

Support for learning and teaching: Working with Support Staff



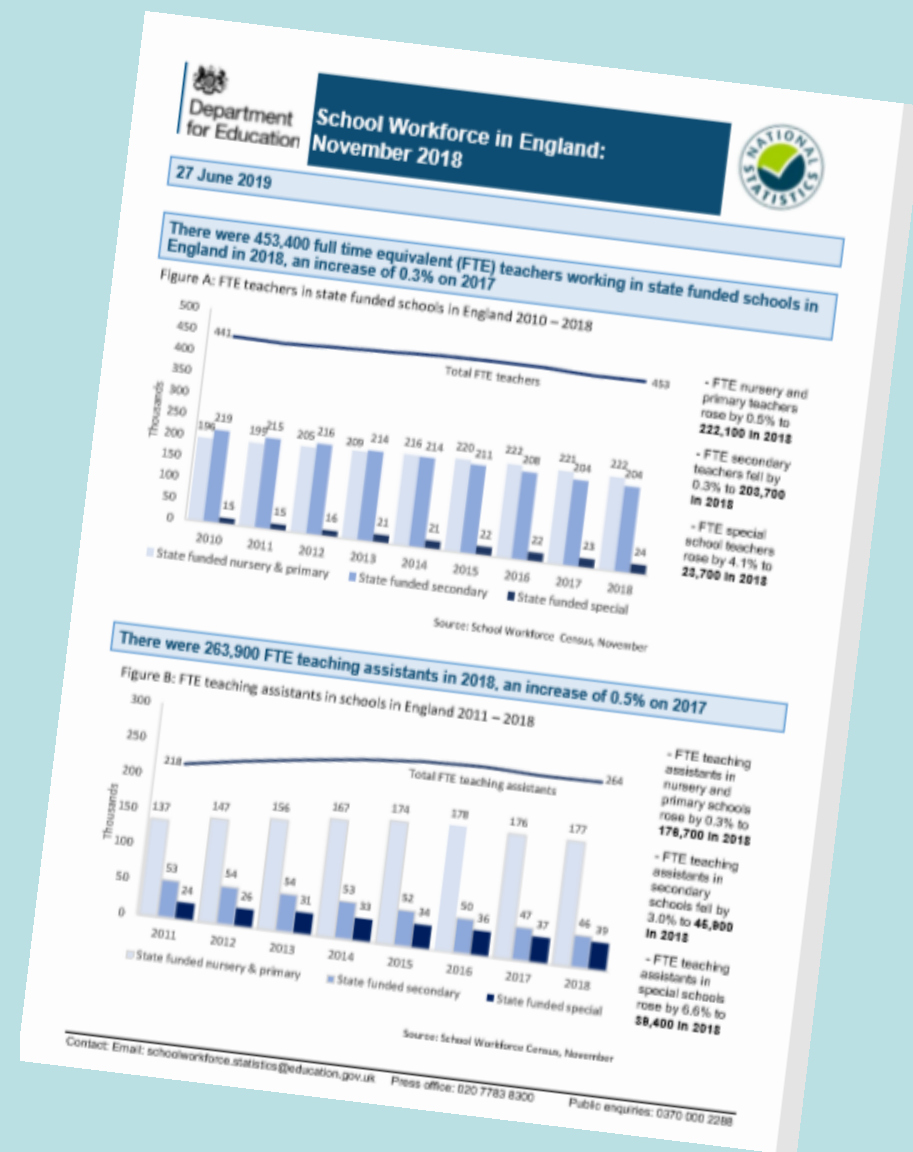
- to understand how to make the most of the teaching assistant in developing learning
- to understand the importance of working in partnership with your teaching assistant
- to consider ways to effectively deploy support staff in your classroom

