



Primary *National Strategy*

The effective management of teaching assistants to improve standards in literacy and mathematics

Senior management teams, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

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DVD contents

The accompanying DVD contains the following:

Introduction

1 Effective leadership and management

The changing role of teaching assistants
Effective deployment of teaching assistants

2 Continuing professional development

Professional development meeting the needs of children
Discussing training needs

3 Focused support for children and the use of evidence-based intervention programmes

Supporting quality first teaching
Focused interventions

4 Joint planning and reviewing progress

5 Monitoring impact

Strategies for monitoring
Matching deployment to children's needs
Reviewing progress and planning future provision

6 Performance management

Introduction

The number of teaching assistants working in schools has increased considerably over the last few years and the range of tasks they undertake has also developed. There are now many examples of good practice and lessons from research and classroom experience that can help senior management teams consider how to develop the role of teaching assistants and ensure the conditions are in place to make best use of these valued colleagues. Teaching assistants play a key role as schools implement the workforce reforms set out in the National Agreement for raising standards and tackling workload.

Recent reports published by HMI, the Primary National Strategy, university researchers and others show that well-trained and well-managed teaching assistants can have an impact on inclusion, children's achievements and attitudes, and teacher workload. Teaching assistants work with teachers to:

- **foster the participation of all pupils in the social and academic practices of the school or setting;**
- **help raise the standards and achievement of all pupils;**
- **encourage independent learning.**

Where management and professional development are not effective, this potential to make a difference is not fully realised.

The following levers need to be in place to ensure schools and settings benefit fully from the contribution of teaching assistants.

- **Effective leadership and management**
- **Continuing professional development**
- **Focused support for children and the use of evidence-based intervention programmes**
- **Joint planning and reviewing progress**
- **Monitoring impact**
- **Performance management**

Each of these factors is described later in this booklet. They are closely interrelated and you may wish to combine sections when you are using them for discussion purposes.

Purpose of the materials

These materials consist of a DVD and accompanying notes. They have been developed to support discussion of the role of teaching assistants to help raise standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They have been written for primary school senior management teams, but colleagues working in early years settings may also find the materials helpful.

The materials aim to support schools in promoting the progress and achievement of all learners, and there are examples of teaching assistants offering whole-class and group support and, as well as support for some individual children who may require further consideration of appropriate learning objectives, teaching styles and access strategies.

Structure of the materials

The materials consist of this booklet and a DVD. The booklet contains:

- a brief school self-evaluation grid linked to the factors outlined above. This can be used to prioritise areas for discussion and attention. If a more detailed review is needed, this can be found in 'Reviewing the roles of additional adults' in the Primary National Strategy publication *Including all children in the literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson* (DfES 0465/2002), available at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/;
- sections covering each of the key factors listed above. They are also exemplified through video sequences on the accompanying DVD. Some suggested activities and discussion prompts are provided at the end of each section;
- case studies, a research summary and a list of further related resources.

How to use these materials

It is anticipated that the materials will be used by senior management teams to review the effective deployment, monitoring and continuing professional development (CPD) of teaching assistants.

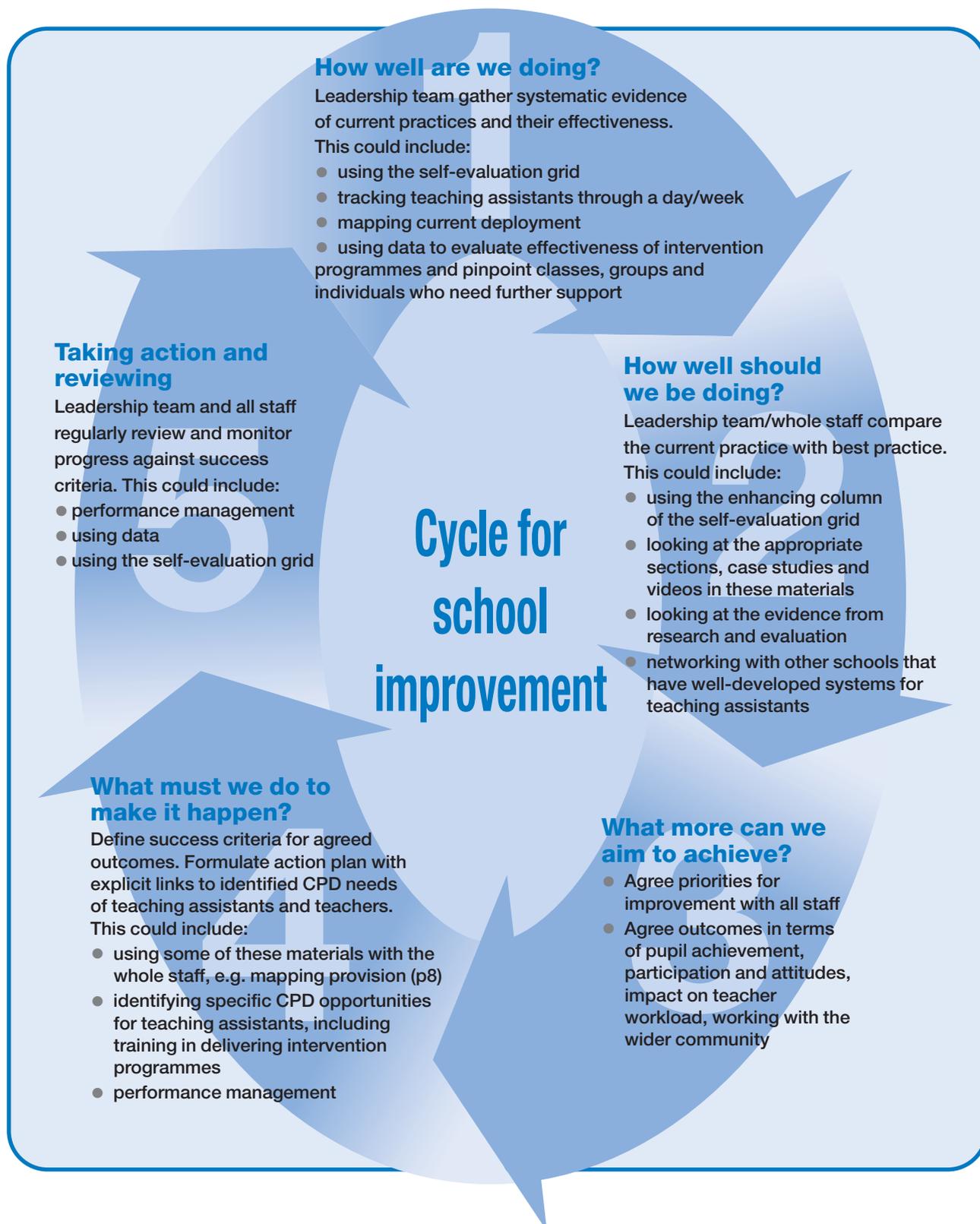
The materials could also be used:

