

Tilley Award 2006

Application form

Please ensure that you have read the guidance before completing this form. By making an application to the awards, entrants are agreeing to abide by the conditions laid out in the Guidance. Please complete the following form in full and within the word limit. Failure to do so could result in disqualification from the competition.

Completed application forms should be e-mailed to Tricia Perkins; patricia.perkins@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

All entries must be received by noon on Friday 28th April 2006. No entries will be accepted after this time/date. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Tricia Perkins on 0207 035 0262. Any queries regarding other aspects of the awards should be directed to Michael Wilkinson on 0207 035 0247 or Lindsey Poole on 0207 035 0234.

Please tick box to indicate whether the entry should be considered for the main award, the criminal damage award or both;

Main award Criminal Damage Award Both Awards

1. Details of application

Title of the project **The Behaviour Attendance and Truancy (B.A.T.) team.**

Name of force/agency/CDRP: Cleveland Police/Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

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2. Summary of application

In no more than 400 words please use this space to describe your project. Include details of the problem that was addressed a description of the initiative, the main intervention principles and what they were designed to achieve, the main outcomes of project particularly in relation to the problem, evidence was used in designing the programme and how the project is evaluated.

Summary.

The Behaviour, Attendance and Truancy team was launched in April 2004 as a result of a successful bid to the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

The team is a genuine multi agency unit made up of one Police Sergeant (the team leader), two Police Constables, an Education Welfare Officer and a Youth Worker.

The five staff are based in offices used by the Children's Services Department of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council.

The remit of the team was to use innovative methods to improve behaviour in and around school, improve attendance, reduce truancy and deal effectively with juvenile offending; in particular anti social behaviour and violent crime.

These aims match with the five strands of the Children Act 2004 ('Every Child Matters'):

- Enjoy and achieve
- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Make a positive contribution
- Improve economic well being

They also match three of Cleveland Police's local policing priorities:

- Reduce overall crime
- Tackle anti social behaviour
- Provide a citizen focused service and inspire public confidence

This submission concentrates on **one key area** of the team's work. This is **reducing the number of school exclusions**. There is an unquestionable link between a young person's exclusion from mainstream school and becoming involved in crime or anti social behaviour.

There are benefits to the education sector of keeping young people in full time education but there are huge benefits to policing and community safety. In the short term a teenager wandering the streets is at risk of committing crime or being a victim of it. In the long term a young person thrown out of mainstream school often loses their only form of stability in an otherwise chaotic life. This can have lasting effects on the life chances of that individual and an exclusion from school can often be the catalyst of a downward spiral into crime and anti social behaviour.

3. Description of project

Describe the project following the guidance given in no more than 4000 words

Scan:

Between 2002 and 2004 the Langbaugh District of Cleveland Police initiated a uniform, operational 'problem solving' team. The team, the Neighbourhood Task Group, was staffed by one Sergeant and four Constables. The team had a remit to spend several months in any one location within the Borough and deal effectively with problems highlighted as concerns to local people. On each deployment (generally three or four months at a time) the team would consult with elected Ward Councillors and hold public meetings to determine what the key issues were to local residents. Without exception, the biggest cause of discontent was always anti social behaviour committed by young people. The team used traditional enforcement techniques and high visibility patrols to reassure the public. They also worked closely with Youth Services and voluntary groups to divert young people into more positive activities.

As the core target group were teenagers the team developed an education programme by visiting secondary schools to interact with young people. There were interactive sessions where frank, open exchanges created a better understanding of the role of the police and highlighted issues such as peer pressure and accountability. The classes were well received by students and staff. Officers were able to communicate with young people without it being in a confrontational situation.

Two real bonuses of the team's involvement with the schools were:

- (1) The schools themselves felt less isolated and that the police did care about what was happening in their 'community within a community.'
- (2) The officers realized there was a wealth of evidence relating to crime and anti social behaviour going on in schools, most of which was never reported. The schools were a completely untapped source of intelligence.

This was the start of the idea of forming a Behaviour Attendance and Truancy (BAT) team. The Task Group team leader met with education and welfare managers who had concerns of the levels of anti social behaviour within their schools. A protocol was agreed with a number of targets. The major problem identified by both organisations, police and education, was how to reduce the number of young people being excluded from school.

The Government, through the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' clearly identified the link between behaviour, levels of school attendance and exclusions.

The Borough of Redcar and Cleveland has a total of eleven mainstream secondary schools, an Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) service and an alternative Key Stage Four (14 – 16 years) vocational training site. The secondary school population is over 10,000 young people.

The audit and consultation for the Community Safety Strategy for Redcar & Cleveland 2002/2005 identified anti social behaviour by young people as a major concern for the general public.

