

St Mary's Catholic High School, Leyland

Effective Deployment of Teaching Assistants



Created: June 2016

To be reviewed: Summer 2018



This policy was written following discussion and consultation with the SENCO, members of the Learning Support department, Teaching Assistants, Curriculum Leaders and Teachers.

Aims

The aim of the policy is:

- **To ensure that as a school we prepare and deploy teaching assistants as effectively as possible as we believe that this has significant benefits for the progress of all pupils.**
- To improve the quality of our teaching assistants' interactions with pupils.
- To improve communication and liaison between teachers and teaching assistants.
- To improve teaching assistants' value and confidence by giving them a more clearly defined role.
- To ensure that teachers are more aware of their responsibilities towards pupils of all abilities including lower attaining pupils and those with SEND, and to ensure that pupils with the most complex needs have sustained interactions with the most highly qualified and experienced teachers.
- To ensure that teaching assistants make an effective contribution to teaching and learning to the benefit of learners.
- To enable teaching assistants to contribute to the progress and achievement of learners by helping to raise standards.

Principles

"Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist

staff.”¹

1. The role of the teaching assistant is a very valuable one to the pupils. Our staff need to be valued, supported and challenged to use, develop and extend their skills and knowledge for the benefit of all the pupils.
2. St Mary’s needs to work as a team for the pupils to get the greatest benefit. All staff have different but complimentary roles to play in that team and need to do so effectively.
3. It is important that the pupils and parents develop the same level of respect for all classroom staff.
4. The professional development of teaching assistants, and all staff, is vital for the pupils and for the staff themselves.

Guideline 1 Preparedness:

Teachers and teaching assistants must ensure that:

- They plan together where appropriate. This will include discussion about learning outcomes, intervention or strategy to be used and resources that are relevant to the learning.
- Communication takes place prior to and after lessons and there is regular discussion between the teacher and teaching assistant, especially feedback in regard to pupils' learning and from observations and assessments they may have carried out. We recommend use the ‘5 Minute TA plan’, although this is not compulsory. *(This and other resources can be found in the EDTA folder in Group Work Staff Area)*
- There is an understanding of the purpose and aims of the lesson and how it fits into the curriculum
- There is an understanding of the needs of the pupils, other relevant information and their learning targets
- There are agreed ground rules about who can do what and when, within a lesson

The teacher needs to make sure that:

- They remain in overall control and accountable for pupils’ progress, welfare and learning
- All pupils know why teaching assistants are working in their class
- All pupils know the teaching assistant’s name and their role
- Relevant information about individual pupils is made available to the teaching assistant

Everyone needs to be clear about whether the teaching assistant can:

- Give permission for pupils to leave the room
- Have a role in behaviour management and use the school’s reward and sanction system
- Have a role when the teacher is teaching the whole class, mark work, carry out assessments and record pupils’ learning

¹ Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

Guideline 2 Deployment:

- All teaching assistants will have job descriptions that will set out in detail their responsibilities.
- There will be a clear structure of line management for the deployment, supervision, monitoring, evaluation and review of the work of teaching assistants.
- The expertise, skills and knowledge of teaching assistants will be used flexibly to foster the learning of pupils, and the school will where possible utilise the specialist skills of teaching assistants.
- Each department will have a link TA. Departments will actively support subject specific training for their TA. Teaching assistants are expected to attend Curriculum Team meetings and whole school INSET.
- Teaching assistants will be included in the wider life of the school, including extra-curricular, social and educational events.
- SLT and Curriculum Leaders will always make clear the value placed on the role of teaching assistants and expectations of all staff about this.
- There will be opportunities within school for Teaching Assistants to share their knowledge and skills with each other and other staff.

Guideline 3 Practice:

- Teaching Assistants will work in a number of ways that suit the needs of the pupils and their skills and knowledge. The role of the level 3 teaching assistant has additional responsibilities in school compared to the role of the level 2 teaching assistant. This might include taking small groups of pupils of **all abilities** and creating resources under the direction of the subject teacher who remains responsible and accountable for the progress and development of their pupils at all times. Please see your TA's Job Description which can be found in Group Work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants should work in partnership to build a pupil's independence, not encourage dependence
- Teachers and teaching assistants should work in partnership to increase the opportunities to build a pupil's self-confidence by enabling them to succeed and give feedback and praise
- Within the rules of confidentiality Teaching Assistants will have access to all relevant information about pupils to ensure they can carry out their tasks effectively.
- Teaching assistants will have the opportunity to review their performance and promote their professional development.
- Like all staff, it is expected that teaching assistants will behave professionally at all times, will have high aspirations for all pupils and will respect confidentiality where appropriate.

