



OUR LADY & ST. BEDE

CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Teaching Assistant Policy

Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy
A member of the Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust

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Rationale

This policy provides information about the teaching assistants (TAs) at Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy. It outlines how we deploy and use TAs as well as how they are managed to achieve maximum impact on outcomes for pupils in terms of their academic and holistic performance, which includes their physical and mental well-being.

1. The role of teaching assistants

1.1 All teaching assistants have clear job descriptions that lay out their responsibilities. They make a major contribution to the work of our school through their support for pupils as individuals, as groups and as classes. Teaching assistants will also support the pupil's social and emotional development as well as promote appropriate standards of behaviour.

1.2 The role of a teaching assistant in the classroom is to provide support for the teacher and the pupils in a variety of different ways, including taking a proactive role, sometimes upfront alongside the teacher and sometimes in more subtle ways. Teaching assistants will work with different pupils within the classroom, in all curriculum areas, supporting them during whole-class teaching and group work. They may also sometimes work on a one to one basis with identified SEN pupils to address their individual learning plan* and provision map targets.

1.3 Teaching assistants will also run intervention programmes with groups of pupil's where appropriate. However, the main focus in our school is on Quality First Teaching; differentiation and support for pupils within the class.

1.4 The teaching assistants are jointly responsible with the teacher for the individual learning plans* of children at school. The SENCo will write targets but the teaching assistants will often carry out the tasks and make notes on progress. The targets are then reviewed by the teacher in consultation with the teaching assistant. The SENCo supports teaching assistants with activities to meet the targets. The teacher manages the teaching assistant attached to their class or named pupils daily. Each class teacher is responsible for overseeing and supporting the work that the teaching assistants carry out in class and will be in the best position to give feedback on tasks.

1.5 There are 4 key areas in our teaching assistants role:
Support for pupils e.g.

*one page 'profiles, strategy sheets and provision plans

- Teaching individuals, small groups and whole class (see deployment strategies)
- Attending to their personal needs
- Providing emotional support
- Helping them use any equipment, including ICT (e.g. use of iPads/IWBs for phonics games)
- Establishing good relationships with them
- Responding to their learning needs
- Encouraging independence
- Challenging and extending thinking
- Promoting their self-esteem
- Promoting inclusion
- Encourage/model learning attributes e.g. recall; literacy skills
- Enabling individuals or groups of pupils to participate in learning tasks set by the teacher
- Enabling pupils to work towards individual targets and learning plans
- Liaison with parents

Support for teachers e.g.

- Teaching individuals, groups and whole class
- Conducting assessments e.g. reading and spelling ages
- Performing administrative and clerical tasks not requiring a teacher's professional expertise, including photocopying
- Escorting groups of pupils to different work areas
- Preparing learning resources
- Attending to ICT equipment
- Maintaining appropriate intervention records including baseline and achievement data and providing feedback
- Liaison with parents – home-school links

Support for the curriculum e.g.

- Helping pupils understand instructions, through repetition, rephrasing and modelling
- Undertaking small-group support work as directed by the teacher
- Providing support through intervention programmes
- Showing pupils how to use ICT to develop their learning
- Selecting, preparing and maintaining learning equipment and resources

Support for the school e.g.

- Implementing and following whole school policies, e.g. safeguarding pupil's, health and safety, presentation, marking and feedback
- Promoting positive behaviour in line with the school policy
- Participating in training, to keep up to date with current school issues
- Contributing to information gathering on pupils' progress, e.g. by liaising with the class teacher, providing notes on pupils when required, feeding back on observations, commenting on pupil's targets.
- Contributing to meetings about pupils, e.g. attending annual review meetings, pupil progress meetings
- Assisting with the supervision of pupils outside lesson times, i.e. duty points around the school;
- Contributing ideas for the development of the school, e.g. through attendance at SEN department meetings; whole school meetings etc
- Participating in school trips (including residential)
- HLTAs may be asked to teach classes

2. Promoting Inclusion and independence

2.1 We aim to promote the full inclusion and independence of all SEN pupils as far as is possible. Where a teaching assistant has been allocated to a 'named pupil' on an EHC plan the teaching assistant will take an integral role within the classroom as a whole and 1:1 support will be only as required to meet the stated objectives/outcomes for the pupil. Support will be directed and planned for by the class teacher. Other pupils may also be supported by the 'named pupil' teaching assistant if the teaching and learning also match their need and this will also be directed and planned for by the class teacher.