- as part of school-based CPD on additional adults in the classroom;
- by individuals who are interested in improving their own understanding concerning the effective use of teaching assistants to raise standards.

The materials can be used in a variety of ways but below is one suggestion as to how

management teams could use them, based on the *Cycle for school improvement*.

The process outlined below supports the approach recommended in *A New Relationship with Schools: Improving Performance through School Self-Review*. (Ofsted, 2005. www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications)



School self-evaluation grid

The effective management and deployment of teaching assistants to improve standards in literacy and mathematics

	Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
<p>Effective leadership and management of teaching assistants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> foster the participation of all pupils in the social and academic practices of the school help raise the standards and achievement of all pupils encourage independent learning 	<p>An audit of provision, professional development needs and quantitative outcomes has been carried out. As a result the expertise and skills of teaching assistants are matched to identified needs.</p> <p>Priorities for further action relating to the contribution of teaching assistants have been identified.</p>	<p>Using the audit, an agreed action plan that addresses identified priorities and appropriate resources has been developed and is being implemented.</p>	<p>The impact of the action plan is monitored and evaluated. The plan is refined following the outcome of evaluation.</p>	<p>The school's priorities for the contribution of teaching assistants to fostering participation, raising standards and encouraging independence are part of the whole-school development programme with clearly identified subject-specific priorities and systematic review and evaluation.</p>
<p>Access to appropriate, high-quality professional development</p>	<p>Information about training is selected and teaching assistants are encouraged to attend relevant courses.</p> <p>In-school training sessions for teaching assistants are led by subject leaders.</p>	<p>Staff are helped to be more selective about the type of professional development in which they participate and relate this closely to the literacy/numeracy action plan.</p> <p>Information from the monitoring of teaching and learning is used to target support and training for teaching assistants.</p>	<p>A CPD policy that relates to the individual and school needs with clear links to the development of literacy/numeracy is in place.</p> <p>Most staff are committed to the policy and understand how it will impact on their own professional development.</p>	<p>The planned CPD programme supports school, LEA and national priorities and meets the needs of all staff. The impact of the CPD programme is monitored and evaluated systematically.</p>
<p>Time for planning and feedback</p>	<p>Teachers and teaching assistants make time to discuss individual children.</p>	<p>Teaching assistants are involved in some planning and are beginning to contribute their own ideas with regard to working with individuals and groups. There are regular opportunities to feed back on the children's learning.</p>	<p>Teachers and teaching assistants together plan and review curricular plans and the curricular targets/learning objectives of the children.</p>	<p>There are regular and timetabled opportunities for all teachers and teaching assistants to work in partnership to review children's progress and plan learning opportunities.</p>

Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
<p>Focused support and the use of evidence-based intervention programmes</p>	<p>Support is in place based on the identification of need. This is regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Teaching assistants are used to support individuals/groups of children in shared, guided and independent sessions.</p>	<p>Needs are systematically analysed across year groups or subjects and trained teaching assistants are deployed to deliver support or interventions as required including NNS and NLS Wave 2 and 3 intervention programmes.</p> <p>Teaching assistants are used to support the whole class, groups and individuals.</p> <p>There is an efficient tracking mechanism in place to assess impact.</p>	<p>Teaching assistants are deployed in line with the priorities identified for the school, whole class, groups and individual children.</p> <p>Teaching assistants are trained and allocated to provide a range of high-quality interventions and programmes that have an evidence base of success, or which represent initiatives that will be carefully evaluated. These interventions are monitored and evaluated.</p>
<p>School systems for monitoring impact of teaching assistants' work on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fostering the participation of all pupils in the social and academic practices of the school helping raise the standards and achievement of all pupils encouraging independent learning 	<p>Teaching assistants give regular feedback to teachers on the learning, attitudes and independence of the groups and individuals they have been working with.</p>	<p>There are opportunities for teaching assistants and teachers to review the progress of individual/groups of children, in relation to the support given by teaching assistants.</p> <p>Criteria for evaluating children's achievements, attitudes and independent learning are shared with teaching assistants.</p>	<p>Monitoring the impact of the work of teaching assistants shows that a difference is made to children's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participation in the social and academic practices of the school achievements independent learning.
<p>System for performance management that addresses training needs and impact of teaching assistants' work</p>	<p>Teaching assistants have regular meetings that lead to performance management targets. There is an action plan of support to achieve these.</p> <p>Teaching assistants meet to discuss their work with their line manager.</p>	<p>The impact of support by teaching assistants is evaluated against both quantitative and qualitative learning outcomes. Children's achievements, attitudes and independent learning are monitored.</p>	<p>The school's performance management sets a framework to agree and review priorities and objectives within the overall school development plans. It supports teaching assistants in raising standards by ensuring they have clear objectives and an opportunity for regular professional discussions with their team leaders about their work and professional development.</p>