The area suffers high levels of social deprivation as measured by accepted criteria of levels of crime, unemployment, health and educational attainment.

"Nationally the number of permanent exclusions from school has risen by 20% since 2000."(The Guardian 6.9.05)

"More than 200,000 pupils of all ages were given a total of 344,000 fixed term exclusions according to a comprehensive set of figures released by the Department for Education and Skills DfES. The figures also reveal that the number of pupils permanently excluded has risen sharply to its highest level for five years. There were 9,880 permanent exclusions in 2003/04, a 6% rise on the previous year, despite increased use of in-school units for disruptive pupils." (Times Educational Supplement 1.7.05)

The local picture was similar. In Redcar and Cleveland there were 1032 fixed term exclusions and 31 permanent exclusions in 2003/04. This figure for permanent exclusions was in excess of the local Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) target of 26 (an excess of 20%).

Analysis:

The link between exclusion from school and crime and anti social behaviour is undeniable.

"We know that children excluded from school are more than twice as likely to commit crime and anti social behaviour. But we also know teachers cannot be expected to put up with poor behaviour and disruption in the classroom". Rod Morgan, Chair Youth Justice Board (YJB) 2004.

A MORI poll carried out for the YJB's annual youth crime survey confirmed these comments; 26% of young people in mainstream schools admit to offending, 60% of those not in mainstream education admit to offending.

An Audit Commission report in 1999 found 42% of those appearing before the Youth Court were excluded from school.

Further research carried out by the Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP) in March 2005 categorises young people who are 'NEET' (not in employment, education or training). Their findings state young people who had been permanently excluded from school are three times more likely to be 'NEET' by the age of 18 years. Anyone in the NEET criteria is at much greater risk of crime (either as a victim or offender).

Locally in Redcar and Cleveland the figures are similar. Of the four 'Prolific and Priority Offenders' (PPOs) in the Borough who are 16 years or under, three are not in mainstream school. The Borough also has 12 Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) in operation for people 16 years and under. Eleven of this twelve are not in mainstream education.

The Borough's BVPI for reducing permanent exclusions was very specifically linked to their three 'Behaviour Improvement Programme' (BIP) schools. These schools are only a quarter of the total number of secondary schools in the Borough. However, they are by their categorisation, the most challenging in terms of behaviour problems, truancy, exclusions and academic achievements. Twelve of the thirty one exclusions were from the three BIP schools (i.e. 39% of the permanent exclusions came from only 25% of the secondary school population). The Borough set a demanding target of reducing this figure of 12 for the 3 BIP schools by 50% over 2 years.

Response:

The BAT team uses a variety of methods to achieve its objectives of reducing exclusions and making schools a safer environment for pupils, staff and the public. The key to its success is partnership working. The simple fact of basing the team in education offices assists in keeping the staff focused on their task and not diverted by other policing demands. Statistics will show how progress has been made, but of equal importance is the qualitative element (matching a key policing priority of providing a citizen focused service).

A young person's poor behaviour in or near to school can result in the Head Teacher giving them a fixed term exclusion (generally between two and ten days) or if a particular serious incident a permanent exclusion. In addition, a youth who is given repeated fixed term exclusions can eventually be permanently excluded.

FIXED TERM EXCLUSIONS:

Typical reasons for a fixed term exclusion would be abusive language to a member of staff or assaulting / bullying a fellow pupil. Where a pupil is fixed term excluded on a second occasion for anti social behaviour the BAT team carries out a joint home visit.

The visit is carried out on an evening time as this gives a truer picture of family life. The Education Welfare Officer and one of the police officers in full uniform carry out the visit and speak with the child and their parent.

A letter is delivered from the BAT team leader (with joint Council and Police logos) warning them that their child is now being repeatedly excluded from school and that further occurrences may result in anti social behaviour proceedings being commenced.

Although the primary reason for the visit is to deliver the warning, there are often other issues that arise. The child may live in squalor or with a drug/alcohol dependant parent; there may be mental health issues for child or parent;

there may be a young single mother struggling to cope with several children; it may be the child is a 'carer' for a disabled relative. These factors are taken into account and acted upon. The team will carry out further consultation with agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or 'Connexions' to get the necessary support to the family.

Alternatively, if there is no reason for the youth's poor behaviour then the delivery of the letter is recorded and subsequent action via an 'Acceptable Behaviour Agreement' or ASBO is taken if there is no improvement.

The scheme of home visits and linked feedback to school has been a tremendous success. The team carried out 90 home visits in the 2004/05 year. These are young people at real risk of becoming permanently excluded. By the very nature of their behaviour they are difficult to manage and hard to reach. As they are repeatedly excluded they account for a significant proportion of the fixed term exclusions in the Borough.

