

Teaching Assistant School Policy Agreement

Date Policy due to be reviewed: June 2017

Committee Responsible for Policy: Curriculum and Standards Committee

Statement of purpose

In line with the expectations of the governing body, our pupils and their families, we recognise the teachers at Hillcrest School are responsible for the meeting the learning needs and the progress of all the pupils in their class(es). Our 'teaching assistants' (TAs) have a different, but distinct, complementary role and contribution to make in relation to helping our pupils become confident, competent, independent and successful learners.

It is the responsibility of the senior leadership team (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.

This policy specifies our vision for the role, purpose and contribution of TAs at Hillcrest School. It sets out expectations in relation to TAs' work and conduct, and also the expectations TAs can have of teachers and the SLT in terms of how they will support TAs to ensure they are equipped to make a meaningful contribution to teaching and learning.

This policy has been developed following extensive strategic work undertaken by our school 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 most effective use and impact of TAs.

Expectations

TAs can expect the senior leadership team to:

- Ensure each TA is deployed in a role that reflects their skills and aptitudes.
- Define, clearly and properly, the tasks and duties each TA can expect to be asked to perform in their role, and specify their contribution to teaching and learning at Hillcrest School.
- Provide timely and appropriate training and preparation to ensure TAs are confident and ready to undertake the tasks they are given.
- Avoid deploying TAs in roles for which they are not specifically trained or that are more appropriately undertaken by a qualified teacher. (Some very exceptional circumstances may apply).
- Recognise and celebrate TAs' contribution to teaching and learning, and treat them as professionals in their own right.
- Provide induction and professional development opportunities, supervision and performance reviews commensurate with maintaining their professional identity.
- Ensure teaching staff are aware of their role and responsibility for ensuring TAs are deployed appropriately and are properly prepared for the tasks they give them.
- Train and support teachers to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to deploy TAs appropriately and consistently.

TAs can expect teachers to:

- Be aware of the school's expectations of how to deploy and prepare TAs, and ensure their contribution to teaching and learning is consistent with our whole school aims.
- Know the respective roles and skills of the TAs they work with most frequently and deploy them appropriately as outlined explicitly in lesson plans and schemes of work
- Communicate adequate information and instructions about lessons ahead of time, and clearly specify TAs' role in, and contribution, to each lesson.
- Provide opportunities for TAs to feed back after lessons and provide clear guidance on what information should be fed back.
- Respond in a positive and timely fashion to requests from TAs for information about lessons, pupils, curriculum content, instructional techniques, or any other information essential to ensuring their effective deployment in lessons and contribution to learning.
- Discharge responsibilities to TAs that, as the lead professional in the classroom, belong to them.
- Recognise and reinforce TAs' professional identity and their status within the school.
- Contribute to induction and training, supervision and performance reviews for TAs.
- Request training and guidance in order to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to meet their professional duties and responsibilities as a teacher, in relation to deploying TAs appropriately.

The senior leadership team and teachers expect TAs to:

- Act in a manner that upholds the professional identity of TAs at Hillcrest School.
- Demonstrate adequate literacy and numeracy skills
- Have good timekeeping and attendance
- Establish good relationships with students, acting as a role model and being aware of and responding appropriately to individual needs
- Participate in the school's induction programme and performance review process.
- Make the most of training and professional development opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills and keep up to date with national and school-based initiatives
- Adhere to the agreed Teaching Assistant standards (see appendix)
- Implementing and following whole school policies, e.g. safeguarding, health and safety, GIR
- Prompt teachers for pre-lesson information and to ask for clarification where required.
- Perform and interact with pupils in ways that are consistent with what the school expects from TAs in terms of their contribution to teaching and learning.
- Contribute to lesson planning and feedback at teachers' request.
- Support the students in achieving the objectives of the lesson as outlined by the classroom teacher
- Make resources for students as appropriate under the guidance of the classroom teacher
- Record student achievements under teacher's direction
- Plan and deliver activities to KS3 students as part of the Intervention programme
- Develop 1:1 mentoring arrangements with students as part of the Intervention programme
- Assist with the development and implementation of Individual Education/Behaviour Profiles and Personal Care programmes and attend meetings with parents and external agencies as necessary
- Provide objective and accurate feedback and reports as required on student achievement, progress and other matters, ensuring the availability of appropriate evidence

