

Local Offer

The roles and responsibilities of key school staff in meeting the needs of children with SEND.

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The role of the headteacher in mainstream schools

The headteacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school staff's work, including provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The head teacher should keep the governing body fully informed and also work closely with the school's SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) or SEN team.

It is important for head teachers to ensure that:

- * SENCOs have sufficient time and professional support to carry out their duties.
- * the management structures within a school enable the SENCO's functions to be carried out effectively. Many schools find it effective for the SENCO to be a member of the senior leadership team who will have a duty to provide advice to the head teacher on special needs issues nationally, at Local Authority (LA) level and internally.
- * Special needs is the responsibility of all staff however the SENCO will often lead and/or liaise with school staff.
- * the SENCO has awareness of the SEN budget to be able to effectively plan provision.
- * the SENCO is supported by the use of information technology (ICT) for SEND management systems and administrative support for preparing and recording individual plans.
- * the SENCO is able to communicate with other SENCOs via update meetings, conferences and training.
- * the Special Educational Needs policy and procedures within the school, is regularly reviewed and monitored including the work of the SENCO.

The role of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) in mainstream schools

- The SENCO, in collaboration with the headteacher and governing body, plays a key role in determining the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school in order to raise the achievement of children with SEN.
- The SENCO takes day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEN policy and co-ordination of the provision made for individual children with SEN, working closely with staff, parents and carers, and other agencies.

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- * The SENCO also provides related professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high quality teaching for children with SEN. The SENCO will also request external professional involvement when appropriate. Amongst others this may include advisory teachers, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists etc.
- * The SENCO, with the support of the headteacher and colleagues, seeks to develop effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching. This will be through the analysis and assessment of children's needs, by monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of pupils' achievements, and by setting targets for improvement.
- * The SENCO should collaborate with class teachers so that the learning for all children is given equal priority, and available resources are used to maximum effect.
- * The SENCO should work with the headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its legislative responsibilities with regard to SEND (Children and families act 2014) and reasonable adjustments and access arrangements (Equalities Act)

SENCO responsibilities

In mainstream schools the key responsibilities of the SENCO may include:

- * Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy.
- * Coordinating provision for children with SEN.
- * Liaising with and advising fellow teachers.
- * Managing teaching assistants.
- * Overseeing the records of all children with SEN and Disability.
- * Liaising with parents of children with SEN to ensure collaboration with children/young people and their families.
- * Liaising with children/young people to ensure their voice is heard.
- * Contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- * Requesting involvement from external agencies.
- * Liaising with external agencies including the advisory teachers and educational psychology services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies.
- * Ensuring the advice from external agencies is shared with relevant staff, implemented, monitored and reviewed.

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The role and responsibilities of all teachers

The LA recognises that planning for progression and differentiation are fundamental to successful teaching and learning. High expectations of progress must apply equally to children working above, at, or below age-related expectations, including those who have SEND. We have an expectation of participation, fulfilment and success for all our children.

Good teaching and learning is characterised by effective planning, ambitious outcomes, challenging personal targets, rapid intervention to keep children on trajectory and rigorous assessment to check and maintain progress.

This is consistent with the quality first teaching approach, the key characteristics of which are:

- * Highly focused lesson design with SMART outcomes and objectives.
- * High demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning.
- * High levels of interaction for all pupils.
- * Appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining.
- * An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups.
- * An expectation that teachers will support pupils to accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently wherever possible.
- * Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils.
- * Class/subject teachers are expected to make use of inclusive strategies to maximise participation.

These include:

- * Ensuring that curriculum targets are realistic and achievable.
- * Differentiating lessons appropriately.
- * Providing visual support to include pupils, e.g. visual timetable.
- * Prioritising pupil's emotional wellbeing.
- * Providing a variety of alternative methods of recording work.
- * Maintaining a well organised classroom to include keeping key resources in the same place and labelling resources.
- * Managing the sensory impact of noise, light and space to maximise learning.
- * Positioning children so that they have the best chance of learning.
- * Ensuring home language support is available.
- * Ensuring adults adapt the level of language they address to pupils so that pupils can understand and be included.
- * Allowing sufficient time for processing.
- * break learning down into manageable chunks

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Class and subject teachers are initially expected to use their own knowledge, skills, expertise and resources to directly address areas of SEND, this should include:

- » provide preliminary input to improve skills in the area of the child's need e.g. motor skills, language.
- » provide opportunities for children and young people to develop executive functioning skills.
- » teach a pupil how to cope with particular situations e.g. change, interacting with peers.
- » provide a welcoming, warm and considerate learning environment.