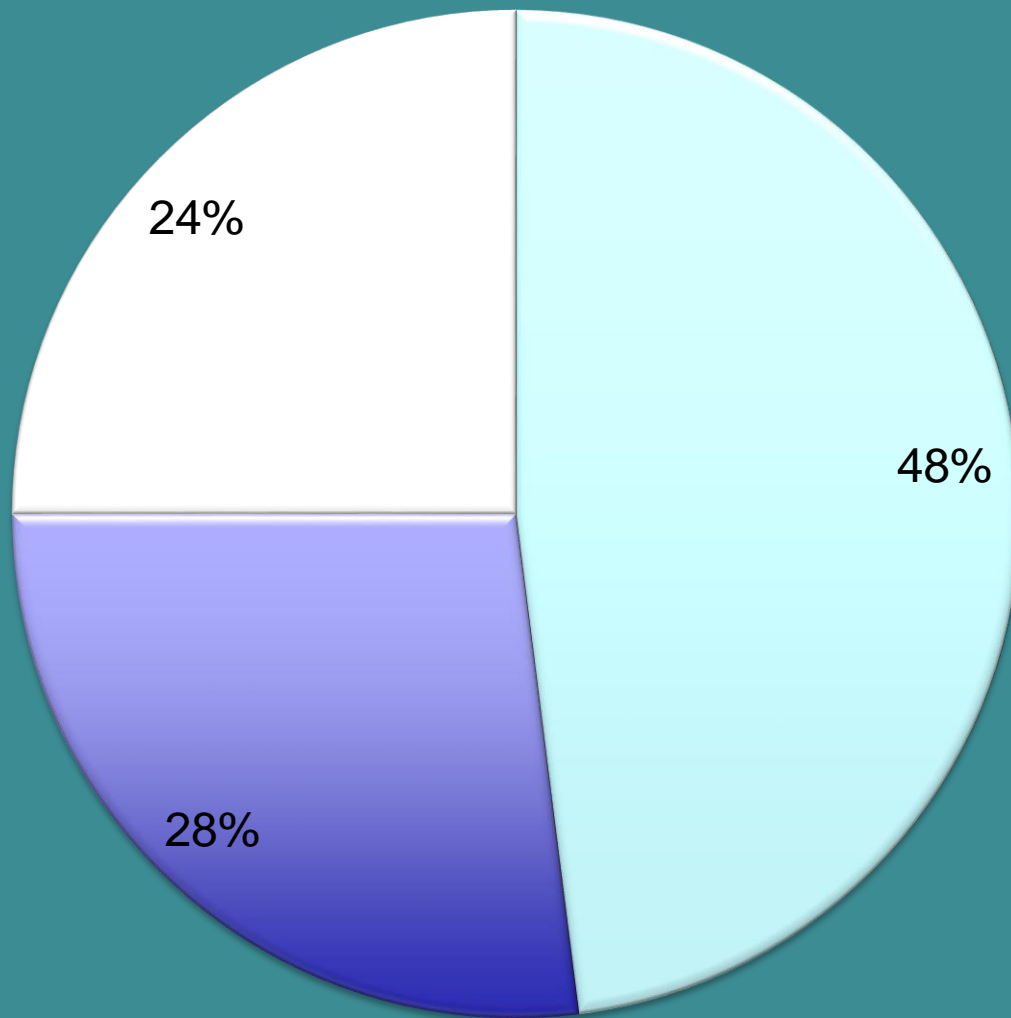
The perfect Teaching Assistant (TA)

What do you think?

In November 2018, there were the full-time equivalent of 947,300 people working in state-funded schools in England. Of these 453,400 were class teachers and 163,900 were teaching assistants.

•https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811622/SWFC_MainText.pdf





- teachers
- teaching assistants
- non- classroom based support staff

What do Teaching Assistants do?

- Think about all the activities that TAs might do in a week. Write one activity on a post it note.



