



LONDON FIELDS

PRIMARY SCHOOL



Deployment of Teaching Assistants Policy

Introduction

This policy concerns the role, purpose and work of 'teaching assistants' (TAs) - the term used to describe paid staff who are not employed as qualified teachers and who contribute directly and indirectly to pupil attainment and to their general development and well-being.

The policy sets out our vision for the role and purpose of TAs in our school. It sets out the school's expectations in relation to TAs' work and conduct, and also the expectations TAs can have of teachers and the senior leadership team in terms of how TAs will be supported and ensure that they are equipped to make a meaningful contribution to teaching and learning in our school.

This policy has been developed following London Field's involvement in a programme of school improvement focussing on maximising the impact of our TA staff. This policy has been informed by, and carefully designed to reflect, the latest research evidence on the use and impact of TAs. Basing our policy on robust evidence from within the school and wider research of what does and does not work gives us confidence in our decision-making and supports our broader vision for teaching, learning and student development at our school.

Statement of aims

In line with the expectations of the governing body, our pupils and their families, the teachers at London Fields Primary School are responsible for meeting the learning needs and the progress of all the pupils in their class. Our TAs have different, but distinct, complementary roles and responsibilities in relation to helping our pupils become confident, competent, independent and resourceful learners. It is the responsibility of the senior leadership team to ensure that TAs support the work of our teachers and the school more broadly, and maintain the sensible and appropriate demarcation between the role and responsibilities of teachers and of TAs.

Recruitment of TAs

- We require all TAs to have qualifications - GCSE English and Maths A*-C, or equivalent as a minimum.
- TAs are employed on a term-time basis, usually for 27.5 hours week.

Conditions of employment for TAs

- TAs start their working day at 8:30am and finish at 3:50pm. All TAs can claim an hour of overtime each week to attend the maths planning meeting for their year group.

- TAs should be in the classroom each morning by 8:30am, unless they have been designated with specific alternative duties. They should attend the weekly TA meeting.
- TAs have a half an hour lunch break and twenty minutes morning break.
- TAs should consult the 'Staff Handbook' for more details on lateness, absence etc.
- TAs should be aware of the content of school policies, particularly Safeguarding Policy; Health & Safety Policy, Equality Policy; Child Protection Policy; Teaching and Learning policy; Behaviour Policy; Marking Policy; Anti-Bullying, SEN and Inclusion.

Deployment of TAs

The TA role

TAs have a range of duties. This includes:

Support for pupils

- Keeping children's safety and well-being as a priority at all times
- attending to their personal needs
- helping them use any equipment
- establishing good relationships with them
- responding to their learning needs
- encouraging independence
- challenging and extending thinking
- promoting their self-esteem
- promoting inclusion
- 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

Support for teachers

- 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

Support for curriculum

- 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 school (including supporting curriculum co-ordinators).

- implementing and following whole school policies, e.g. safeguarding children, health and safety, presentation, marking and feedback, school uniform
- participating in training, in order 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 IEP 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. in the playground, or in the school grounds generally;
- promoting positive behaviour in line with the school policy
- contributing ideas for the development of the school, e.g. through attendance at staff /TA meetings
- participating in school trips

Main forms of TA deployment

TAs are expected to spend the majority of their time in class:

- Working with pupils in classrooms
- Working with pupils outside of classroom – as required for particular interventions
- Working with individual pupils
- Working with groups
- Working with high, middle and lower-attaining pupils
- Working with pupils with SEN
- Liaising with teachers
- Liaising with others (e.g. parents, work with external professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists).
- Ensuring children with medical conditions are well provided for – including being responsible for equipment such as asthma spacers etc.
- Managing classroom resources such as water bottles
- Where possible TAs will not spend all day allocated to one child but will share with another TA as appropriate

Role demarcation

- Teaching assistants are valued members of the school team but they are not employed as qualified teachers and this should be borne in mind when they are allocated tasks.
- TAs do not mark whole class books
- TAs have allocated classes before and after school and during this time follow the direction of the teacher to prepare resources and contribute towards child observations and planning.
- Class teachers will direct TAs to work with specific children.

- TAs allocated to a particular child are expected to support them – plus the members of their group if appropriate, as directed by the teacher or Senco, for the majority of sessions.

Practice of TAs: interactions with pupils

The quality of TAs' interactions with pupils are the fine point of TA deployment. TAs are employed to complement the work of the teacher and they support learning by:

- Instructional talk, and indirectly via talk that develops pupils' 'soft skills' (e.g. independence, confidence, determination, resilience), they help pupils to 'know what to do when they do not know what to do'.
- TAs should support children in transferring skills and knowledge from small group interventions, such as language groups, into the class room and other contexts.
- TAs should feedback to the child's teacher and Senco about progress in any small group intervention.
- Questioning children to enable/encourage them to work out the correct answer rather than supplying answers themselves.
- During whole-class delivery, TAs should be directed by the class teacher in how they will support their child/group. Teachers should be explicit in their expectations of TAs, this may differ from lesson to lesson or child to child. They should also have regard from feedback from TAs about their observations from working with individuals about what is the best approach.
- Ensuring that TAs 'talk' fits with other pedagogical strategies, such as student-directed learning or group work.

Preparation for TAs

Induction

- The Teaching Assistant Induction Policy is to be used in conjunction with this policy and provides more detail about expectations and responsibilities.
- They will be informed about key policies (particularly safeguarding) and where these can be found on the website.

- They will join the school performance management scheme. They will have three annual targets set and discussions around training needs in the initial meeting. The targets will be reviewed in a mid-year meeting and further training needs can be identified as necessary.

Training and professional development

Children learn most effectively when we invest properly in the professional development of all our staff, and we recognise that our teaching assistants will bring to the job a variety of skills and areas of expertise.

- TAs are supported to develop their practice by being offered training, guidance, peer coaching/mentoring and support from the Senco, class teachers and year group managers. TAs should make use of school resources to help with their CPD.
- Training and CPD opportunities are available to all TAs each year. This can be a mix of externally-provided courses and in-house training.
- TAs receive training on specific areas, such as supporting maths teaching, in the weekly TA meetings
- TAs receive additional training by working alongside a range of external professionals such as specialist teachers and speech and language therapists.

Day-to-day preparedness and feedback

- TAs should ensure that they are familiar with the teacher's plans for the lessons and that they are clear of their role and expectations. TAs should feedback to teachers about the progress of any children they supported with the activity so that this can inform future planning.
- Teachers should communicate pre-lesson information at the start of each session (as far as is possible) or make arrangements to speak to TAs the evening before.
- Feedback from TAs to teachers should be timely and staff are encouraged to develop routines that support this.

Line management performance management (PM) processes

- All TAs have a line manager who is responsible for their appraisal process
- The Senco with the Head of School is responsible for the deployment of TAs across the school.
- The PM cycle for TAs follows the appraisal process in place for teachers; targets and training needs are set in the first meeting (usually during late September); the mid-year meeting is held to discuss progress and training needs – observations both formal and informal feed into this process; the end of year meeting then summarises progress towards meeting targets.
- The appraisal process includes a ‘capability procedure’ for TAs where after consistent support and training, performance does not meet our high expectations.

Monitoring the TA policy

- This policy is new to all staff, so after its implementation adherence to the TA policy across the school will be monitored on a regular basis to support staff in adopting new procedures; there will be an annual review of the policy.
- Staff will be consulted informally during the year on how well the policy is working. It will also be addressed in the PM meetings and feedback will be provided to SLT so that further consultation can take place.