Key principles for the effective use of TAs in lessons

- TAs should **not** be used as an informal teaching resource for low-attaining pupils
- TAs should **add value** to what teachers do, **not replace them**
- TAs should be **fully prepared** for their role in the classroom prior to the lesson through effective communication with classroom teachers
- TAs should have the opportunity to **feedback** regularly to classroom teachers on the progress made by targeted students and the appropriateness of teaching and learning strategies employed.
- The roles and duties TAs are **not expected** to fall within the remit of teachers' responsibilities

Main forms of TA deployment

We will employ different levels of teaching assistant. Teaching assistants will work under the direct instruction of the teaching staff, usually in the classroom, generally to support the management of pupils. This may involve planning, preparing and delivering learning activities for individuals and groups. Higher-Level teaching assistants (HLTAs) will complement the work of teachers by taking responsibility for specific learning activities and/or areas of the curriculum. On a short-term basis only, an HLTA may be asked to take responsibility for a whole class in a classroom.

Deployment in the classroom

- The learning needs of all pupils should be met, first and foremost, through high quality teaching by the teacher.
- TAs work with a range of pupils within the class and should supplement and extend teachers' work, rather than replace them.
- Support for specific individuals or groups should be structured so it helps them access general classroom teaching.
- Teachers and TAs should work effectively as a team, with a shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives.
- Teachers' moment-by-moment decisions regarding TA deployment should be driven by pupils' needs.

TA interactions with pupils

- TAs should provide the right amount of support at the right time, and consistently give the least amount of help first.
- TAs should ensure pupils retain ownership over their learning and responsibility for their work.
- TAs should actively look for opportunities to allow pupils to attempt parts of tasks independently and to experience a healthy mix of success and challenge.
- TAs should be confident in their role and have good subject knowledge.
- Good questioning skills inform their interactions. TAs should allow sufficient 'wait time' for pupils to think and respond (e.g. 4-5 seconds).

Teacher / TA preparation

- Teachers should ideally meet with TAs prior to the lesson or at the start of a new programme of study to ensure TAs are fully equipped with the skills to support learning for pupils across the attainment range, consistent with teachers' intentions. However, as a minimum expectation teaching staff are expected to complete a communication sheet with TAs set targets for students in lessons and allow TAs to feedback on the progress made. In addition, teachers will be expected to complete an overview sheet for each module to outline key themes, words, questions, objectives and outcomes to assist Teaching Assistants in planning their interventions.
- TAs skills and particular specialisms should be understood and maximised by the teacher as part of this process.
- TAs should enter lessons with a clear understanding of the concepts and information being taught, skills to be learned/applied, intended learning outcomes and specific learning needs of students they work with. This information should be recorded by teachers on lesson plans and/or schemes of work and shared with TAs prior to lessons / the start of new modules.
- Teachers and TAs should ideally allocate designated time to review lessons, and feedback on pupils' learning in and progress as a result of agreed structured interventions. However, as a minimum expectation, this should be completed through the Teacher / TA Communication pro-forma completed every lesson. This will inform future planning to improve outcomes for targeted students.

TAs delivering targeted and structured interventions

- TAs should plan and deliver evidence-based and structured interventions, chosen to deliberately complement and extend class-based teaching and learning.
- Intervention sessions should be brief, regular and sustained, with clear objectives and expectations.
- Sessions should be well-paced, well-resourced and carefully timetabled to minimise time spent away from general class teaching.
- Sessions should have clear learning outcomes and measurable success criteria to allow TAs to assess the extent of student progress in the session and by the end of specific modules.
- TAs should be supported and guided by appropriate staff to deliver interventions and review impact.
- There should be regular opportunities for CLMs and TAs to plan and review learning taking place in interventions, with regular assessments in place to guide this process.
- Teachers and TAs should work collaboratively to help pupils make connections between the learning in interventions and the wider curriculum.

Key roles of the TAs in lessons

Recognising the significant contribution that support staff can make in raising standards and increasing efficiency, we allocate the following principal functions to our teaching assistants:

- Encourage students to interact with others and engage in activities led by the teacher.
- Encourage students to act independently as appropriate..
- Set challenging and demanding expectations that promote self-esteem and independence.
- Provide feedback to students in relation to progress and achievement under guidance of the teacher.
- Support students consistently whilst recognising and responding to their individual needs.
- Promote independence and employ strategies to recognise and reward achievement of self-reliance.
- Assess the needs of students and use detailed knowledge and specialist skills to support learning.
- Assist in ensuring that the length of time spent on tasks and activities is consistent with the individual students' needs.
- Be aware of pupil problems/progress/achievements and report to the teacher as agreed.
- Provide detailed and regular feedback to teachers on students achievement, progress, problems etc.