Effective leadership and management

In schools where teaching assistants are used effectively there are clear management systems for ensuring:

- induction and ongoing professional development opportunities (see page 11);
- identifying the needs of children across year groups and matching the deployment of teaching assistants and teachers to this analysis of need. This mapping of needs and provision can be undertaken annually and reviewed periodically throughout the year (see page 8);
- communication between teachers, teaching assistants, parents and the wider community (see page 14);
- monitoring and evaluation of the impact of teaching assistants (see page 15);
- inclusion of teaching assistants in performance management procedures (see page 16).

These systems should be overseen by the headteacher assisted by the senior management team. Many schools now include senior teaching assistants on the senior management team.

Mapping effective provision

Mapping provision enables school and setting managers to see the 'big picture' in terms of needs and resources, and to allocate resources (including teachers and teaching assistants) through a rational, evidence-based process. Teaching assistant deployment will be related to the needs of particular cohorts of children – classes, groups and individuals. Provision mapping can be informed by the findings of audits of literacy and mathematics provision and the analysis of pupil performance data in literacy and numeracy. This will enable the effective targeting of teaching assistant support to raise standards in literacy and mathematics. Mapping in this way can illuminate why it may be necessary to distribute teaching assistant support in ways other than, for example, one teaching assistant to one class. Effective targeting of intervention and support in this way can lead to a significant reduction in the need for individual education plans with a subsequent reduction in paperwork. An example of one school's provision map is on pages 8–10.

Bonner Primary School, Tower Hamlets, identified the Year 6 cohort as having particular needs and systematically targeted teaching assistant and teacher time to the cohort to form three teaching groups of 20 (reducing teaching assistant allocation to other classes). They predict that no child will achieve below level 3 in the national tests and the school will achieve well above national average for L4+. They also targeted teaching assistant time to ensure early intervention where children were at risk of not achieving age-related objectives.

Discussion and review suggestions

1. Look at the *Cycle for school improvement* on page 3 and the example of provision mapping on pages 8–10.
2. Read the brief case studies on pages 18–20, paying particular attention to management and leadership.
3. Watch the DVD sequences on effective leadership and management. In these extracts we hear from the headteachers of two schools, other senior managers, teaching assistants and governors. They are discussing the leadership and management of teaching assistants to ensure high standards of literacy and mathematics within a broad and balanced curriculum.
4. Consider the following discussion points.
 - Do we have in place the processes outlined in the *Cycle for school improvement*?
 - Do we base the deployment of teaching assistants on a rigorous analysis of needs and resources, and how do we gather and record these?

Provision map for an anonymous primary school, 2005–06

Provision additional to Wave 1 inclusive quality first teaching for all children

Provision	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Wave 2 literacy intervention	Teaching assistant (TA) 1–1 <i>Playing with Sounds</i> : children with poor phonological awareness (Steps 1 and 2 of <i>Progression in Phonics</i> (PIP))	Teacher and TA use <i>Early Literacy Support</i> (ELS) – term 2 Children to be identified through screening in term 1 but? <i>Hannah, Paul, John, Sunita</i> ELS top-up sessions – term 3 Children to be identified through ELS progress checks	<i>Additional Literacy Support</i> (ALS) modules 1, 2 and 3 – term 1 for children new to the school or needing further support with phonics following ELS			Teacher and TA use <i>Further Literacy Support</i> in term 2 – children to be identified through tracking but? <i>Sam, Daniel, Astor, Sian</i>	Booster – children to be identified through tracking but? <i>James, Ahmed, Elizabeth, Ian, Antony</i>
Wave 2 mathematics intervention		Additional 20-minute TA sessions from NNS <i>Models and Images</i> CD-ROM			<i>Springboard mathematics 4</i> : children to be identified through tracking but? <i>Jamia, Jordan, Mary, Kalam, Ben</i>	<i>Springboard mathematics 5</i> : children to be identified through tracking but? <i>Brooke, Daniel, Emma, Hannah, Victoria</i>	<i>Springboard mathematics 6</i> Booster: children to be identified through tracking but? <i>Sunita, Sarah, Beth, Mansoor, Alfie</i>
Wave 3 literacy intervention		<i>Reading Recovery</i> for 4 children for 15–20 weeks, terms 2 and 3. Lowest attaining children to be identified but? <i>David, Paul, Yusuf, Anthony</i>					Contingency for <i>Phonographix</i> ™ with children new to the school <i>Paired Reading</i> programme organised by inclusion coordinator, involving trained cross-age peer tutors and parents – approximately 18 children involved on a rolling programme