2.2 Teaching assistants support the teacher on a general basis within the classroom and this support is varied each day but can also include creating classroom displays, preparing resources, photocopying and mounting work. In addition, Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) would at times support by planning for interventions and teach whole class groups.

2.3 Teaching assistants are also expected to be fully involved in the life of the school and attend meetings, go on trips, carry out before school/break/lunch duties etc.

2.4 We believe firmly that teaching assistants play a vital role in the education and the wellbeing of the pupils at our school, with some of our teaching assistants being trained mental health first aiders.

3. Teaching Assistant deployment

3.1 Throughout the year the deployment of teaching assistants will be reviewed to ensure that the team are deployed effectively, which will also enable the school to respond to the changing needs of the pupils and school. We believe that teaching assistants usually work more effectively when they are attached to one class. We follow this principle wherever possible as it allows for better relationships to be built up between the teaching assistants, teacher and pupils. This structure also enables teaching assistants to manage their timetables better as they only have to consider their class which results in communication becoming more effective.

3.2 *Our Lady and St Bede recognise the following strategies as examples of good practice for TA deployment:*

- Observations of pupils (sometimes leading to the identification of further need). Writing comments on 'post-its' for learning journals etc.
- Providing verbal feedback for pupils who need to re-learn concepts.
- Provide written feedback, including next steps, when working with small groups or individuals
- Support pupil's in implementing their next steps in their learning
- Link learning in interventions to class learning, including encouraging retrieval practice.
- Proactively supporting pupils in 'whole class' teacher input sessions e.g. enabling pupils to manage distractions and focus on learning.
- Identify pupils who have understood the task and encourage them to 'teach' pupil who are lacking in their understanding.
- Implement specific behaviour management strategies devised for individuals/groups/class.
- Provide links to learning in other contexts e.g., Speech and Language, Future Steps; HI/VI teams
- As respond to the wide variety of needs of pupils using strategies recommended in ILPs e.g., visual support, prompts for physical support, use of timers, laptops etc.

4. Professional development

4.1 Teaching Assistants are a highly valued resource and an integral part of the teaching team and as a school, we are firmly committed to developing a CPD programme to enable them to carry out their responsibilities well. We have developed a clear departmental structure to develop communication and ensure that our teaching assistants have a high status in the school to enable them to make a valued contribution in raising standards.

4.2 This includes:

- *School-based CPD*
This takes place in school and is usually carried out by visiting professionals or led by members of staff. The training is targeted on areas of need by the school and teaching assistants can also request sessions.
- *Local Authority CPD*
The LA run a comprehensive range of courses across the academic year that teaching assistants have the opportunity to sign up for on a range of subjects. Courses are advertised via LA SEN email / HUBS.
- *Additional CPD*
Training provided by a different provider, which includes QA online courses across a range of SEN topics and long term training such as TA level 2 and HTLA courses

5. Performance Management of Teaching Assistants

5.1 There is a designated Assistant Headteacher linked to the SEN department who is the line manager for the teaching assistants. The Leadership link will deal with daily issues as well as concerns. Teaching assistants must bring their concerns and possible solutions to a daily debrief.

5.2 There is a weekly SEN department meeting run by the designated Assistant Headteacher where teaching assistants are kept up to date with whole school developments and discussions are held on a variety of issues. Training can also be delivered through these meetings.

5.3 Teaching assistants will follow the whole school performance management cycle, as this encourages professional dialogue allowing the teaching assistant to discuss their needs and future development.

5.4 Each teaching assistant will complete a self-review which will be discussed at the performance management review meetings held in line with the whole school cycle.

5.5 From these meetings, targets will be set to allow teaching assistants to work towards developmental goals. The teaching assistants are supported in meeting these goals within the constraints of the budget.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation (QA)

The progress that SEN, disadvantaged, and other key pupils are making is tracked through the whole school QA cycle through data drops, book scrutinise and classroom observations across the academic year. This provides information on how both the class teacher and teaching assistant are impacting pupil progress. Therefore, when teaching staff are observed then the role of the TA in the lesson will also be observed. This will also link into the individual teaching assistants performance management.