- Monitor and evaluate student's responses to learning activities through observation and recording of achievement against pre-determined learning objectives.
- Help students follow the school rules and also work towards specific goals and expectations as prescribed by the class teacher including individual, group or class targets.

What should TAs not be used for in lessons?

- TAs should not be used by teachers to control the behaviour of individual students in the room
- TAs should not be sent to complete administrative tasks (ie- photocopying) during lessons
- TAs should not be asked to prepare whole class resources that detract from their role of supporting students in the lesson (ie-cutting up resources)

Examples of effective TA interventions in lessons

- TAs should support learning directly via instructional talk, and indirectly via talk that develops pupils' 'soft skills' (e.g. independence, confidence, determination). For example, TAs may choose to develop forms of talk and questioning that help pupils to 'know what to do when they do not know what to do'.
- TAs talk should fit with the purpose and nature of teachers' talk (e.g. in their whole-class delivery).
- TAs talk should fit with other pedagogical strategies, such as self-directed learning or group work.
- TAs should help students understand instructions, through repetition, rephrasing and modelling

The TA/teacher agreement

When?	What?
During the lesson introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that learning objectives are written in books • Refocus students • Ensure that planner and other equipment are out; note if homework is missing
During whole-class work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as talk partner for _____ and _____ so that they can rehearse their ideas and thinking aloud • Encourage responses from _____ • Emphasise key vocabulary – record key words in book for _____ • Model or role-play activities with the teacher • Rephrase information • Scan the room and notice when students need rather than ask for help • Access arrangements: scribe for _____ and read for _____ • Use questioning to ensure that students have understood instructions as to what they are to do, what they will learn and what outcome is expected • Check they are using success criteria • Correct spelling errors in pink/red ink
In group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use questioning to ensure that students have understood instructions as to what they are to do, what they will learn and what outcome is expected of them by the end of the group session • Explain roles, prompt and give time checks • Note issues, mistakes, misconceptions and difficulties so that the teacher can address these in the plenary or in future lessons • Rehearse reflection on learning so that the students can present their ideas in plenary sessions
In plenary sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt and help students explain strategies and reasoning to reflect on their learning • Monitor responses of _____ ; note difficulties
At the end of the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify with students what the next steps in their learning will be • Ensure that students have homework in planners and are clear about any follow-up required
After the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback to subject teachers as appropriate

TA training and professional development opportunities

Hillcrest School recognizes the value of professional development for teaching assistants. 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. Teaching assistants are entitled to professional development, and will receive specific training, as well as the general training provided by the school. Access to this training will be considered in relation to priorities in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). TAs are required to complete the appropriate request of training pro-forma and pass to Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) with a clear summary of the nature and expected outcomes of the training. After undertaking the training TAs are expected to evaluate the impact on their day to day practice.

Line management and performance review

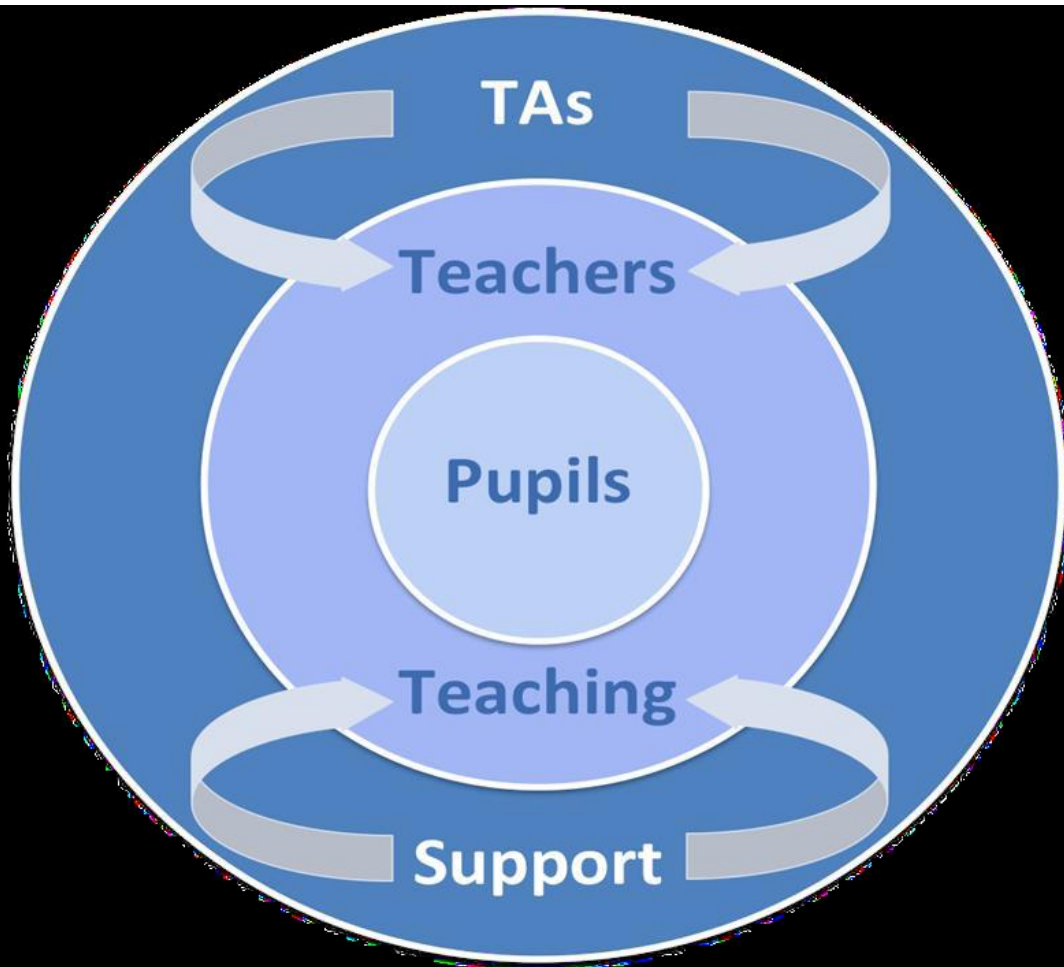
The line manager for teaching assistants in our school is the SENCO / Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral). Regular meetings for TAs will be convened by the SENCO / Deputy Headteacher. TAs will be involved with all members of the Senior Leadership Team in the development of their role and their deployment.