Provision	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Wave 3 mathematics intervention							
Structured language programme		Talking Partners in term 1 – Hannah, Paul, John, Mansoor, Jaz					
EMA provision	First language support and additional language work for 2 children at the early stages of learning EAL Kalam, Nic	First language support and additional language work for 2 children at the early stages of learning EAL Rafiq, Attia	First language support and additional language work for 4 children at the early stages of learning EAL Parvais, Ali, Jahangir, Sedef	Small group language enrichment/development for children at later stages of learning EAL Yusuf, Ibrahim, Usha, Jamila	Small group language enrichment/development for children at later stages of learning EAL Sara, Jamia, Mohammed	Small group language enrichment/development for children at later stages of learning EAL Mansoor, Jaz, Mohammed R., Nadia	Small group language enrichment/development for children at later stages of learning EAL Ali, Shantila, Jahangir
Coordination programme			Weekly lunchtime group plus home programme William, Burnett, Aiden, Charlie, Gareth, Jade, Kimberley				
One-to-one counselling for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties					Patrice, Maria	Adam	Ben, Alice
In-class support for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	Kalam, Jamila, Jenny	John, Rafiq, Attia	Stephen, Adam, Parvais, Ali, Jahangir, Sedef	Gareth, Brooke	William, Burnett, Patrice, Travis, Sara	Néil, Mohammed P.	Ben

Provision	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Small-group work to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills	<i>Incredible Years</i> – parenting support programme and children's social skills groups <i>Garth, Cameron, Reggie, Liam, Callum, Emma, Rebecca, Sunita, Billy, Jordan, Sara, Joanna?</i>		Friendship skills group <i>Peter, Stephen, Rebecca, Adam</i>	<i>National Pyramid Trust</i> clubs for less confident children – to be identified through screening	<i>Circle of Friends</i> for <i>Patrick</i> and <i>Maria</i>	Anger management group <i>Ali, Chris, Terry, Katie</i>	<i>National Pyramid Trust</i> transition clubs for less confident children – to be identified through screening
One-to-one mentoring to increase aspirations and engagement with learning					<i>Travis, William Paris, Aston</i>	<i>Daniel, Leroy, Luke</i>	
Other	One-to-one work with TA on programme devised by speech and language therapist <i>Cameron</i> Family Literacy and Family Numeracy programmes for interested parents or carers	One-to-one work with TA on programme devised by speech and language therapist <i>Anthony</i> Family Literacy and Family Numeracy programmes for interested parents or carers	One-to-one TA sensory programme supervised through outreach from SLD special school <i>Beth</i>	One-to-one TA work with child with ASD on social scripts <i>David</i> One-to-one work with TA on programme devised by speech and language therapist <i>Sasha</i>	Lunchtime club for children needing help with social skills/playground interactions <i>William, Burnett, Shelby, Jordan, Leroy, Aston</i> One-to-one TA work with child with ASD on social scripts <i>Luke</i>	Lunchtime club for children needing help with social skills/playground interactions <i>Adam, Chris, Katie, Terry, Siam, Luke</i> One-to-one TA work with child with ASD on social skills <i>Lucy</i>	One-to-one TA work with child with ASD on social skills <i>Nell</i>

Continuing professional development

Evidence shows that teaching assistants are more likely to have the skills and knowledge to support pupil learning effectively if they have received appropriate induction training and continuing professional development. Training for teaching assistants should:

- be planned, systematic and cumulative;
- be identified in the school development plan and individual performance management portfolios;
- relate to identified national, school and personal priorities;
- over time, contain a balance of general and subject-specific training, including developing subject knowledge;
- be monitored for impact and effectiveness;
- include opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to undertake joint professional development within and beyond the school.

It is important that teaching assistants should have good subject knowledge to enable them to support pupils' learning. This includes secure standards of literacy and numeracy. Details of the national training opportunities for teaching assistants are given in the further resources section of this booklet.

School-based mentors are important in the induction and training of teaching assistants, especially in supporting school-based tasks. While mentors have specific responsibility in this area, all teachers play their part in modelling effective learning and teaching approaches for teaching assistants and in supporting their new learning. Discussing the implications and next steps is crucial in helping develop the confidence and expertise of teaching assistants, and in building teams and professional working relationships.

At Sevenoaks Primary School teaching assistants are involved in a range of training opportunities. These are identified in their performance management process and include school-based sessions run by the literacy and numeracy coordinators and sessions for teaching assistants organised across a cluster of schools. Teaching assistants undertake a range of national qualifications, including Higher Level Teaching Assistant training. Continuing professional development is integrated into teaching assistants' contracted hours.

Discussion and review suggestions

1. Select one or two teaching assistants and itemise the continuing professional development opportunities they have had over the last two years. Do they exemplify the characteristics outlined on this page?
2. Read the brief case studies on pages 18–20, paying particular attention to professional development.
3. Watch the introductory DVD sequence and the sequences on continuing professional development. These show senior managers discussing this issue, a senior teaching assistant leading a review session for teaching assistants and a teaching assistant discussing her individual training programme with the deputy headteacher.
4. Consider the following discussion points.
 - How is the professional development of our teaching assistants related to school, personal and national priorities?
 - What has been the impact of this professional development?
 - What are our plans for the continuing professional development of teaching assistants, in the light of our discussions and observations?

Focused support for children and the use of evidence-based intervention programmes

Raising standards in literacy and mathematics

Teaching assistants have an important role to play in the teaching and learning of mathematics and literacy. For example, the Primary National Strategy report *Teaching assistants in Year 6* (DfES 0340-2004), which evaluated the 2002–03 pilot, shows the positive impact on attainment in schools which had trained teaching assistants working with targeted children in Year 6 (see page 23).

