

# Expression of interest

# Title: Evaluation of the Behaviour Hubs Programme

**Project reference: DFERPPU 2019/007**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: 23:59 Wednesday 28th October 2020**

## Summary

Expressions of interest are sought for a mixed-methods evaluation of the behaviour hubs programme. This three-year programme[[1]](#footnote-2) will begin in Spring 2021. It is a government-led, school-based programme which aims to improve pupil behaviour and behaviour practices in at least 500 schools by enabling schools and multi academy trusts with exemplary behaviour to work in close partnership with those that need and want to improve, alongside a central offer of support and a taskforce of advisers. In the short term we expect to measure progress against implementation and participation in the programme and consistently applied and understood behaviour policies in schools.  In the medium term we expect to see improved school behaviour cultures and staff confidence and fewer incidents of disruption, truancy and bullying.  In the long term we expect the programme to have a wider impact on pupil attainment and outcomes, pupil and staff wellbeing, staff recruitment and retention, and improved Ofsted judgments.

Ahead of the programme beginning, we are looking to appoint an independent research body to conduct an evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its strategic aim to improve behaviour cultures and practices in schools and to provide real-time learning to foster continuous improvement of the programme.

The evaluator will work alongside the behaviour adviser team, the delivery centre and the department for the duration of the programme. It is anticipated that the contract will run for approximately four years (February 2021 to March 2025), with a range of deliverables and outputs required over this period.

## Background

All schools should be safe and disciplined environments in which pupils are able to fulfil their potential. As well as delivering excellent teaching, schools must create positive environments where pupils are respectful of one another and are free from the disruption that can damage their education. Schools also need to be safe and respectful workplaces to attract and retain teachers.

The behaviour hubs programme will enable exemplary mainstream, special and AP schools (‘lead schools’) to work closely with schools that need and want to turn around their behaviour management culture and practices (‘partner schools’). Lead schools, partner schools and MATS will work together to form “hubs”. The programme is centred around equipping senior leaders (school headteachers, deputy heads and executive teams at Multi-Academy Trusts) with the tools to improve their school’s approach to behaviour management through facilitated peer-training. The £10m behaviour hubs programme will run for three years.

The behaviour hubs programme builds on the Department’s review of behaviour in schools ‘[*Creating a Culture:* *how school leaders can optimise behaviour'*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools)*[[2]](#footnote-3) (2017), which was led by Tom Bennett*. The review identified a set of core principles which characterise the approach of successful school behaviour policies. These include:

* having a clear understanding of what the school culture is
* high expectations of pupils and a belief that all pupils matter
* consistency and attention to detail in the execution of school routines, norms and values.

The Behaviour Hubs programme will consist of the following key elements:

1. **Lead behaviour schools and lead multi-academy trusts (MATs).** These will be exemplars of behaviour best practice: responsible for supporting partner schools to improve, sharing their good practice, and supporting partner MATs to design and implement effective behaviour practices in their schools.
2. **Partner schools and partner MATs**. These schools or MATs will receive support, advice and guidance from lead schools or lead MATs and will share their own practice with others.
3. **Hubs.** Behaviour hubs will consist of clusters of lead, partner schools and MATs working together and sharing good practice.
4. **Behaviour advisers**. Led by Tom Bennett, a team of behaviour advisers will oversee and support the work of lead schools and MATs. Lead schools will support advisers to deliver central training for schools and MATs in the programme.
5. **Delivery Centre.** A central delivery organisation will provide logistics and administration, including making grant payments to schools, organising training, collecting monitoring information and acting as a central point of contact for enquiries.
6. **Evaluation.** An evaluation will consider the effectiveness of the programme and capture learning to aid programme improvement. ​

DfE is currently recruiting for lead schools and is looking to appoint around 20 outstanding lead schools from across primary, secondary, special and alternative provision (AP) sectors for the first year of the programme. The DfE is also looking for 2 to 3 MATs with excellent behaviour management that are willing to support other Trusts. Appointments are due to be made in Spring 2021.

Schools that receive an Ofsted Requires Improvement (RI) judgement (including RI for behaviour) and are ready to make changes to their school will be eligible for support as a partner school and will be referred onto the programme via the Department’s COVID-19 Recovery offer and the Department’s School Improvement programme where appropriate. We are currently looking to recruit 40 partner schools for the first cohort joining in Spring 2021, with termly recruitment thereafter.

Partner schools will be assessed based on need and will have access to either:

1. bespoke one-to-one in-depth support with action planning, training and ongoing mentorship for 1-2 years; or
2. a short action planning service where a lead school provides advice and challenge on the partner school’s behaviour management practices and approach.

Partner MATs will receive MAT-to-MAT support over 1-2 years to consider, develop and implement a trust-wide approach to behaviour management.