Most impact on children's learning

Now rank each activity:

Least impact on children's learning

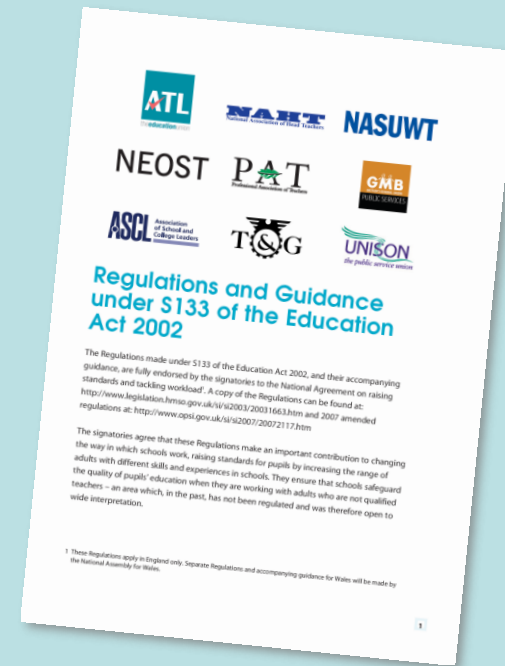


- Teaching Assistants first appeared in schools in 1960s. They were often called 'aides' or 'auxiliaries'
- January 2003: National Workforce Agreement. The idea of this agreement was to tackle workloads and raise standards. Along with this the role of the Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) was introduced.
- By 2005 all teachers were given 10% non-contact time (Planning, Preparation and Assessment)

Time for Standards

2007 Regulations

and Guidance



‘The Regulations clarify the respective roles of qualified teachers and other staff in schools, and specify circumstances under which certain kinds of staff without qualified teacher status (QTS) – usually support staff – may carry out ‘specified work’ related to teaching and learning, including requirements for appropriate supervision of support staff by a qualified teacher.’

Ofsted: Reforming and developing the school workforce

October 2007



Reforming and developing the school workforce

This report evaluates the introduction and implementation of workforce reform within the context of the national agreement and other initiatives related to workforce deployment. The survey that formed the basis for this report found that the reforms have resulted in a revolutionary shift in the culture of the school workforce. Teachers' time and work are now focused more directly on teaching and learning and the substantial expansion of the wider workforce at all levels is allowing the schools to extend the curriculum, provide more care, guidance and support for pupils, and use data more effectively to monitor pupils' progress.

Age group: 3–19

Published: October 2007

Reference no: 070020

- Pupils benefited from increased support from members of the wider workforce. Deploying adults with different skills allowed the schools to improve care and guidance for vulnerable pupils and those at risk of exclusion.

Ofsted (2007) *Reforming and developing the school workforce*. London: Ofsted 6

- The full potential of the wider workforce to raise achievement and standards was realised when schools did not match skills and expertise sufficiently closely to school needs, and when insufficient attention was given to the performance management and career development of the workforce.

Ofsted (2007) *Reforming and developing the school workforce.*

London: Ofsted 6

- Performance management of members of the wider workforce was not consistent. When they reported to more than one person, it was not always clear who would conduct their annual performance review or what evidence would be used for assessment.

Ofsted (2007) *Reforming and developing the school workforce.*

London: Ofsted 6

Raising Standards and Tackling Workload Implementing the National Agreement

July 2008



The Appropriate Deployment of Support Staff in Schools

Introduction

This note responds to concerns of the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group¹ (WAMG) relating to the way school support staff are being deployed in a number of schools. WAMG has reviewed the evidence concerning, in particular:

- inappropriate contractual arrangements for support staff;
- insufficient opportunities being given to those support staff who have particular skills (such as higher level teaching assistants) to use those skills on a continuing basis;
- the confusion between cover for unforeseen teacher absence and normal timetabled arrangements for taking a class while the class teacher is taking their planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time or other regular non-contact time;
- support staff without appropriate training and skills being required to supervise pupils and/or deliver specified work; and
- some members of support staff being expected to undertake 'unpaid overtime'.

WAMG fully endorses the new opportunities for the development and progression of support staff created by workforce reform in schools and the positive impact of these changes on pupil outcomes. However, it is incumbent on all schools to ensure that these roles and responsibilities reflect the skills, training, expertise and experience of members of staff and that such attributes are reflected in appropriate pay and rewards and fair conditions of employment.