Trained teaching assistants can work with the teacher to ensure all children experience quality teaching within the literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson and across the broad and rich curriculum. This will involve working with the whole class, groups and individuals.

At Nancealverne School for children with severe and profound learning difficulties, the classroom assistant worked within the literacy hour and undertook various literacy courses. Her expertise grew and she took on responsibility for supporting literacy initiatives throughout the school. This involves working with children in a range of contexts, for example (in guided reading sessions), discussing targets linked to IEPs, making notes in the literacy records and developing resources such as story sacks. The coordinator now has a more accurate overview of reading and writing throughout the school, supported by regular feedback from the literacy assistant.

Within sessions they can undertake a variety of roles including:

- pedagogical support;
- modelling learning;
- supporting discussion and other speaking and listening activities;
- promoting positive behaviour;
- observing and assessing;
- resource management.

For more detail on each of these roles and practical suggestions see:

- *The role of teaching assistants in the shared section of the literacy hour* (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/features/literacy/)
- How is it best to use classroom assistants? pages 24–25 *NNS Framework for teaching mathematics from Reception to Year 6* (DfEE NNFT)
- *The Assessment for learning unit in Excellence and enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years* (DfES 0518-2004 G)



Use of intervention programmes

There is increasing evidence (see page 23) that focused, group intervention programmes delivered by trained teaching assistants have a significant impact on pupil achievement if the following factors are in place.

- The programme is selected based on **evidence** of its effectiveness and its match to children's needs.
- It has a time-limited focus.
- There is planned time for the teaching assistant to feed back to the class teacher on progress and also to discuss any issues that have arisen.
- Its impact and use is regularly reassessed as part of provision mapping to identify whether teaching assistant time is justified in running particular programmes each year.
- It is part of whole-school provision to raise standards.

The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy intervention programmes are time-limited, group intervention programmes which aim to accelerate progress up to age-related expectations. They are delivered by teaching assistants working with small groups of carefully targeted children. Details are given in the Further resources section of this booklet. Specific training in these programmes is a vital feature of their effective use and this training is offered by LEAs. Undertaking such training (ideally alongside the class teacher) enables teaching assistants to:

- develop their subject knowledge, pedagogical expertise and confidence;
- deliver the programme with high degrees of fidelity;
- understand how the programme links to the ongoing work of the class;
- develop a shared understanding of the programme with the class teacher.

Some LEAs also organise support meetings for teaching assistants running intervention programmes and this could also be organised via local networking structures.

Reviews of the programmes and refresher training in subsequent years help consolidate teaching assistants' expertise.

'I found the support meetings run by our LEA after the first four weeks of the programme to be really helpful. We were able to discuss how the programme was going and went through the progress checks together. It was good to hear how other teaching assistants worked in their schools, any problems they'd had and solutions they'd tried.'
(Teaching assistant)



Discussion and review suggestions

1. List the ways teaching assistants in your school support whole-class, group and individual work in mathematics and literacy. Is any context under-represented?
2. Read the brief case studies on pages 18–20, paying particular attention to the roles teaching assistants play in raising standards in literacy and mathematics.
3. Watch the introductory DVD sequence and the sequences on focused support. These show teaching assistants supporting quality first teaching in mathematics and literacy sessions and delivering structured intervention programmes.
4. Consider the following discussion points.
 - What practices have been most successful regarding teaching assistant support during literacy and mathematics sessions within your school? When and where are they used? What further could they do?
 - How do we ensure that teaching assistants have the best conditions for achieving success when working with intervention programmes?
 - What has been the impact on pupil achievement in literacy and mathematics of teaching assistant deployment?

Joint planning and reviewing progress

Time for joint planning between teachers and teaching assistants and regular opportunities for reviewing progress can have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the learning support offered. There are many different ways and different contexts in which joint planning and reviewing can be undertaken. These include:

- termly or half-termly reviews;
- involvement in in-service training days;
- timetabled weekly meetings;
- ongoing informal feedback during and after sessions;
- a shared booklet or recorded memos;
- computer-based records.

Research and evaluation reports (see pages 22–23) identify regular time for joint planning and reviewing progress as an issue in many schools.

Joint planning and reviewing progress between teachers and teaching assistants, both at whole-school and class level, helps to ensure:

- a consistent approach;
- opportunities for each adult to share their particular knowledge and expertise;
- that any group or individual work is integrated into whole-class work, where appropriate, and relevant links are made;
- focused differentiation and support are identified;
- assessment opportunities and techniques are identified and detailed assessment information is built up;
- curricular targets and success criteria are jointly understood;
- learning and teaching can be adjusted in the light of feedback.

At Bonner School, Tower Hamlets, there are designated weekly times for year teams (which include teaching assistants) and individual class teachers and teaching assistants to undertake joint review and planning. Day-to-day feedback and adjustment to planning is an ongoing and frequent aspect of the professional dialogue between team members.

Discussion and review suggestions

1. Ask teaching assistants and teachers to note their joint planning and reviewing opportunities over one week. What does this tell you about the provision for these activities?
2. Read the brief case studies on pages 18–20, paying particular attention to opportunities for joint planning and reviewing progress.
3. Watch the introductory DVD sequence and the DVD sequences on joint planning and reviewing progress. These show a range of opportunities for teacher and teaching assistant exchanges about planning and reviewing progress.
4. Consider the following discussion points.
 - How do teaching assistants give and receive feedback about children's learning, their misconceptions and next steps?
 - How do teaching assistants give and receive feedback about children's social and emotional development?

