

Independent evaluation of the Buttle UK 'Children in Need' school places project

Submission date 29/01/2015	Recruitment status Stopped	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 10/02/2015	Overall study status Stopped	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 07/08/2019	Condition category Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Buttle UK is a grant-making organisation that supports individuals in a variety of ways, including providing support to overcome an immediate crisis and putting plans in place to ensure children have the best possible chance of a successful education. In March 2014 over 397,000 children in England were considered to be in need of services from their local authority in order to maintain a reasonable standard of health and development. Buttle UK would like to extend the support they offer by proactively identifying children in need of support from their local authorities, and their families, who would not routinely seek either their support or consider boarding school education. The aim of this study is to determine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of local authorities offering boarding school as an early intervention for children in need (as defined by the Children Act 1989) or a child who has a Child Protection Plan, compared to not offering boarding school for children in need or those who have a Child Protection Plan.

Who can participate?

Children who are, or about to go into, year 6/7 (throughout the academic year), identified as "children in need" or who have a Child Protection Plan by their local authority, and who are prepared to be followed-up by the evaluation team.

What does the study involve?

Participants are randomly allocated into one of two groups. Those in group 1 are offered a place at a boarding school. Those in group 2 follow their expected educational path, which is most likely to be attendance at a local state secondary school. Children allocated to the boarding school arms of the trial are supported by Buttle UK and social services to attend these institutions from year 7 until year 13. The support for the boarding school arms cover all immediate costs related to attending the schools. Assessments at the end of the study includes comparisons of maths scores between the children in each group of the study.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Benefits of taking part in this study include potential improvements in academic achievement, health and wellbeing of the children/ There are no risks to taking part in the study.

Where is the study run from?

1. York Trials Unit, University of York (UK)
2. School of Education, Durham University (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

February 2014 to March 2024

Who is funding the study?

Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

Who is the main contact?

Professor David Torgerson

Contact information

Type(s)

Public

Contact name

Prof David Torgerson

Contact details

York Trials Unit
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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number

v2.0; 22/01/2015

Study information

Scientific Title

Independent evaluation of the Buttle UK 'Children in Need' school places project: a Zelen's randomised controlled trial

Study objectives

Current hypothesis as of 12/01/2016:

What is the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of local authorities offering boarding school as an early intervention for children in need (as defined by the Children Act 1989) or children on a Child Protection Plan compared to not offering boarding school for children in need?

Previous hypothesis:

What is the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of local authorities offering boarding school as an early intervention for children in need (as defined by the Children Act 1989) compared to not offering boarding school for children in need?

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

1. Durham University School of Education Ethics Committee, 12/11/2015, ref: 2152
2. University of York Health Sciences Research Governance Committee, 29/10/2015

Study design

Current study design as of 12/01/2016:
Zelen's randomised controlled trial

Previous study design:

Pragmatic randomised controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Children identified as 'children in need' by local authority or children on a Child Protection Plan

Interventions

1. Intervention:

The offer of a place at a state or independent boarding school. Pupils randomly allocated to the boarding school arms of the trial will be supported by Buttle UK and social services to attend these institutions from year 7 until year 13. The support for the boarding school arms will cover all immediate costs related to attending the schools.

2. Control:

No offer of a place at a boarding school. Pupils randomised to the control arm will follow their expected educational path, which is most likely to be to apply to their local state secondary school as assigned through the routine state school application process; although parents /guardians may identify other educational routes for their child e.g. home school, other bursary for attending independent school.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

The difference in post-test maths scores between pupils in the boarding groups and pupils in the control group. This will be collected in July 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire.
2. Health-related quality of life, measured by the EQ-5D-Y questionnaire (added 12/01/2016)

This will be collected in July 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Completion date

31/03/2024

Reason abandoned (if study stopped)

Participant recruitment issue

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

Current participant inclusion criteria as of 12/01/2016:

1. Boys and girls who are in, or about to go into, year 6/7
2. Identified as "children in need" by their local authority or on a Child Protection Plan
3. Prepared to be followed-up by the evaluation team

Previous inclusion criteria:

1. Boys and girls who are in, or about to go into, year 6/7
2. Identified as "children in need" by their local authority
3. Prepared to be randomised and allow follow-up by the evaluation team

Participant type(s)

Other

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

Current exclusion criteria as of 12/01/2016:

1. Boys and girls who are not in, or about to go into, year 6/7
2. Not identified as "children in need" by their local authority or not on a Child Protection Plan
3. Not prepared to be followed-up by the evaluation team

Previous exclusion criteria:

1. Boys and girls who are not in, or about to go into, year 6/7
2. Not identified as "children in need" by their local authority
3. Not prepared to be randomised and followed-up by the evaluation team

Date of first enrolment

01/02/2015

Date of final enrolment

31/03/2017

Locations**Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre**York Trials Unit**

University of York

York

United Kingdom

YO10 5DD

Study participating centre**School of Education, Durham University**

Leazes Road

Durham

United Kingdom

DH1 1TA

Sponsor information**Organisation**

University of York

ROR

<https://ror.org/04m01e293>

Funder(s)**Funder type**

Charity

Funder Name

Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Not provided at time of registration

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes