

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

<b>Submission date</b> 29/01/2015	<b>Recruitment status</b> Stopped	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 10/02/2015	<b>Overall study status</b> Stopped	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 07/08/2019	<b>Condition category</b> 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  
Department of Health Sciences  
University of York  
Heslington  
York  
United Kingdom  
YO10 5DD

## 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