Monitoring impact

The impact of teaching assistant support should be evaluated against both quantitative and qualitative learning outcomes. Monitoring impact might include:

- regular opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to review pupils' progress;
- national, optional and other test results;
- intervention programme screening tools;
- work sampling;
- observation;
- evidence of pupil behaviour, inclusion and participation, and attitudes to learning.

Provision can then be amended in the light of evidence of effectiveness. Such ongoing monitoring and evaluation will assist schools in becoming self-evaluating schools as outlined by Ofsted within the new inspection framework.

At Bonner Primary School the deployment of teaching assistants is regularly monitored to assess its impact on children's learning and attitudes. For example, reviews are held at the end of all intervention programmes and this information feeds into the data collection for the annual provision mapping and teaching assistant deployment. As part of performance review the headteacher regularly observes teaching assistants as they work with children.

Discussion and review suggestions

1. Map the monitoring of teaching assistants you have undertaken in the last half-term.
2. Read the brief case studies on pages 18–20, paying particular attention to how monitoring informs the deployment of teaching assistants.
3. Watch the introductory DVD sequence and the sequences on monitoring impact. These show headteachers, governors and other members of the management teams discussing the impact of teaching assistants on attainment in their schools.
4. Consider the following discussion points.
 - What evidence do you have of the impact of teaching assistants on attainment?
 - What use do you make of this evidence?

Performance management



At Christchurch School, all teachers and teaching assistants have a professional profile. This is a dossier of evidence and information relating to their work at the school, which supports and informs their professional development and performance management. The portfolios contain a range of information such as records of all professional development activities, pupil targets and achievements, feedback from classroom observations and work scrutiny, and relevant extracts from Ofsted reports. Teaching assistants are all developing areas of curriculum responsibility. For example, one is the ICT manager and another has responsibility for curriculum enrichment (such as 'out of school' activities).

Many schools now include teaching assistants in their performance management systems. Teaching assistants have regular meetings with their line manager that are focused on performance management targets related to the school development and personal development needs. An action plan supports these targets and teaching assistants receive appropriate training. The impact of teaching assistant work is monitored against their targets. The performance management system supports teaching assistants in raising standards by ensuring that they have clear objectives and regular discussions about their work and professional development.

Discussion and review suggestions

1. Look at the key actions in your school development plan. Which of these could include performance management targets for teaching assistants?
2. Read the brief case studies on pages 18–20, paying particular attention to how teaching assistants are included in performance management linked to the school development plan.
3. Watch the introductory DVD sequence and the DVD sequences on performance management. These show teachers and teaching assistants engaged in performance management reviews and discussions.
4. Consider the following discussion points.
 - How can teaching assistants' performance management targets be used to support raising standards in our school?
 - How can these targets be supported and monitored?





Case study: mapping provision

Tavistock Community Primary School

is a large school in a semi-rural area. The school admits children with a diverse range of needs. It has an area resource base for children with communication and interaction difficulties. There is a fully-inclusive nursery, with enhanced staffing, specifically to provide for children under five whose needs require early intervention. This too is an area resource.

The well-focused deployment of teaching assistants is a strong feature of the school management systems. The school has developed an annual provision mapping system which identifies possible provision in each year group from Nursery to Year 6. A further provision map identifies approaches and interventions according to areas of difficulty such as 'cognition and learning' or 'communication and interaction'. All Key Stages 1 and 2 provision maps are differentiated into Wave 1, Wave 2 and Wave 3 provision.* The provision maps are used alongside the class targets and individual children's targets to develop individual and group programmes and deploy teaching assistants, taking account of their expertise and experience. Provision across the school is needs-led. Using the provision maps in this way also reduces paperwork such as Individual Education Plans, as they show the teaching programmes and the support children are receiving. Outcomes can be monitored against this. Teachers and teaching assistants liaise to discuss the provision mapping, the strategies and programmes used and to decide on the next steps. Outcomes are assessed against the provision map and targets.

Case studies

Case study: raising standards in literacy and numeracy

Bonner Primary School, Tower Hamlets, is a large inner city, multicultural school. There are many areas of social and economic deprivation in the locality. The children start school with low levels of attainment but leave with very high levels of attainment. Ofsted has noted the 'excellent' leadership and management provided by the headteacher, who ensures 'outstanding' use is made of all available resources. Teaching assistants are deployed following annual needs and provision mapping. For example, this year they identified the Year 6 cohort as having particular needs and systematically targeted teaching assistant and teacher time to the cohort to form three teaching groups of 20 (reducing teaching assistant allocation to other classes). They predicted that no child will achieve below level 3 in the national tests and they will achieve well above national average at L4+. They also targeted teaching assistant time to ensure early intervention where children were at risk of not achieving age-related objectives.

Performance management and continuing professional development are integrated to ensure national, school and personal priorities are addressed. The headteacher regularly observes and monitors teaching assistants as part of this process. Training opportunities include sessions led by senior teaching assistants, which review subject knowledge within the team as well as children's progress. Teaching assistant time is allocated to ensure they are included in school development days and there is designated time each week devoted to joint planning and reviewing progress.

* The three waves model of provision is based on systematic, graduated allocation of support according to need. Wave 1 is quality first teaching for all children. Wave 2 is additional interventions to enable children to work at age-related expectations or above. Wave 3 is additional, highly personalised interventions.



Case study: training and performance management

Rachel Keeling Nursery School has a mixture of teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants on its staff. They have very good levels of understanding about how young children learn and work closely together, sharing their expertise. Teaching assistants are a key part of the staff team and feed back the responses of the children to the class teacher so they can be incorporated in planning for future learning.