Of the 90 visits, 67 pupils were not further excluded in the following six months. **This gives the scheme a 75% success rate.** Of those who did re offend, 8 'Acceptable Behaviour Agreements' were signed and one ASBO granted by the courts.

These home visits are now integrated into a 'problem solving group' formed with the local joint police / Council anti social behaviour team and other interested parties such as housing associations and primary health care trusts. Information is exchanged and a coordinated response applied.

For the majority of young people involved who stayed out of trouble the team organise events to reward their improved behaviour. Police officers and the team's youth worker organised mountain bike trips, activity weekends and trips to Premier League football matches to demonstrate there is something positive to gain from positive behaviour.

To reduce the fixed term exclusions still further, the BAT team delivers 'Discipline Clinics' in school. This is for the more minor behaviour that would lead to a fixed term exclusion. The team warns the young person in school in the presence of a senior member of staff. Parents are aware that their child will be spoken to by police, but as it is not a police 'interview' in most cases they are not present. (Though they are generally grateful as their child has been spared a fixed term exclusion). This scheme gives the Head Teacher an alternative course of action. The team leader acts as a 'gatekeeper' to ensure discipline clinics are only carried out for appropriate offences. The team is not there to replace school discipline policies and the BAT team still maintains the 'rarity value' of involving the police.

PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS:

As already stated, one reason for a permanent exclusion is a build up of fixed term exclusions. However the main reason is as a response to a specific serious incident. Examples would be assaulting a member of staff, carrying knives, bringing drugs into school or serious assaults or damage. In such instances there is pressure on a Head Teacher to do something positive. This pressure can come from parents, governors or teaching unions. In addition to any action by the school there may or may not have been a separate report to the police. Previously there was no liaison between school and police.

The BAT team introduced a protocol to work with the 11 secondary school Head Teachers. When there is a serious incident the Head informs the team and only temporarily excludes the youth while police enquiries are made. The youth appears with a parent at the police station and is either arrested and interviewed, or interviewed under caution as a voluntary attender. After the interview the youth is given a formal reprimand by the Custody Sergeant or (if it is a second offence) placed on the final warning scheme.

The 'Final warning' means the young person re attending the police station at a later date. They appear with around 10 – 15 other young offenders and are seen by an officer of Inspector rank. They are then given a presentation by the Prison Service on what life is like in HM Prisons and how that is the life to which they are heading if they do not change their behaviour. After the youth's release from the police station they are assigned a key worker from the Youth Offender Service (YOS). The role of the YOS worker is to support the child and family and steer them from crime.

The BAT team then fully updates the school with the result of their enquiries. In the majority of cases, the young person is spared a permanent exclusion as the Head Teacher has been seen by interested parties to have done

something positive. If the Head feels able to risk manage the child with BAT team support, the child keeps their place in mainstream schooling. An officer from the team will attend the offender's re admission interview to remind the young person of their responsibilities and to advise that they will continue to be monitored. If the victim of the initial crime was a fellow pupil the team also work closely with that young person to give confidence there will be no repeat or incidences of bullying. This sort of cooperation could not take place without a dedicated multi disciplinary team.

In the first 12 months, the BAT team dealt with 84 offences in this way:

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF OFFENDERS.
Assaults on pupils	44
Theft (of school or staff property)	11
Criminal Damage	8
Criminal Harassment (severe cases of bullying)	5
Carrying Offensive Weapons (e.g. knives)	5
Possession or supply of Controlled Drugs	4
Assaults on staff	3
Threatening behaviour	4
TOTAL	84

Further prevention work has been carried out by introducing a major citizenship drive into all the secondary schools in the Borough. Young people need to know they have responsibilities but rather than simply lecturing them on this, the team introduced interactive classes to all new secondary pupils (Year 7 - 11/12 year olds). This was an extension of the work started on the Neighbourhood Task Group two years earlier.

There is a big change from primary to secondary education. The new secondary pupils were seen by the team in class size groups. This is much more beneficial than larger audiences (e.g. assemblies) as there is encouragement for the young people to take part. Emotive issues are discussed; personal responsibility, peer pressure, policing a parliamentary democracy, expectation and accountability. The classes generate frank discussions on juvenile crime, anti social behaviour, the feelings of victims and the consequences of engaging in poor behaviour. They are well received by staff and students alike. The citizenship programme is an excellent way of introducing the role and powers of the BAT team to a wider section of the school population. The team is on course to have delivered classes to all Year 7s in the Borough by July 2006. (Over 2000 young people).

Assessment:

The BAT team's structure is unique in the United Kingdom. In the field of school exclusions it has reversed the national trend. It gives Head Teachers a real effective remedy to deal with poor behaviour (support with 'teeth'). The team is able to assist schools to manage poor behaviour in school rather than having to resort to excluding them to wander the streets at risk of becoming involved in crime and disorder.

