

Learning Support Assistant Policy



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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Learning Support Assistants play a vital **role at Maple House School**. This policy celebrates their contributions while acknowledging the complexities of maximizing their impact. It highlights research on effective learning support assistant deployment, high-quality teaching, and inclusive learning environments, offering the school leadership team an insight into overcoming barriers and making leadership decisions that unlock the full potential of this workforce.

1.1 Purpose

To provide a framework whereby HLTA and LSAs at Maple House School are enabled to maintain a good standard of performance.

2. Scope

The policy will be implemented on an ongoing basis as part of the Quality Assurance calendar within Maple House School and applies to all HLTAs and LSAs within the school.

Where concerns regarding performance are identified through the quality assurance process, informal support will be applied in line with the Staff Capability Policy.

3. Policy Statement

Maple House School is committed to providing high quality learning experiences for students and HLTAs and LSAs form a crucial role within this. Each employee is provided with support to help them develop and consequently ensure strong outcomes for students.

This policy sets our arrangements that are in place within Maple House School that are applied to ensure the high-quality support provided to students.

4. The Role of Learning Support Assistants and Higher-Level Teaching Assistants

4.1 The Role of the L1-2 TA

Teaching and Learning

Individual support in the classroom

- Fostering a supportive relationship with students, building trust and confidence to facilitate their academic and personal development.
- Students should not become over-reliant on one adult, this is why they will normally be supported by more than one LSA working as part of the class team, supported by additional adults outside of the classroom
- Whenever possible, students will be included in whole class activities and will work with their peers.
- Using instructional materials and technology to enhance teaching and learning.
- Existing strategies to support students inside of the classroom are planned and researched and led through a TAC to ensure targeted interventions are supportive and demonstrate progress and engagement
- Develop and use an array of strategies to support young people in the classroom such as helicopter drops, check-ins, scribing, prompting and reading.

- Supporting the teacher with managing classroom behaviour and promoting a positive learning environment
- Communicating regularly with teachers to share insights and observations about student progress, challenges, and successes.
- Providing extra support and encouragement to students who are struggling academically or emotionally
- Advocating for the needs of students with special educational needs or disabilities, ensuring they have access to appropriate resources, accommodations, and support services.

Individual/Small group interventions inside of the classroom

- Some LSAs will deliver high-quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions, e.g. RWI Phonics, Speech and Language, Sensory, Numeracy and Thrive within the classroom or in the hub.
- They may conduct baseline/post intervention assessments and will keep pupil progress records.
- They will offer 1:1 support for short periods of time outside of the classroom to allow the student to co-regulate and return to class.

Administrative Duties

LSAs will:

- Make resources that are directly linked to the EHCP. Eg visual timetables, social stories, reward charts.
- Contribute to meetings about students e.g. annual review meetings, pupil progress meetings, meetings with outside agencies
- Prepare resources linked to the interventions
- Support with the preparation of displays in the classroom and around the school
- Supporting the teacher with communication home with families on a regular basis
- Update the MIS following any contact or behaviour incident
- Update and monitor education data tracking systems for– eg Lexia, Sum Dog, Numeracy Ninja's, Earwig EHCP, Earwig Academic
- Update any safeguarding concerns using MyConcern
- Cover duties when required and facilitate lunch and break clubs
- Supporting students in their emotional, social and educational development.
- Assisting with administrative tasks such as record-keeping, marking, and organising educational resources
- Managing classroom equipment and technology, ensuring they are in working order.

4.2 The Role of the HLTA/L3 TA (in addition to L1-2 TA responsibilities)

Management

- Guide/Advise L1 and L2 LSAs on appropriate support strategies within the class daily
- Provide supportive critical feedback to LSAs that inform the appraisal process
- Ensure that student EHCP termly reporting is completed on a regular basis - at least weekly – in collaboration with the class teacher
- Manage interventions as directed by the SENCO/Pastoral Manager ensuring interventions are logged and tracked.
- Observation and feedback on performance of L1 and L2 LSAs to support development and upskilling for the support of children at Maple House School

Teaching and Learning

- Planning and delivering targeted intervention to students with the support of the SEN and Clinical Teams
- Liaising with the class teacher to ensure the effective deployment of LSAs in the classroom
- Keeping reporting on track for relevant systems

- Preparing and setting up classrooms, leading single lessons and working with the teacher to plan activities.
- Interacting independently with children during learning activities
- Collaborating with teachers to plan and deliver engaging lessons that cater to the diverse needs of students.
- Differentiating instruction and learning activities to accommodate the diverse needs and abilities of students with SEND.
- Modifying teaching materials, resources, and assessments to make them accessible and inclusive for all students.
- Adapting lesson plans and instructional strategies to accommodate different learning styles and abilities within the classroom
- Implementing strategies and interventions to support students with sensory processing disorders, learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and other special needs.
- Leading small group activities, delivering pre-planned lessons, or providing cover for absent teachers, ensuring continuity of learning.

