact of the Programme. The case study discusses learnings from this school regarding their recruitment of ABAs, the involvement of younger pupils to establish a succession plan, organisation and planning of the Programme within the school, and the subsequent positive, long-lasting impact on their school culture.

Analysis of feedback from schools pre and post training shows that the Programme is delivered to a high standard. The ways in which the facilitators engage with the young people at the training sessions is identified as a key strength, and high value is placed on the opportunity to interact with other schools. It is widely agreed that the training successfully inspires and empowers young people. Ongoing 12-month support is appreciated, with regular but flexible contact points with The Diana Award's anti-bullying team and provision of "superb" resources. Some schools needed to tailor resources to suit their needs; however, link teachers appreciate the way in which the Programme responds to and incorporates feedback into future resources.

The evaluation report provided three key recommendations:

01

Review of evaluation methods including a revised survey, a longitudinal study and streamlined approach to recruitment of case study schools;

02

Clarity and managing expectations of all parties in advance and during the Programme (for example, time commitment required by link teachers to fulfil their role fully);

03

Provision of further guidance relating to anti-bullying policies to deepen the impact of schools' anti-bullying work after attending their initial training day.



Overall, the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme was greatly valued by link teachers and young people. Findings from this evaluation suggest the Programme contributes to young people's understanding of bullying behaviour and increases their confidence in tackling it. As an essential first step in tackling bullying behaviours in primary school, this understanding and confidence consequently leads to the development of a safer, kinder, more respectful school community.

TDA Management Response To Nationwide Building Society External Evaluation 2021-22

Purpose and Objectives of Report

In August 2021, with funding from Nationwide Building Society and following a tendering process, independent evaluator Nathalie Noret (University of York) was commissioned by The Diana Award to conduct an external evaluation of the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme (ABAP) in primary schools across the UK. This programme engages young people, parents/carers and teachers to change the attitudes, behaviours and culture of bullying by building skills and confidence to address different situations both on and offline.

The evaluation was split into an analysis of existing survey data gathered by TDA at four timepoints (pre-training, immediately post-training, and 3-month and 12-month post-training) and focus group interviews with Ambassadors, non-Ambassadors and school staff.

This evaluation sought to achieve the following evaluation objectives:

- To capture a rich understanding of participants' experiences of the ABAP that tells a story of the impact of the ABAP
- To support TDA to understand areas of strength and areas to develop further in the ABAP
- To provide recommendations and a plan for further evaluation

TDA Response

The Diana Award is committed to learning and identifying ways in which we can improve our effectiveness and impact. We are therefore grateful to Nathalie for her report and the recommendations developed. This response sets out some general comments on the report and specific actions we are committing to in response to those recommendations.

Due to COVID-19, it is worth noting that the delivery of the ABAP's initial training session flexed around government guidelines and safe practices as below:

February 2021 - July 2021 initial training delivered entirely online

September 2021 – December 2021 initial training delivered in single schools

January 2022 – April 2022 return to online delivery of initial training (due to Omicron)

May 2022 – February 2023 initial training delivered in large regional events with multiple schools in attendance

Survey data analysed in the report covers September 2021 – May 2022 inclusive.

Programme Strategy

TDA is now in year 3 of implementing its programmes strategy. The actions identified below will feed into and draw upon broader programme initiatives to improve our effectiveness and impact. These include the development of a new TDA theory of change, a School's Journey project, the EDI working group, and broader youth development work.

RECOMMENDATION 01:

To better understand and more accurately measure the impact of the Anti-Bullying Ambassador programme the Diana Award may wish to consider further evaluations and consider:

1. A longer-term, longitudinal study to evaluate the impact of the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme.
2. Consideration of recruiting schools for the evaluation, for example, when signing up to the programme.
3. A revised questionnaire. The current questionnaire is very lengthy, which may be challenging for schools to complete. You may benefit from shortening the questionnaire to capture less but more focused evaluation data.

TDA COMMENTS

TDA is due to begin using Salesforce CRM by Summer 2023; this will enable us to better track individual school's journeys with TDA, as well as better understand how and when schools choose to re-engage with the ABAP year on year.

Since Summer Term 2022, TDA ABAP now asks for 2x contacts at each school, to aid in smooth comms with schools and try to reduce possible drop-outs rates caused when link teachers change in trained schools.

