MAKING BEST USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS
## TA policy template

Statement of purpose

This policy specifies our vision for the role, purpose and contribution of teaching assistants (TAs) at [name of school]. It sets out expectations in relation to TAs' work and conduct, and also the expectations that TAs can have of teachers and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in terms of the support they will receive to make a meaningful contribution to teaching and learning. It has been developed following extensive work in our school on maximising the impact of our TA staff in line with the best available evidence on TA deployment, use and training.

In line with the expectations of the governing body, our pupils and their families, we recognise the teachers at [name of school] are responsible for the meeting the learning needs and the progress of all the pupils in their classes. Our TAs have a different, but distinct, complementary role and contribution in helping our pupils become con dent, competent, independent and successful learners.

It is the responsibility of the SLT to ensure that TAs support the work of our teachers and the school more broadly, and maintain the appropriate demarcation between the role and responsibilities of teachers and the role and contribution of TAs.
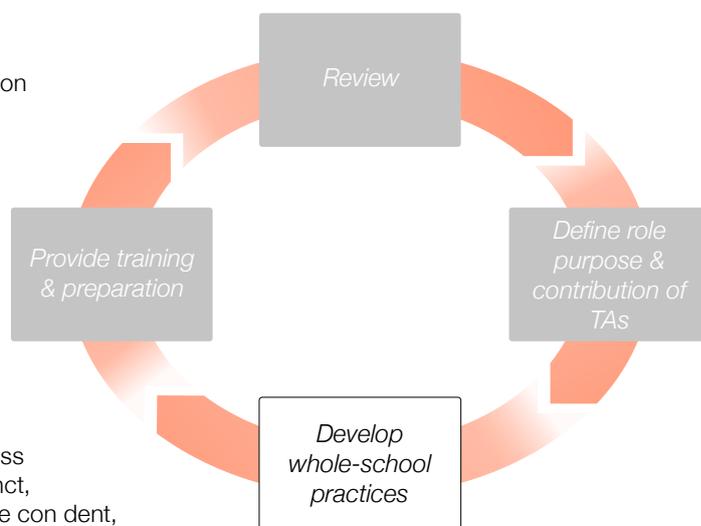
1. Links to other school policies

- Throughout the TA policy, specify links to other school polices (e.g. teaching and learning policy; behaviour policy; safeguarding policy; marking policy)

- Where relevant, make explicit linkages throughout the TA policy to the SEN Code of Practice.

2. Monitoring the TA policy

- Specify how you will monitor the implementation and adherence to the TA policy across the school on a regular basis. Consider using an audit to conduct an annual review of the policy.

- Specify the processes and timetable for monitoring the TA policy and how modifications will be made. Consider how staff (and others) will be consulted on changes.

3. Recruitment

- Specify minimum level of qualifications required for new TAs (e.g. GCSE English and Maths A*-C).

- Specify hours of work for each new/replacement TA post.

4. Conditions of employment

- Specify hours of work.

- Consider a 'code of conduct', setting out (for example) the time by which TAs should be in the classroom each morning.

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5. Line management and performance review

- Specify lines of responsibility; that is, the member(s) of staff who manage TAs and are responsible for their employment and the decisions taken regarding their deployment. Use an organogram (e.g. a management structure diagram) to show a clear path from TAs to the headteacher/principal and governing body.

- Specify the performance review cycle for TAs. It may be helpful to model your TA appraisal process on that which is in place for teachers.

- The appraisal process should include a 'capability procedure' for TAs.

6. Deployment of TAs (Recommendations 1 and 2)

Types of TA role

- Specify types/levels of TA role in school (e.g. 'In our school, there are three types of TA role').

- TA roles can be briefly outlined in terms of whether they are predominantly pedagogical or non-pedagogical in nature. The following headings may be helpful:

    - Support for pupils

    - Support for teachers (including parent liaison)

    - Support for the curriculum

    - Support for the school (including lesson cover).

- Link roles to job descriptions, copies of which can be included in an appendix.

Role demarcation – coordinated, but differentiated roles

Define some guiding principles in terms of how heads of year/department and teaching staff are expected to use TA time. Set out TAs' main roles and duties relative to teachers' main roles and responsibilities. You may find it useful to refer to the Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants and Teacher-TA Agreement template:

- Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants - http://maximisingtas.co.uk/assets/content/tastandards-final-june2016-1.pdf

- Teacher-TA Agreement template - link

Identify the main forms of TA deployment. Consider using a Venn diagram to illustrate the main roles of teachers and TAs. There is likely to be some overlap where teachers and TAs share particular responsibilities (e.g. upholding whole school policies and values). Areas to consider include (but are not limited to): in-class support; pastoral support; delivering interventions; family liaison.

The purpose of this is to set some parameters around how the sc hool expects TAs to be used and to aid pupil progress (e.g. duties they should and should not p erform). Broadly speaking, the roles and duties TAs are not expected to undertake should fall within the remit o f teachers. There may be additional duties that overlap with those of other professionals/practitioners, for example, a speech and language therapist.

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7. TAs' interactions with pupils (Recommendation 3)

TAs' interactions with pupils are the fine point of decisions concerning TA deployment. The description of the nature of TA talk is perhaps the most concrete embodiment of the different, but distinct, roles you create for TAs in your school, in terms of how they support pupils' learning and development.

- Specify how TAs support learning directly via instructional talk, and indirectly via talk that develops pupils' 'soft skills' (e.g. independence, confidence, determination).

- You may choose to develop forms of talk and questioning based on the scaffolding framework and which help pupils to 'know what to do when they do not know what to do'.

- You may wish to describe why this is important, with reference to any wider whole-school initiatives in place to develop such skills.

- Specify how TAs' talk fits with the purpose and nature of teachers' talk (e.g. in their whole-class delivery).

- Specify how TAs' talk fits with other pedagogical strategies, such as self-directed learning or group work.

- Specify how the school supports TAs to develop their practice and how this is monitored, and by whom. Include information about resources and training available to TAs.

8. TA and teachers preparation and training (Recommendation 4)

Induction

- Specify induction processes for new TAs: training offered; observation opportunities; shadowing; introduction to policies; appointing a mentor.

- Make links with the school's induction policy for teachers. It is important that new teachers understand the role and purpose of TAs and adhere to your TA policy.

Training and professional development

- Specify the types of training and CPD opportunities available to TAs and teachers on an annual basis. This could be a mix of externally provided courses and in-house training.

- Specify how TAs (and teachers) can request training.

Day-to-day interactions and feedback

- Specify SLT's expectations in terms of what information teachers must provide to TAs prior to lessons, and what TAs must seek to feed back to teachers after lessons. Describe why this is important.

- Specify processes/mechanisms by which teachers communicate pre-lesson information (e.g. lesson plan pro forma) and how TAs provide feedback for teachers.

- Specify times during the week that are set aside for teacher-TA liaison.

9. TAs delivering targeted, structured interventions (Recommendations 5-7)

- Specify the targeted interventions that TAs will be delivering, the rationale for that intervention and their intended impact. Where possible use interventions with robust evidence of impact on pupil outcome and deliver them as intended. You might find it helpful to conduct an interventions 'health check'.

- Specify when these interventions will take place so they minimise the time spent outside of the classroom.

- Specify how assessments will be used to identified appropriate pupils, guide areas for focus and monitor progress.

- Specify the training, ongoing coaching and support that TAs will receive, as well as the resources

- Specify times for teacher-TA liaison to ensure connections are made between pupil's learning ininterventions and classroom teaching.

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