The deployment of school support staff will have significant implications for schools as they prepare to move to a situation where teachers 'rarely cover'. In particular, schools must be aware that this will not automatically mean that cover can be passed on to support staff to fill any gaps. In developing a strategy for 'rarely covering', schools should take account of this advice and previous advice issued regarding the deployment of support staff and strategies for dealing with PPA and cover².

Contractual arrangements for classroom-based support staff

The latest research into the deployment of classroom-based support staff in school notes that the practice of split contracts for support staff remains widespread.

A split contract for a teaching or learning support assistant, including those who meet the higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) standards, means they only receive enhanced pay for those hours when they are specifically deployed in an HLTA capacity, for example, when taking a whole class to provide PPA time for a teacher, which is only one aspect of the HLTA role. A recent study by UNISON³ reports that up to 50 per cent of schools in their sample were issuing split contracts to support staff.

HLTAs can take on higher level tasks and responsibilities that reflect their level of expertise – this includes working with individual pupils, small groups and whole classes.

However, many schools only seem to see the role of HLTAs in connection with a teacher's PPA time, when an HLTA may take responsibility for a whole class in the planned absence of a teacher. This narrow view of the HLTA role has a number of potential drawbacks, because the skills demonstrated by HLTAs against the national standards are not being fully utilised. These drawbacks include:

- teaching assistants (TAs) or other members of support staff with HLTA status find that there is no role for them when schools use other strategies for managing teachers' PPA time. This can mean that the HLTAs' level of skills and experience are not being fully deployed to raise standards;
- HLTAs find themselves taking whole classes all or most of the time because they are exclusively deployed during the PPA time of different teachers. This means that schools are unable to also deploy HLTAs in other roles that, together, make better use of HLTAs' range of



Implementing the National Agreement: July 2008

¹ The Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group is composed of representatives from ASCL, ATL, DCSF, GMB, NAHT, NASUWT, NEOST, UNISON, UNITE, Voice and the Welsh Assembly Government, who are all signatories to the Agreement.

² See WAMG Cover and PPA resource packs at www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling/nationalagreement/cover/coverresourcepack.aspx and www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling/nationalagreement/ppa/resourcepack.aspx respectively.

³ School Remodelling – the impact on support staff, Unison, 2007.