Conclusion:

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. This policy seeks to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning for all learners will benefit from the enhanced roles of teaching assistants. It will ensure that teachers and teaching assistants work in partnership to make a strong contribution to promoting high standards and exceptional progress.

You can find out more information at:

<http://blog.optimus-education.com/top-tips-achieving-effective-deployment-teaching-assistants>

and

<http://maximisingtas.co.uk/research/research-blogs-articles.php>

Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants – Recommendations Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN EVERYDAY CLASSROOM CONTEXTS				RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN DELIVERING STRUCTURED INTERVENTIONS OUT OF CLASS		RECOMMENDATIONS ON LINKING LEARNING FROM WORK LED BY TEACHERS AND TAs
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
<p>TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low-attaining pupils</p> <p>The evidence on TA deployment suggests schools have drifted into a situation in which TAs are often used as an informal instructional resource for pupils in most need. Although this has happened with the best of intentions, this evidence suggests that the status quo is no longer an option. School leaders should systematically review the roles of both teachers and TAs and take a wider view of how TAs can support learning and improve attainment throughout the school.</p>	<p>Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them</p> <p>If TAs have a direct instructional role it is important they supplement, rather than replace, the teacher – the expectation should be that the needs of all pupils are addressed, first and foremost, through high quality classroom teaching.</p> <p>Schools should try and organise staff so that the pupils who struggle most, have as much time with the teacher as others. Breaking away from a model of deployment where TAs are assigned to specific pupils for long periods requires more strategic approaches to classroom organisation.</p> <p>Where TAs are working individually with low-attaining pupils the focus should be on retaining access to high-quality teaching, for example by delivering brief, but intensive, structured interventions.</p>	<p>Use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning</p> <p>New research has shown that improving the nature and quality of TAs' talk to pupils can support the development of independent learning skills, which are associated with improved learning outcomes. TAs should, for example, be trained to avoid prioritising task completion and instead concentrate on helping pupils develop ownership of tasks.</p>	<p>Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom</p> <p>Schools should provide sufficient time for TA training and for teachers and TAs to meet out of class to enable the necessary lesson preparation and feedback.</p> <p>Creative ways of ensuring teachers and TAs have time to meet include adjusting TAs' working hours (start early, finish early), using assembly time and having TAs joint teachers for (part of) Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time.</p> <p>During lesson preparation time ensure TAs have the essential 'need to know's':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concepts, facts, information being taught • Skills to be learned, applied, practised or extended • Intended learning outcomes • Expected/required feedback. 	<p>Use TAs to deliver high-quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions</p> <p>Research on TAs delivering targeted interventions in one-to-one or small group settings shows a consistent impact on attainment of approximately three to four additional months' progress (effect size 0.2-0.3). Crucially, these positive effects are only observed when TAs work in structured settings with high-quality support and training. When TAs are deployed in more informal, unsupported instructional roles, they can impact negatively on pupils' learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction</p> <p>Schools should use structured interventions with reliable evidence of effectiveness. There are presently only a handful of programmes in the UK for which there is a secure evidence base, so if schools are using programmes that are 'unproven', they should try and replicate some common elements of effective interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sessions are often brief (20-50mins), occur regularly (3-5 times per week) and are maintained over a sustained period (8-20 weeks). Careful timetabling is in place to enable this consistent delivery. • TAs receive extensive training from experienced trainers and/or teachers (5-30 hours per intervention) • The intervention has structured supporting resources and lesson plans, with clear objectives • TAs closely follow the plan and structure of the intervention • Assessments are used to identify appropriate pupils, guide areas for focus and track pupil progress. Effective interventions ensure the right support is being provided to the right child • Connections are made between the out-of-class learning in the intervention and classroom teaching (see Recommendation 7). 	<p>Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions</p> <p>Interventions are often quite separate from classroom activities. Lack of time for teachers and TAs to liaise allows relatively little connection between what pupils experience in, and away from, the classroom. The key is to ensure that learning in interventions is consistent with, and extends, work inside the classroom and that pupils understand the links between them. It should not be assumed that pupils can consistently identify and make sense of these links on their own.</p>