Both partner schools and partner MATs will also have access to the following support over 1-2 years:

* a menu of training modules developed by DfE-appointed behaviour advisers focused on the principles and practice of effective behaviour management. There will be core modules we expect all schools to attend and optional targeted modules, so schools can choose the training offer that suits them best.
* termly open days at exemplary schools to observe good behaviour management in practice.
* regular hub networking events to share experiences and good practice.
* online resources curated and developed by the behaviour advisers to support schools. These will be accessible to all schools in the country, and may include case studies of exemplar practice and tools for schools to audit their own behaviour practice.

## Evaluation aims

The aim is for the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its strategic aim to improve behaviour and behaviour practices in schools, achieving benefits for schools, workforce and pupils, and to provide real-time learning to foster continuous improvement of the programme. The evaluator will deliver a process, outcomes and impact evaluation, built around a theory of change, to:

* assess whether the programme is effective in meeting strategic aims, objectives and expected outcomes and impacts
* assess, test and refine the programme theory of change to understand why the intervention has worked (or not), what the change mechanisms linking activities to outcomes are, and how they vary across school and pupil contexts.
* evidence the outcomes and emerging / potential for impact for schools, teachers, pupils, including use of bespoke data collection
* assess impact for pupils, teachers and schools, relative to matched-comparison groups using secondary analysis of administrative data
* capture formative learning and real-time insights to understand operational and contextual challenges / successes, and ways to exploit or overcome these
* provide feedback to the department to inform delivery of the programme and disseminate learning across and outside the programme
* explore and evidence (actual and reported) costs, benefits and sustainability, to explain whether (and which parts of) the programme represents good value for money, and under what conditions.

**Key research questions include:**

* To what extent was the programme effective in meeting strategic aims, objectives and expected outcomes? – what challenges are there and how well has the programme responded to these?
* How well did the programme-level theory of change reflect what happened in practice? – how has this evolved, why and, how should it be changed?
* How effectively has the hubs programme been implemented on a national and school/MAT level? – how has this evolved, why and, what was learned?
* What works, for who, when and why? – good practice in improving behaviour, conditions of success and how to exploit, challenges and how to overcome, what methods have been effective in sharing practice between schools, and what is transferable and scalable?
* To what extent have systems, processes and practices in the schools and MATs (partner and lead) changed as a result of the programme?
* What are the outcomes and impact of the behaviour hubs programme of support over time for schools, leaders, teachers, staff, pupils and parents, including unexpected consequences?
* What evidence is there of value for money and sustainability? – what aids / inhibits this?

## Methodology

Broadly, the preferred methodology is to apply **theory-based** approaches (to explore outcomes and potential for impact, and the mechanisms by which the hubs programme brings about change, or not) and **quasi-experimental** approaches (using administrative data to assess impact relative to a matched-comparison group of schools). To meet the research aims and objectives, we seek to commission a mixed-method evaluation and it is anticipated that both quantitative and qualitative research will be undertaken with a range of participant groups (including behaviour advisors, leaders, teachers, parents and pupils) to deliver the evaluation aims and objectives. Design and delivery of the evaluation will need to strike a balance between maximising insight and cost-efficiency, and guarding against burden on schools.

Indicative approach and possible methods are outlined here to inform the selection of evidence to demonstrate relevant subject and technical expertise included in the EOI response and give prospective bidders time, ahead of full ITT stage, to consider any implications for resourcing / capacity and whether to work as a consortium. At full-tender stage bidders will have the opportunity to present a definitive method including these approaches and / or alternatives (see further information section below). **The EOI response does NOT require development of a method and if provided will not be assessed.**

**Indicative approach and possible methods include:**

**Theory-based approach –** to explore change and change mechanisms and [handle complexity within policy evaluation](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/879437/Magenta_Book_supplementary_guide._Handling_Complexity_in_policy_evaluation.pdf), employing e.g. realist, contribution analysis or qualitative comparative analysis (with input from the methods below).

**Case study visits to hub schools and MATs, including lead and partner school leaders, teachers, pupils and parents** (potentially with longitudinal element) potentially drawing on a variety of methods e.g. interviews, pulse surveys, observation, diaries (see bespoke data collection) - to gain an in-depth understanding of behaviour management principles and systems, while observing and exploring school setting/context, understand experiences of engagement and change, and if / how outcomes are being achieved.

**Consultation with lead schools, behaviour advisers and the delivery centre,** potentially including a combination of focus group and in-depth semi-structured interviews - to capture intelligence and perspectives on implementation, development and lessons.

**In-depth semi-structured interviews with teachers and leaders from lead and partner schools, engaged in the programme** (potentially including a longitudinal element and those disengaged / leaving the programme early) – to understand how the programme and application of learning are experienced, if / how outcomes are being achieved within the school context and to help assess what works, where and in what ways.

**Surveys conducted with teachers and leaders in partner schools** (and possibly lead schools) at baseline and throughout the programme, drawing on established / national survey questions and tools and testing / developing new approaches (potentially including lighter touch pulse surveys and applying creative methods / utilising technology to minimise burden and support requirement for real-time insights) – to capture baseline, monitor progress and changes in key outcomes, unintended consequences and costs.