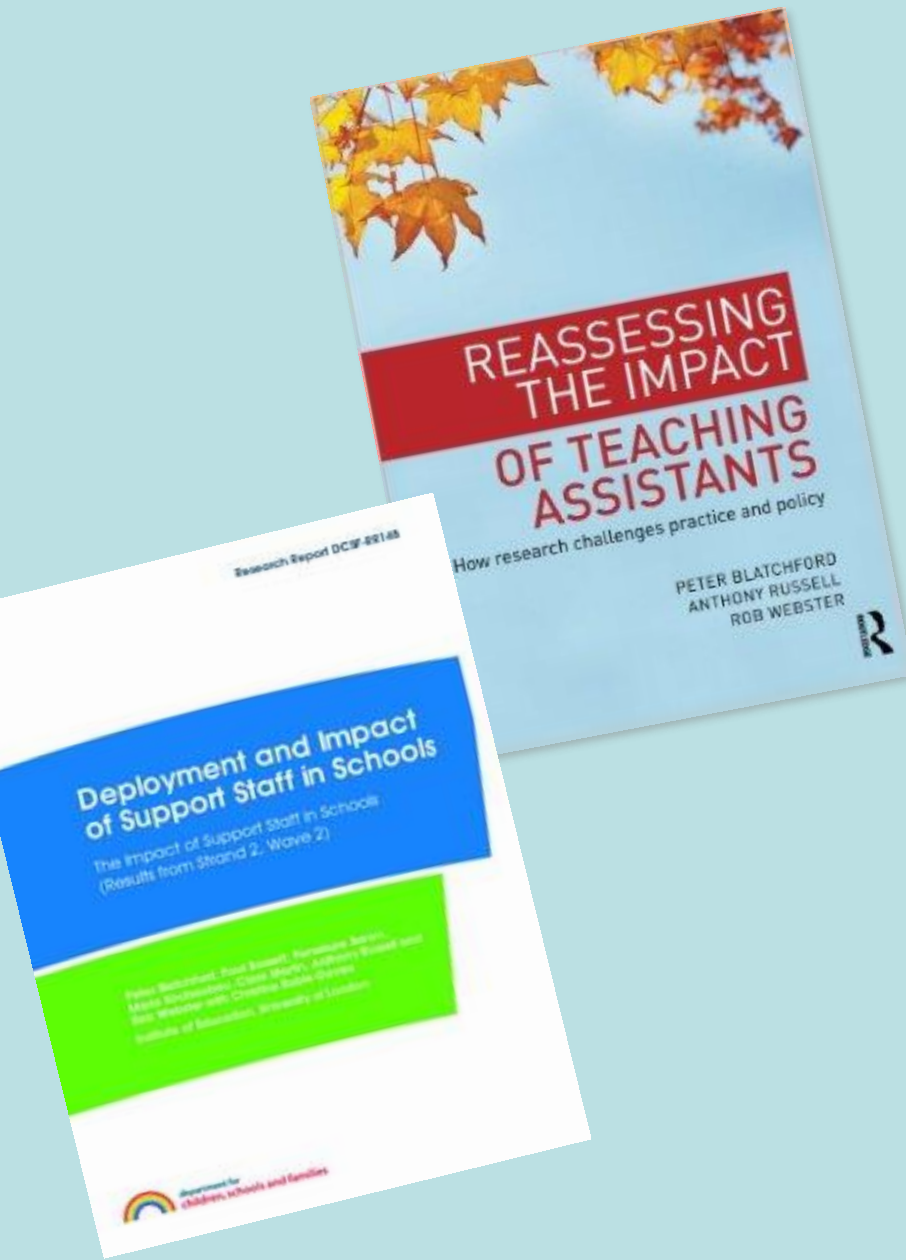
The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff (DISS) Project

Longitudinal study carried out between 2003 and 2009.

This report found a negative relationship between TA support and pupil progress.

<http://maximisingtas.co.uk/>

Blatchford, P., Russell, A. and Webster, R. (2012) *Reassessing the impact of teaching assistants: how research challenges practice and policy*. Oxford: Routledge



Filter Toolkit

Toolkit Strand ^

Cost v

Evidence Strength v Months Impact v

Filter results by keywords



Cost



Evidence



Months Impact

Reset ↺

Social and emotional learning

Moderate impact for moderate cost, based on extensive evidence.



+4

Sports participation

Low impact for moderate cost based on limited evidence.



+2

Summer schools

Low impact for moderate cost based on extensive evidence.



+2

Teaching assistants

Low impact for high cost, based on limited evidence.



+1

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit>

What is your view?



How do you know TA support is effective?

What are your responsibilities?

What are the responsibilities of the TA?

Responsibilities of the TA

- Prepare for the lesson – to understand the learning intention/journey
- Work in partnership with the class teacher
- Assess/keep records of pupil progress
- Feedback to class teacher
- Ensure fidelity to interventions
- Be flexible to pupil need
- Retain confidentiality and professionalism
- Focus on the learning not the task

Responsibilities of the Class Teacher

- Makes time for communication
- Values and safeguards intervention time
- Ensures the TA is clear about the expectations for pupil outcomes (planning/effective AfL)
- Maximises the skills of the TA in pupil progress
- Gives TAs preparation and planning time
- Monitors TA effectiveness
- Recognises/celebrates successes

Rob Webster, Anthony Russell and Peter Blatchford

MAXIMISING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AND TEACHERS

2ND EDITION



Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants Guidance Report

Jonathan Shaples
Rob Webster
Peter Blatchford



RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN EVERYDAY CLASSROOM CONTEXTS

see section five

I

TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low-attaining pupils

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.