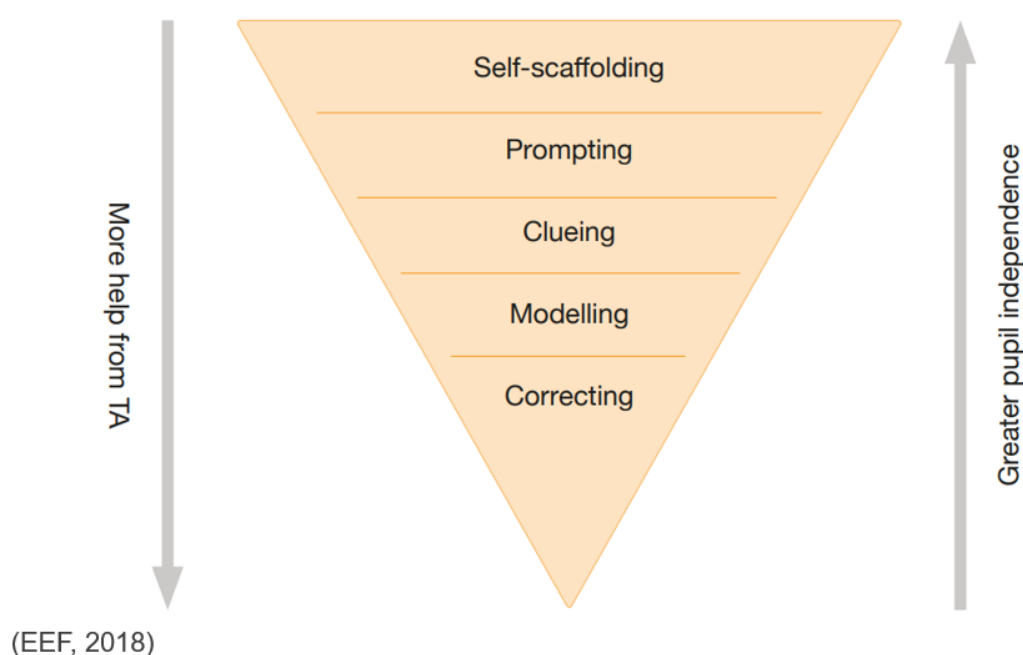
Administrative Duties

- Prepare *risk assessments* and *behaviour support plans* following any new or concerning behaviours
- Ensure the class folders are prepared for the class
- Review student documents in line with the school quality assurance cycle
- Ensure academic, SEN, behaviour and safeguarding administration is completed as part of the plan and reset end of day procedures.

5. Scaffolding for Independence

The quality of interactions that LSAs have with children is the most important aspect of teaching and learning, therefore LSAs should use the scaffolding framework for LSA-Student interaction.

The initial expectation is that students self-scaffold while the LSA observes their performance. LSAs should then intervene appropriately when students demonstrate they are unable to proceed, by moving down the layers in turn. It's important the tasks set by teachers, and supported by LSAs, provide students with the right level of challenge.



Self-Scaffolding – The LSAs default position is to observe pupil performance, allowing time and space for them to process, think and try the task independently. LSAs need to get comfortable with

students struggling a bit and recognise this as an essential component of learning. Using helicopter drop-ins to support and check-in allows the student independence but ensures support where required.

Self-scaffolding represents the highest level of student independence. LSAs observe, giving students time for processing and thinking. Self-scaffolders can: plan how to approach a task; problem-solve as they go; and review how they approached a task.

Prompting – LSAs provide prompts when students are unable to self-scaffold. Prompts encourage students to draw on their own knowledge, but refrain from specifying a strategy. The aim is to nudge students into deploying a self-scaffolding technique. For example: "What do you need to do first?"; "What's your plan?"; "You can do this!"

Clueing – Often students know the strategies or knowledge required to solve a problem, but find it difficult to call them to mind. Clues worded as questions provide a hint in the right direction. The answer must contain a key piece of information to help students work out how to move forward. Always start with a small clue.