With a series of joint home visits the most disruptive of pupils are dealt with so effectively that **three quarters of them do not come to further notice.**

With 'Discipline Clinics', offenders are verbally warned before the Head Teacher has to resort to a fixed term exclusion in the first place.

With serious incidents, then firm action is taken followed by support and reintegration. Some may allege that we run the risk of 'criminalising' children. Three points would refute this:

1/. Before the launch of the team, the school / parent of a victim could have telephoned the local police anyway (but without the benefit of a multi agency problem solving approach).

2/. The fact that of **84 people dealt with at the police station by way of arrest and interview only 6 were put before the Youth Court.** These six are the only ones who would receive a conviction and criminal record. All others

were processed either by reprimand, final warning or no further action. It should also be noted that all six placed before the Youth Court had already been dealt with by the local police for other offences prior to the involvement of the BAT team. **Of the 78 young people who were not charged to court only 5 have come to any further police notice to date and none of these were for incidents within school. Our ethos is to steer young people away from the criminal justice system.**

3/. (Perhaps the most important point) When faced with a trip to the police station, interviewed, asked to account for their actions, required to think about the feelings of their victim and subsequently receiving a stern warning, is this not a preferred option than permanently excluding a young person with all the associated risks of crime and anti social behaviour that the statistics demonstrate become not only a possibility but a probability? The most vulnerable youngsters from the most chaotic backgrounds are often the most likely to face permanent exclusion. By the very nature of their family make up or deprived home circumstances these are the group of people that need the stability that mainstream school can provide; the only place they can learn, develop, be safe, have positive relationships and role models. They need balance and order more than the rest of us. (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs 1954).

Shaun Bailey is a Youth Worker from London. His paper "No Man's Land: how Britain's Inner City youth are being failed" (Centre for Policy Studies – published Sunday Times 27.11.05) makes several important points. Shaun describes his experiences as an Afro Caribbean youth growing up in the inner city. His four main points fit very well with the raison d'être of the BAT team:

- (a) Establish boundaries early.
- (b) Keep them busy.
- (c) Be straight, be firm.
- (d) Don't wait for the problem to come to you: go and tackle it before it's too late.

The thrust of Bailey's article is that young people must be given boundaries. Any amount of support and help is of no use without first stating what the parameters are. Young people must know that there will be a consequence for poor behaviour.

These figures show how effective the BAT team has been:

Fixed term exclusions reduced from 1032 to 890 **down 14% in the first year** and half way through the second year stand at 356 - **projected to fall 31% below** that initial figure.

Permanent Exclusions reduced from 31 to 24 **down 23% in the first year** and half way through the second year stand at 9, **projected to fall to 45% below** in the initial figure. *This second year figure for permanent exclusions would have been even more impressive. Unfortunately one of the 11 secondary schools has not adopted the protocol. There were nine permanent exclusions from September 2005 - February 2006. Three of this nine came from that one school. As the BAT team was not consulted we were not able to assist. If the team's resources and methods had been utilised then the figure could have reduced further by up to a third.

In particular, the 3 BIP schools target of reducing the 12 permanent exclusions by 50% over 2 years has not only been met but exceeded. In the first year they fell from 12 to 7 (**a reduction of 42%**). Half way through the second school year this figure stands at a total of 3. This may mean a **reduction of up to 75% in BIP school permanent exclusions** (far in excess of the target set).

The BAT team uses a variety of innovative methods: home visits, arrest and interview, discipline clinics, reward schemes, citizenship programmes.

Across an entire police Basic Command Unit only three police officers (one Sergeant and two Constables) together with an Education Welfare Officer and Youth Worker are able to free up traditional resources and provide a coordinated response to a key area of crime and anti social behaviour.

The feedback from schools and parents is excellent, demonstrating real achievement in a citizen focused approach.

Many secondary schools in the Borough have dedicated Pupil Referral Units. These classes on the main school site are specialist centres aimed at providing quality education for hard to reach young people.

This is a real partnership with police officers supporting the excellent work of the Pupil Referral Units within schools

to manage the behaviour of young people **in school**. Once excluded, the teenager may not be a school's problem but they remain a policing problem. The staff of the PRUs appreciate the direct logistical support the BAT team provides.

The team is now fully integrated with all other behaviour support available from the Local Authority such as Educational Psychologists and Education Welfare. Partnership, multi agency working has been the key to success. The team works not only with schools but with Connexions, Youth Services, Housing Associations and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

This submission is that the BAT team provides sustainable long term solutions to a core policing problem – juvenile offending. The team in is receipt of many letters of praise from Head Teachers of secondary schools who fully appreciate the impact that has been made not only in their school but within the community as a whole.