II

Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them

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.

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.

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.

III

Use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning

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.

IV

Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom

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.

Creative ways of ensuring teachers and TAs have time to meet include adjusting TA's working hours (start early, finish early), using assembly time and having TAs join teachers for (part of) Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time.

During lesson preparation time ensure TAs have the essential 'need to know's':

- Concepts, facts, information being taught
- Skills to be learned, applied, practised or extended
- Intended learning outcomes
- Expected/required feedback

I – TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low attaining pupils.

II – Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them.

III – Use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning.

IV – Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE
OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN DELIVERING
STRUCTURED INTERVENTIONS OUT OF CLASS

see
section
v to

RECOMMENDATIONS
ON LINKING LEARNING
FROM WORK LED BY
TEACHERS AND TAs

see
section
vii to

V

Use TAs to deliver high-quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions

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.

VI

Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction

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:

- Sessions are often brief (20–50 mins), 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 vii).

VII

Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions

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.

V – Use TAs to deliver high-quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions.

VI- Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction.

VII – Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions.

How do you know TA support is effective?

What are your responsibilities?

What are the responsibilities of the TA?

How do you know TA support is effective?

- The children with whom they are working make good progress as demonstrated by the school's internal tracking systems and external data, for example ASP (Analyse School Performance)
- TAs can demonstrate progress children have made as a result of their support.

What are your responsibilities?

8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

What are your responsibilities?

The Teacher's Standards make it clear that it is every teacher's responsibility to *'adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils'* (TS 5)

This is also emphasised in the new NC documentation (*NC Inclusion statement 2014*)

SEN Code of Practice echoes this point, stating *'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.'* (6.36)

Scenarios


PRO
TEACHERS
VIDEO

Professional Development for Quality Teaching

About Contact

HomeTop seriesSubjectsRolesWhole school

Behaviour Breakdown - Teachers Versus TA



Published : Dec 2010

04 mins

Series

School Dilemmas

Roles

Primary CPD Leader

Secondary CPD Leader

Primary Teacher

Secondary Teacher

Primary Teaching Assistant

Secondary Teaching Assistant

Whole School Issues

Primary CPD in school

Secondary CPD in school

Summary

What should teachers and TAs do if their working relationship breaks down over the management of classroom behaviour? Use this CPD video to discuss what each should do, in this dramatisation of a real life situation.

The dramatisation tells the real story of how a TA is verbally abused by a Year 6 pupil after challenging his disruptive behaviour. The class teacher refuses to accept the TA's account of the event and prevents her reporting the incident.

Should the teacher be more supportive of his TA? Should the TA take up the matter with the head of year? Is it the teacher's role, not the TA's, to enforce good behaviour in the classroom?

The video is designed to be used as a springboard for discussion between staff on how this issue should best be dealt with.

<http://www.proteachersvideo.com/Programme/81651/behaviour-breakdown-teachers-versus-ta>

In the other person's shoes

What is their role?

What are the difficulties they are faced with?

What could you do to help?

What will you do back in the classroom next week?

Blatchford, P., Russell, A. and Webster, R. (2012) *Reassessing the impact of teaching assistants: how research challenges practice and policy*. Oxford: Routledge

DCSF (2007) *Time for Standards* London: DCSF

DCSF (2008) *Implementing the National Agreement* London: DCSF

Education Endowment Fund (2015), *Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants Guidance Report*, London: EEF p4-5

Ofsted (2007) *Reforming and developing the school workforce*. London: Ofsted p6

DfE (2015) SEND Code of Practice: for 0 to 25 years statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. London: Crown Copyright

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811622/SWFC_MainText.pdf [accessed 16.12.19]

<http://maximisingtas.co.uk/> [accessed 16.12.19]

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit>
[accessed 16.12.19]