Teaching assistants (TAs)

Teaching assistants provide a valuable contribution to the education of children with SEND. The class or subject teacher remains responsible for working with children on a daily basis.

Where interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, the main class or subject teacher should still retain responsibility for the pupil. The main class or subject teacher should work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. The SENCO should support the class or subject teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

The Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants (MITA) research makes the following recommendations:

- * TAs should not provide "general support" for lower attaining children and those with SEN.
- * Teachers should deploy TAs in ways that allow them to 'add value' to their own teaching.
- * Initial teacher training should include how to work with and manage TAs.
- * Schools should have a formal induction process for TAs.
- * More joint planning and feedback time for teachers and TAs.
- * Use TAs to develop pupils independent skills and manage their own learning.
- * Use TAs to deliver high quality one to one and small group support using structured and evidence based interventions.
- * Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions.

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Best practice

TAs can make a significant difference to outcomes when the following support is implemented:

- * Responsible recruitment and induction, according to need.
- * Clear line management.
- * Clarity of role, including an agreed job description.
- * Effective deployment based on rigorous analysis of the needs of pupils – e.g. clarity about where teacher input will have more value to learning than TAs; how TAs can support whole class learning and not just the most vulnerable learners.
- * Ongoing training/development including whole school continuous professional development.
- * Performance management linked to job role, professional Standards for Teaching Assistants 2016 and school priorities.
- * Support and training for teachers – e.g. how to manage TAs most effectively.
- * Time allocated for TAs to participate in other relevant activities (e.g. regular teacher and TA time and time to implement advice from external agencies and specialists).

Effective Teaching Assistant Support

The LA expects the following good practice from all schools in the following three areas to enable children and young people to successfully meet their outcomes:

- * Supporting teacher input (i.e. supporting the effective inclusion of all children in high quality lessons).
- * Supporting learning in group work (i.e. small-group intervention programmes).
- * Supporting learning of individuals (i.e. specific targeted approaches for individual children identified as requiring SEN intervention).

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Class/subject teachers and teaching assistants support learning in group work by:

- * Facilitating access to task by the following:
 - Ensuring physical access.
 - Ensuring understanding (concept/task/instructions) and facilitating understanding through use of first language if necessary.
 - If necessary, going over teaching from an earlier part of the lesson – clarifying, using further explanation and examples.
 - If necessary, providing resources to support learning [ensuring that support has an impact on learning]. - Visual: e.g. alphabet strip, word-mat, table square, number square, vowel chart, key words/tricky words/new words list/cards, visual prompts and support. - Aural: e.g. taped story. - Kinaesthetic: e.g. mini-whiteboard, number fans, place-value cards, counters, cubes, shapes.
 - Scribing or providing alternative methods of recording.
 - Specific support e.g. signing, helping children use ICT, providing adapted resources.
- * Scaffolding learning by using:
 - Mind-maps.
 - Spider-grams.
 - Writing frame e.g. 'Writing skeletons'.
 - Talking/Speaking Frame.
 - Role-play.
- * Encouraging children to explain thinking to TA/others in group.
- * Modelling.
- * Demonstrating.
- * Reminding pupils of previously learned strategies.
- * Encouraging/modelling correct/appropriate use of language.
- * Pre-tutoring/rehearsing for plenary task.
- * Modelling/coaching appropriate behaviour and social skills.
- * Working with children to help them to prepare to answer a question when asked.
- * Providing appropriate praise and encouragement, and using Pause/Prompt/Praise.
- * Encouraging independent learning - use timer if necessary.
- * Reminding pupils of targets and helping them to assess their own work.

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- * Providing support which is clearly focused on moving the pupil on
- * Ensuring objectives and expected outcomes for session are clear to the pupil.
- * Ensuring that there are strategies to reduce over-dependency (e.g. when task has been made clear, pupil set to work independently on task for specified period of time ,while TA works with other pupils).
- * Ensuring that support facilitates interaction between pupil and peers and doesn't inadvertently act as a barrier to interactions.
- * Ensuring support is discreet and does not embarrass the child.
- * Sometimes using support to pre-tutor child and/or go through unusual or technical vocabulary for future lessons.
- * Identifying progress and knowing when to move the child's learning on.