### Bespoke data collection including the use of creative methods and technology that minimise burden and facilitate real-time learning and improvement – to support both the process and outcome components of the evaluation requirements. This could be integral to / supplementary components of the above methods, or an additional / discrete approach to data collection. This could include for example recording of administrative / monitoring information, pulse surveys, observation, diary, embedding data collection and primary research within delivery (training events and access to materials, observation and / or interactive sessions at the hub networking events). Bidders will have the opportunity to set out how bespoke data collection approaches will support the evaluation to:

### develop and test approaches to identify and track indicators of outcomes and potential for impact on behaviour e.g. on incidents of challenging behaviour and bullying. punctuality, detentions; and

### capture real-time insights about the experience of engaging with the programme and of applying learning withing the school context.

### Secondary data analysis - assessment of administrative data collected from all schools in the programme and a matched comparison sample to assess impact of the programme, including data on attendance, exclusions, Ofsted ratings and demand for school places, to assess impact on schools, workforce and pupils. To note, recruitment modelling includes a staggered point (with joiners each term from April ‘21 through to January ‘24).

The methods will need to support **timely and effective communication** of evidence and insightsfacilitating continuous improvement of policy and delivery. At full-tender, bidders will be advised of the formal reporting requirements and will be able to propose additional tools / outputs to support the test and learn approach of the programme.

**Further information about our requirements:**

If invited to submit a full tender, bidders will have the opportunity to propose a definitive method based on the indicative approaches provided and / or propose / include alternative approaches (if it can be demonstrated that these address the evaluation aims and objectives whilst still providing good value for money), and to propose optional extras to this (to add value within the overall budget).  At this second stage, bidders will also be asked to demonstrate flexibility to review and improve the effectiveness of methods during the study (as appropriate).

At ITT, any consortium bids will be expected to demonstrate a history of leading a consortium, assurance of effective collaboration and rationale / added value of each partner.

Experience of delivering an evaluation that is embedded within delivery would be an asset. At ITT, contractors will need to demonstrate willingness to collaborate with DfE, Delivery Centre, Behaviour Advisers and lead schools to ensure synergy, coordination and management of any asks of schools and teachers, and reduce burden e.g. where data capture at Behaviour Adviser visits or by the delivery centre can be an input to the evaluation. It will also be important to demonstrate flexibility to adapt to any changes in DfE planning and reporting requirements.

The evaluation is expected to be delivered over 4 years (5 financial years) between February 2021 and March 2025. The upper limit for the package of evaluation is £350K; the overall package of evaluation, and inclusion of proposed components, will be assessed for value for money against the requirement and potential for impact.

## Timing

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| **Task**  | **Deadline**  |
| Deadline for EOI returns  | 23.59 28th October 2020 |
| ITTs issued  | w/c 9th November 2020 |
| Deadline for ITTs  |  4th December 2020 |
| Interviews | w/c 11th January 2021 |
| Contract awarded  | w/b 1st February 2021 |
| Project inception meeting and research tools workshop  | w/b 8th February 2021 |

## Assessment criteria

The Expressions of Interest received by the deadline will be assessed against the following criteria:

* Understanding of the policy background e.g. knowledge and experience of schools and behaviour policy and experience and expertise of designing and delivering research in this field.
* Experience and technical ability to design and deliver complex mixed-method evaluation, theory based approaches to handling complexity and use of the range of methods (including those detailed above) to address challenges e.g. to assess impact, minimise burden, capture real-time insights, and subjectivity.
* Organisational capacity and flexibility, and project management processes and skills to deliver a complex method to scope, time and quality.
* Delivery of tailored, timely, effective and accessible communications to inform operational delivery and strategic planning, and foster continuous improvement.

**The EOI response does NOT require development of a method and if provided will not be assessed.**

Please evidence each criterion using examples to demonstrate what you did, how, why and the impact. Assessors will consider the full EOI response when scoring. You are advised to organise and present evidence under each criterion in turn. EOIs will be evaluated on demonstration of these criteria, using the scale below. **The criteria have equal weighting.**

**Scoring scale:**

1. No evidence/very poor
2. Poor evidence
3. Some evidence
4. Good evidence
5. Excellent evidence

Expressions of interests submitted must be no more than 2,000 words – anything longer will be disregarded. Please note that any references must be included within the above word count and content to be viewed via a hyperlink will not be opened / included in the assessment.

**The full invitation to tender will only be issued to those organisations deemed to best meet these requirements.**

| **Closing date for EOIs: 23.59 Wednesday 28th OCTOBER 2020****Send your EOI form to:** **Research.BAEA@education.gov.uk** |
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## How to submit an expression of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the **NEW EOI Form** which can be found under attachments. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

All contracts are let on the basis of the Department’s Terms & Conditions, a copy is available attached to the Contracts Finder listing. You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.

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1. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/behaviour-hubs> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)