The deputy headteacher oversees the training and development of teaching assistants in the school and this is supported and moderated by the headteacher through regular meetings. Teaching assistants attend the DfES induction training run over a period of weeks by the LEA. The deputy headteacher also attends this training as their mentor. The follow-up tasks in school are supported by the mentor and other team members through discussion and ensuring that the links to the Foundation Stage curriculum and the children's observed responses to the activities are clear.

Interaction and support strategies to assist children's learning are modelled by the deputy headteacher and time made to discuss these with teaching assistants. The deputy headteacher undertakes regular performance reviews with the teaching assistants. This enables relevant training to be identified and linked to their performance management targets.

Case study: teaching assistants and community involvement

Highweek Community Primary and Nursery School draws the majority of its pupils from a large housing estate, parts of which have problems related to social and economic deprivation. The current priorities of the school include working with parents to support their own development alongside helping them to help their children and fostering community involvement. Teaching assistants play an active role through everyday contacts with parents and planned activities.

A breakfast club and after-school homework club provide extended support at the beginning and end of the school day. The school hall and community room provide local groups with meeting places. The school provides 'Learning together' courses aimed at the parents of young children to improve the parents' literacy and numeracy skills as well as those of their children. There are parent-and-toddler groups to encourage very young children and their parents to spend time together in school. The teaching assistants know the children and their families well and the involvement of teaching assistants in this range of activities is important in building relationships and providing good role models. Recently for example, as part of the school's 'Healthy school' programme, teaching assistants went food shopping with some of the parents and children and then helped them prepare lunch. The impact of these initiatives and the role of the teaching assistants in them have been notable. Partnerships with parents and others are 'very productive and have a significant impact on pupils' achievements, as do the extended services offered by the school. These are outstanding. Links fostered with the community overall are exceptional.' (Ofsted).

The school has also developed whole-school provision mapping (waves 1, 2 and 3) and monitoring to ensure effective use of teaching assistants throughout the school. Each class has a full-time teaching assistant who works in a variety of targeted ways with classes, groups and individual pupils. The school's Ofsted report makes frequent comments on the impact of teaching assistants on children's learning and attitudes. 'Teaching assistants are very effective and help teachers promote pupils' very positive attitudes to learning.'



Case study: **working with classes, groups and individuals**

Sevenoaks Primary School is a large school whose children leave in Year 6 achieving well above average in literacy and mathematics. Teaching assistants are deployed strategically within the school and 'make a very good contribution to learning throughout the school' (Ofsted). They provide 'a very good balance of challenge and support' to low-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Teaching assistants are part of the senior management team.

Each year the senior management team (including the SENCO), in discussion with teachers and teaching assistants, reviews progress based on optional tasks, work sampling and classroom observations. Provision for the following academic year is then decided and teaching assistants allocated to work with classes, groups and some individuals. The SENCO and teaching assistants frequently review progress and feed back on individuals and groups. Regular reviewing includes close scrutiny of intervention programmes.

Teaching assistants are involved in a range of training opportunities. These are identified in their performance management process and include school-based sessions run by the literacy and numeracy coordinators and sessions for teaching assistants organised across a cluster of schools. Teaching assistants undertake a range of national qualifications, including Higher Level Teaching Assistant training. Continuing professional development is integrated into teaching assistants' contracted hours.



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Summary of the research and evaluation evidence

A range of recent research and official reports have given consistent messages about the use of teaching assistants. These reports show that well-managed and well-trained teaching assistants can have an impact on teacher workload, the attention given to groups and individuals, ethos and attitudes, and raising standards. They also show that there remain issues that must be addressed before all schools are using their teaching assistants most effectively.

Teaching assistants in schools: the current state of play (NFER, 2002), commissioned by the Local Government Association, found that:

- teaching and learning appeared to be more effective when teachers and teaching assistants worked in a collaborative, mutually supportive way;
- joint training and development, where teachers and teaching assistants learned and developed their skills together, was very effective in fostering a consistent approach in the classroom;
- teachers needed to receive training and development in the most effective ways of working with teaching assistants. They noted that this was not widely available.

Report available from NFER (Tel: 01753 747281).

Teaching assistants in primary schools: an evaluation of the quality and impact of their work (Ofsted, 2002) found that:

- teaching assistants have a key role to play in the intervention and catch-up programmes;
- most teachers believe that having a teaching assistant in the classroom helps to create a better working atmosphere and thus makes teaching less stressful but it does require them to spend additional time on planning and preparation. In schools where these competing demands are not managed well, HMI found that teachers do not experience the full benefits that support from teaching assistants can provide.

Report reference HMI 434 – downloadable from www.ofsted.gov.uk

Remodelling the school workforce

(Ofsted, 2004) found that:

- teaching assistants were making a valuable contribution to learning and teaching;
- a number of schools could point to measurable improvement in the achievement of pupils when teaching assistants worked with clearly identified groups and used a well-structured programme for which they had been trained;
- many schools had increased the level of teaching assistant support but had not always given consideration to the most effective way of deploying their teaching assistants;
- class teachers working with younger children frequently received more classroom support than colleagues working with older children;
- a minority of schools had reviewed their deployment of teaching assistants to achieve the maximum impact on teacher workload and on standards of attainment;
- higher standards were generally achieved where support staff were deployed to bring about clearly specified improvements in a defined area of school life.