Modelling – Prompts and clues can be ineffective when students encounter a task that requires a new skill or strategy. LSAs, as confident and competent experts, can model while students actively watch and listen. Students should try the same step for themselves immediately afterwards.

Correcting – Correcting involves providing answers and requires no independent thinking. Occasionally it is appropriate to do this, however, LSAs should always aim instead to model and encourage students to apply new skills or knowledge first.

Additional

Distraction – Used to distract from the anxiety or barrier to a question to de-escalate when dysregulation is known.

Conflict Resolution – perceptions are often problematic for students, being able to unpick triggers and offer supportive advice around conflict, relationships and social communication will enable students to understand misconceptions and reintegrate back in to learning.

PACE – Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy - A trauma-informed practice offers a relational therapeutic approach cultivating empathy and a nurturing supportive environment. ([8 Top Tips for Using Dan Hughes' PACE in the Classroom with Students Who Have a Lived Experience of Trauma and Unmet Attachment Needs - +ProActive Approaches](#))

Scaffolding involves:

- Working towards the development of a mental tool kit
- Helping students develop skills for self-scaffolding
- Supporting by providing the least amount of help. Help should be minimal but specific
- Providing support that constantly adapts
- Recognising smaller learning mini-goals (process success criteria), planning how to achieve them and carefully observing the progress of students working through the mini goals
- Using open ended questions and higher order questions e.g. compare and contrast questions
- Providing the right amount of support at the right time (Helicopter Drop-ins)
- **Please see Appendix 4: Teaching Assistant – Pupil Interactions**

6. Implementation

The form teacher will be responsible for the implementation of this policy, under the guidance of the SENDCO.

7. Support, Advice and Communication

Any queries concerning the statement content or its implementation should be addressed directly with the Lead SENDCO.

Additional CPD can be found on National College. Please speak with your line manager for additional CPD as part of the appraisal process.

8. Review

This statement will be reviewed annually or upon significant changes to the daily operational routines of the school.

Appendix 1: TA Learning Walk Form

HLTA/LSA	Term	Date	Reason	Observer	Group	Lesson
			Class/Individual			
	Standard	Embedded	Developing	Not evident		
DEPLOYMENT OF TA IN THE CLASSROOM	Additional adults are not used as an informal teacher within the classroom	Teacher's spend at least as much time with students with the most barriers to learning as they do with the least.	The teacher makes inconsistent decisions regarding TA deployment throughout the lesson.	TA's are used as the 'primary educator' routinely in the lesson.		
	All students have opportunities to engage with whole class teaching	LSAs work with a range of students, supplementing and extending the work of the class teacher.	LSAs are not consistent in supplementing whole class teaching	Students with higher support have fewer opportunities to engage with whole class teaching.		
	All staff work effectively as a team	Teachers and LSAs work effectively as a team, deployment driven by student needs	LSAs drift towards a teaching role with lower attaining students.	Teachers spend less time working with the most complex students due to TA deployment.		
	LSAs are redeployed throughout the lesson	LSAs take an active role in the teaching of students by: supporting whole class delivery, roving the room, etc.	There is no attempt to redeploy the TA in response to 'real time' needs of students	LSAs are static and do not support whole class teaching.		
	LSAs display appropriate reporting skills to support assessment and progress (Earwig, EHCP, Intervention, etc)	LSAs effectively report and collect evidence of student attainment and progress to inform planning and learning.	LSAs lack consistency in reporting and collecting evidence of student attainment and progress to inform planning and learning.	LSAs do not report or collect evidence of student attainment and progress to inform planning and learning.		
LSAs INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS	LSAs carefully consider the amount of support provided to complete learning	LSAs consistently give the least amount of help first, providing support at the right time.	Interactions from staff lean towards learning, understanding and on Task behaviour.	LSA support is heavily prompted and focused on Task completion.		
	LSAs allow students to retain responsibility for their work	Students can demonstrate the capacity and confidence to structure their work without adult support	LSAs withdraw from student support, with support continuing to be high throughout the lesson.	LSAs repeat verbatim what teachers say during whole class instruction.		
	LSAs have good subject knowledge to support learning (inc intervention)	LSAs have good subject knowledge which can be seen through good questioning.	Open ended questions are used frequently and appropriately	LSAs mainly use closed questions and there are gaps in the subject knowledge.		
	TA use of good questioning to support learning and progress	Questioning is appropriate to the activity/task and clearly thought about/planned. There is clear purpose behind questions.	Questions are planned but tend to be too open/closed. Wait time could be more effective – students are often given less than 3 seconds to respond.	Questioning is either not planned or badly planned. The teacher is not clear on the answer they want. Wait time not used or not used well. Most or all opportunities for questioning lost.		
TEACHER/TA PREPARATION AND TRAINING	LSAs understand the lesson content and key concepts being taught	LSAs are clear with the concepts and information being taught, skills applied and intended outcomes.	There is a lack of dynamic communication meaning that teachers receive little or no feedback .	LSAs are not prepared for lessons and tune into teacher delivery to pick up vital subject knowledge		
	LSAs and teachers have positive relationships to support strong pupil progress	Teachers and LSAs capture meaningful feedback to inform the next stages of learning.	Teachers and LSAs have good professional relationships.	LSAs have limited awareness of lesson objectives, expected outcomes, subject knowledge and individual student needs		