TDA has trailed a shorter survey through the new Respect Programme in 2022-23 and learnings are to be applied to the ABAP survey review, ready for roll-out from Sept 2023; TDA recognises the report findings that behaviour change in most schools take longer than 3 months (when schools are currently surveyed) and instead, TDA plans to survey schools when they achieve a badge and have therefore delivered impactful campaign work.

ACTIONS

1. TDA to pull together a case for support for carrying out case studies of young people tracked over time, for example, Year 7 ABAs through to Year 9 or beyond. Bid proposals should include this ask i.e. a 3-year external evaluation; this also sets a precedent for 3-year grant funding and longer, rather than yearly funds
2. TDA to use newly implemented Salesforce CRM to contact schools in good time for opportunities like being case study schools
3. TDA to set expectations for schools when they join the ABAP that they may be included in case study/focus group requests
4. TDA to build evaluation processes into marketing for all schools
5. TDA to create an annual review/refresh of Link Teacher contact details e.g. through a newsletter reminder to update contact details by emailing us, to reduce impact of outdated contact information
6. New (shorter) survey to be rolled out from Sept 2023 and creative data gathering methods to be explored and implemented from Sept 2023
7. TDA to trial capturing progress feedback/data when schools earn badges as good opportunity to create case studies
8. TDA YD team to build in focus group opportunities as part of schools' journey
9. TDA to approach partner CFMH for a training session on research methods.

RECOMMENDATION 02:

The Diana Award may wish to consider how to manage the expectations of those involved in the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme. This includes::

1. Communicating to link teachers early in the process, the time, resources, and support required to run the project.
2. For ambassadors, it is important to highlight the limitations of their role. The Diana Award may wish to consider whether it might be possible to create a network of ambassadors as a means of sharing experiences and gaining support. The Diana Award may also wish to support link teachers in providing support for ambassadors to help all involved manage their expectations of their individual roles and the role of the programme as a whole.

TDA COMMENTS

We support this recommendation and recognise the need to be clearer and more consistent in how we market and communicate the programme. We also recognise the need to give more guidance to Link Teachers, including how to select and recruit ABAs.

ACTIONS

1. TDA to create a staff info pack for Link Teachers which sets out time commitments and expectations for role. This pack will include info for Link Teachers to share with SLT about their role, as well as top tips on how Link Teachers can best support their ABAs in their new role, plus 'We find the ABAP works best when' top tips guide incl. How to select/recruit ABAs for the Programme
2. TDA to review language around ABAP i.e. 'Programme' rather than 'training day'
3. TDA to create a short video for Link Teachers on how to select/recruit ABAs for the Programme and market Link Teacher role info pack on website
4. TDA to add a slide in ABAP training on the roles and responsibilities of different members of the school community i.e. link teacher, ABAs, SLT, Headteacher, parents/carers, etc to help set expectations
5. TDA to build in more and meaningful opportunities for schools to come together to reflect on journey and learnings e.g. through Linked In group, and promote this way of connecting in the new Staff Guide for Sept 2023.

RECOMMENDATION 03:

TDA COMMENTS

The Diana Award may wish to consider how to further support schools in developing their anti-bullying policy. This could include:

1. Providing more examples of best practice in the development of student-friendly anti-bullying policies. The Diana Award may also wish to consider sharing examples of existing student-friendly policies.
2. Additional support for link teachers to understand how the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme can support their anti-bullying policies.

We support this recommendation. Whilst we already do collect examples of best practice, there are clearly opportunities to promote more widely.

ACTIONS

1. TDA to update and promote resource on school Anti-Bullying Policy examples and add this into the current Campaign Pack for schools from Sept 2023
2. TDA to update and promote resource on best practice guide to recording and reporting bullying incidents
3. TDA to add a slide at initial ABAP training day to include clearer action steps for schools to a) review / update their AB Policy and b) implement a robust recording and reporting process for bullying incidents. To explore making these two actions mandatory when schools apply to earn a follow-on AB badge
4. TDA to better promote existing webinar recording on how to review your AB Policy (currently on Resource Centre)
5. TDA to explore opportunity to implement an 'AB Policy' feedback service in the YD team where schools submit their updated AB Policy for comments/feedback from AB experts
6. TDA to collate reporting tools from trained schools e.g. TootToot, Whisper, to include in resource for schools.

THANK -
YOU