Teaching assistants support teacher input by:

- * Working collaboratively with the teacher during input e.g:
 - Jointly model speaking and listening 'pair' tasks.
 - Scribing for teacher on board.
 - Helping operate interactive whiteboard.
 - Demonstrating activities.
- * Scanning class for inappropriate behaviour, use eye-contact/visual prompts to communicate and re-focus child's attention.
- * Encouraging reticent children to answer (verbally e.g. 'I think Katie has a good idea' or silently, using nods or an encouraging smile, providing question cards).
- * Using observation checklists when relevant e.g. for behaviour, participation, and for assessment purposes, to inform future planning.
- * Providing resources if necessary.
- * Supporting work on teacher-planned differentiated activities.
- * Monitoring pupil progress in order to feedback to class teacher.

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Teaching assistants working with pupils in targeted intervention groups support learning by:

- Helping pupils to relate to and transfer skills and knowledge from withdrawal context to main lesson.
- Coaching pupils in skills needed for cooperative group work by explaining and describing, modelling and praising appropriate behaviours.
- Assessing progress and giving feedback to the teacher.

TAs provide support for both pupils and teachers, however the teacher remains accountable for the progress of every pupil in their classroom, their learning, assessment and planning.

Duties of governing bodies for SEND

The Governance Handbook 2015 describes the duties of governing bodies in relation to SEND to:

- Use best endeavours in exercising their functions to ensure that the necessary special education provision is made for any pupil who has SEND.
- Ensure that parents of a young person are notified by the school when special educational provision is being made for their child, because it is considered that he or she has SEND.
- Make sure that the responsible person makes all staff likely to teach the pupil aware of the pupil's SEND.
- Make sure that the teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying pupils who have SEND and of providing appropriate teaching.
- Ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) for the school. A newly appointed SENCO must be a qualified teacher and, where they have not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant school for a total period of more than twelve months, they must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within three years of appointment.
- Consult the local authority and the boards of other schools when it seems necessary to co-ordinate special educational teaching in the area.
- Ensure that pupils with SEND join in the everyday activities of the school together with children without SEND, as far as is compatible with them receiving the necessary special educational provision; the provision of efficient education for all other pupils; and the efficient use of resources.
- Take account of the 'SEND and Disability Code of Practice' when carrying out their duties towards all pupils with SEND.
- Where a local authority or the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) names a maintained school as the school the child will attend on an SEN statement or Education and Health Care Plan, the board must admit the child to the school. Before naming a maintained school on a statement, the local authority must consult the board of the school.

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- Cooperate with the local authority in developing the local offer.
- Ensure the school produce and publish online its School SEN Information Report in accordance with section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014, and
- Ensure the school has arrangements in place to support children with medical conditions (section 100 Children and Families Act 2014).

Guidance on the role of the SEND governor

- All governing bodies have specific legal responsibilities for pupils with SEND. Where the responsible person (for SEND) is the headteacher it is advisable to have one other governor with an interest in SEND. It is for this reason that some governing bodies appoint a specific SEND governor who has responsibility for liaising with the school's SEND co-ordinator (SENCO) and must ensure that the governing body is aware of, and fulfils its responsibilities for special education as described in the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance.

SEND governors have a strategic, rather than operational role

- The role should not be concerned with day-to-day management - a SEND governor should not intervene in the teaching of individual pupils.
- If parents approach a governor with a complaint or a problem, they should be encouraged to talk to the headteacher first. If the problem leads the parents to make a formal complaint, the first appeal is to the governing body.
- An SEND governor does not have the right to see a pupil's statement of SEN / Education Health and Care Plan without permission of the parent/young person (over the age of 16).
- SEND governors should not normally need to identify which children are receiving support.
- It would normally be expected that when an SEND governor visits the school, the visit would be led by the SEND Co-ordinator (SENCO) or whichever member of staff takes the lead on SEND. This visit should be conducted with a view to discussing the school's systems and processes for supporting pupils with SEND, rather than assessing and commenting on provision for individual children.
- It may be appropriate to discuss a particular child where specific concerns have been raised by a parent. It might also be appropriate where a child's needs require extra equipment, and this would draw upon the school budget.
- The SEND governor could be involved in creating the school's SEND information report which must be published online.

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