Report reference HMI 358 – downloadable from www.ofsted.gov.uk

Reading for purpose and pleasure (Ofsted, 2004) found that teaching assistants often worked with some of the most challenging groups and individual pupils. They frequently bore the main responsibility for listening to them read. However, they did not always have enough confidence and knowledge about teaching reading to adapt intervention programmes where it was necessary.

Schools with high standards identified pupils' difficulties in reading early on. They used intervention programmes wisely, providing relevant support. In ineffective schools, intervention programmes followed one another with too little evaluation of their appropriateness and impact.

In a number of schools teaching assistants had received no formal training for their work.

Report reference HMI 2393 – downloadable from www.ofsted.gov.uk

National Evaluation of the National Literacy Strategy Further Literacy Support Programme

(Beard et al. University of Leeds, 2003) showed that in this teaching assistant-delivered programme:

- pupils' literacy attainments increased. Further Literacy Support pupils showed gains in both reading and writing, measured by teacher assessment. In reading there were statistically significant gains as measured by the standardised testing. The second year of the report showed that 84% of children who had been in Further Literacy Support went on to gain a level 4 or above in their Year 6 national tests;
- the teaching assistants rated their training very highly;
- the higher progress schools had implemented the programme with high degrees of fidelity and with regular links being made between the work of the Further Literacy Support group and that of the rest of the class. Regular discussions between teachers and teaching assistants were also very evident in these schools;
- the skill and tenacity of the teaching assistants were very apparent, often in the face of challenging new extensions to their role.

The first report can be seen at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy/about/news_and_events_archive/870975 The report on the second year is to be published shortly and will be placed on the Primary National Strategy website.

Evidence for the Effectiveness of the Early Literacy Support Programme

(Snowling et al. University of York, 2004)

The effectiveness of the UK Early Literacy Support programme was evaluated relative to another reading intervention programme. The evaluation discovered that:

- both groups of children made equivalent and significant gains in reading and spelling that were maintained at follow-up;
- the success of the trained teaching assistants in implementing the programmes testifies to the important pedagogical role that they are able to play in schools;
- the Early Literacy Support programme provides a cost-effective method of boosting 6-year-old children's reading to an average level.

The report will be available on the Primary National Strategy website –

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/

Teaching assistants in Year 6

(DfES 0340-2004). This evaluation showed the impact that trained teaching assistants working with targeted children in Year 6 had on attainment in schools.

The results were based on the results of more than 1100 schools and over 56,000 children.

- Overall Key Stage 2 results rose by over three percentage points in English L4+ and by two percentage points in mathematics. Participating schools narrowed the gap between themselves and other schools.
- LEA evaluations showed that the pilot schools improved their percentage of children achieving L4+ in both English and mathematics by more than that achieved by schools in the LEA as a whole.
- The report concluded that what made the difference was training, support for the teaching assistant in their new role, appropriate deployment, opportunities for joint planning and evaluation with the class teacher, and tracking the progress of target pupils.

Available on the Primary National Strategy website – www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/

Further research

A comprehensive summary of research findings (six pages) on commonly used interventions and teaching assistant support and a summary of research into effective additional provision (14 pages) can be found on pages 243–262 of *Leading on inclusion* (DfES 1183-2005 G), available at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/

Further resources

Training and professional standards for teaching assistants

Induction training for teaching assistants in primary schools. See the teaching assistants' area of Teachernet: www.teachernet.gov.uk These modules include two new modules – 'Understanding how children learn' and 'ICT in teaching and learning'.

Higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) programme. See the HLTA website: www.hlta.gov.uk

Literacy and numeracy requirements for the professional standards for HLTA are available on the HLTA website: www.hlta.gov.uk

NLS and NNS literacy and mathematics workshops for teaching assistants in Year 6 may be available via your LEA.

National Strategies intervention programmes

Literacy intervention programmes

Early Literacy Support (ELS) (DfEE 0651/2001)

Additional Literacy Support (ALS) (DfES 0337-2004 CD)

*Y3 Literacy Support (Y3LS)**

Further Literacy Support (FLS) (DfES 0359/2002)

Year 6 booster units (CD: DfEE 0017/2001)

Mathematics intervention programmes

Springboard 3 (DfEE 0091/2001)

Springboard 4 (DfES 0096/2002)

Springboard 5 (DfEE 0151/2000)

Springboard 6 (DfEE 0651/2001)

Year 6 booster lessons (DfEE 0778/2001)

Supporting children with gaps in their mathematical understanding – Wave 3 mathematics (DfES 1168-2005 G)

These programmes and *Targeting support: managing NNS/NLS intervention programmes* (DfES 0669/2002) can be found on the Primary National Strategy website: www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/

*This new Y3 programme will be available to download from the PNS website from April 2005. A pack of distance learning materials to support the implementation of the programme is available from Prolog in April 2005, quoting reference numbers DfES 1223-2005 (file), DfES 1191-2005 (video).

Brooks, G. (2002) *What works for children with literacy difficulties?* London, DfES research report 380

Dowker, A. (2004) *What works for children with mathematical difficulties?* London, DfES research report 554

Interventions from provision map, pages 8–10

- Talking Partners www.rowa.co.uk/talk_part.htm
- Phonographix™ www.readamerica.net
- Paired reading www.Dundee.ac.uk/psychology/TRWresources
- Reading Recovery <http://ioewebserver.ioe.ac.uk/ioe/index.html>
- National Pyramid Trust www.nptrust.org.uk/
- Friendship skills groups, circles of friends, anger management groups
Contact your local educational psychology or behaviour support service for information.



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