The annual performance management of teaching assistants will be carried out by the SENCO / Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral). As part of this process performance management targets will be formally negotiated and reviewed annually. An interim performance management review meeting will take place during the year to review the progress made against the negotiated targets and ascertain the nature of additional support the TS may require to allow them to successfully meet the agreed targets. Access to appropriate CPD is an important part of this process.

As part of the performance management cycle TAs are expected to collect evidence to show their performance against nationally recognised standards for the performance of TAs in schools. Progress made against these standards will be used as a basis to negotiate targets in annual performance management meetings.

Monitoring of policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the SENCO / Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) in conjunction with TAs, teaching staff, students and parents.



National standards - Knowledge and Understanding: Teaching assistants are expected to:	Evidence/Notes e.g training acquired, key examples of practice where relevant
Acquire the appropriate skills, qualifications, and/or experience required for the teaching assistant role.	
Demonstrate expertise and skills in understanding the needs of all pupils (including specialist expertise as appropriate) and know how to adapt and deliver support to meet individual needs.	
Share responsibility for ensuring that their own knowledge and understanding is relevant and up to date by reflecting on their own practice, liaising with school leaders and accessing relevant professional development to improve personal effectiveness.	
Demonstrate a level of subject and curriculum knowledge relevant to their role and apply this effectively in supporting teachers and pupils.	
Understand their roles and responsibilities within the classroom and whole school context recognising that these may extend beyond a direct support role.	

National Standards - Teaching and learning: Teaching Assistants are expected to:	Evidence/Notes e.g training acquired, key examples of practice where relevant
Demonstrate an informed and efficient approach to teaching and learning by adopting relevant strategies to support the work of the teacher and increase achievement of pupils	
Communicate effectively and sensitively with pupils to adapt to their needs and support their learning.	
Contribute to effective assessment and planning by supporting the monitoring, recording and reporting of pupil progress as appropriate to the level of the role.	
Promote, support and facilitate inclusion by encouraging participation of all pupils in learning activities.	
Maintain a stimulating and safe learning environment by organising and managing physical teaching space and resources.	
Prepare for learning and deployment in lessons by reading and discussing planning ahead of time.	
Use effective behaviour management strategies consistently in line with the school's policy and procedures.	

National standards - Personal and professional conduct: Teaching assistants should uphold public trust in the education profession by:	Evidence/Notes e.g training acquired, key examples of practice where relevant
Having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they work as professional members of staff.	
Demonstrating positive attitudes, values and behaviours to develop and sustain effective relationships with the school community.	
Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being by following relevant statutory guidance along with school policies and practice.	
Upholding values consistent with those required from teachers by respecting individual differences and cultural diversity.	
Committing to improve their own practice through self-evaluation and awareness.	

Identify 3 areas for further development ahead of performance management

1.
2.
3.