Key strength		Key area for development	
1.	Additional adults are not used as an informal teacher within the classroom	1.	LSAs do not solely support the weakest students
2.	All students have opportunities to engage with whole class teaching	2.	Ensure that all students are engaging with whole class discussions
3.	All staff work effectively as a team	3.	Ensure clarity around roles within the classroom
4.	LSAs are redeployed throughout the lesson	4.	LSAs and teachers make sensible decisions regarding deployment as students progress through learning
5.	LSAs carefully consider the amount of support provided to complete LSAs	5.	Ensure that students are not solely relying on adult support in lesson
6.	Students retain responsibility for their work	6.	Encourage responsibility for learning
7.	Subject Knowledge	7.	Develop subject knowledge
8.	Questioning	8.	Provide students with wait time when questioning
9.	LSAs understand the information being taught	9.	LSAs are prepared in advance of the lesson for upcoming content
10.	LSAs and teachers have positive relationships	10.	Develop more positive relationship with colleagues

Appendix 2: LSA Observation Form

[illegible]

Time (Minutes)	Main Activity of TA					Students being supported (name, attainment, SEND, etc)	Differentiation	Teacher Role	Features of Interaction
	1:1 with student	Working with a group of students	Roving the classroom	Listening to teacher talk	Other Task (admin)				
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45									
Summary	%	%	%	%	%				

Appendix 3: Effective Practices in the Deployment of Teaching Assistants

Deployment of Teaching Assistants Summary of recommendations  Education Endowment Foundation	
Effective practices	
1 Deploy TAs in ways that enable all pupils to access high-quality teaching	TAs should supplement – not replace – the teacher. This means that pupils who struggle most should spend at least as much time with the teacher as other pupils, if not more. • Ensure working relationships between teachers and TAs meet all pupils' needs, with the teacher retaining responsibility for all pupils. • Equip TAs with a range of scaffolding strategies appropriate to the age, subject, and specific individual needs of pupils they work with. • Support teachers and TAs to identify practices which inhibit pupil learning and engage in effective alternatives.
2 Deploy TAs to scaffold learning and to develop pupils' independence	Leaders should ensure TAs are prepared to engage in scaffolding practices that support pupils' learning and ability to learn independently. Supporting pupil independence should be a key consideration of TA deployment. • Equip TAs with a range of scaffolding strategies appropriate to the age, subject, and specific individual needs of pupils they work with. • Remove scaffolds over time to promote independent learning, with teachers supporting TAs to make those judgements. • Ensure pupils have the opportunity to attempt tasks independently before intervening appropriately when they can't proceed.
3 Deploy TAs to deliver well-chosen, evidence based, structured interventions where appropriate	The evidence shows that TAs can support pupils effectively through structured interventions. However, these need to be carefully considered, monitored, and linked to the classroom to ensure positive outcomes for pupils • Reflect on the purpose of interventions and engage with the evidence base before deploying TAs to deliver structured interventions. • Monitor progress to be sure the benefit of the intervention outweighs time away from the classroom. • Support teachers and TAs to engage in bridging practices that connect learning between interventions and the classroom.
Effective implementation	
4 Prepare and train staff around effective TA deployment	The evidence shows that TAs can support pupils effectively through structured interventions. However, these need to be carefully considered, monitored, and linked to the classroom to ensure positive outcomes for pupils. • Provide clarity on the role of the TA for all in the school. • Enable TAs to be effective in their role and teachers to work effectively with TAs, through effective professional development. • Develop ongoing coordination and communication so that teachers and TAs are prepared for their day-to-day roles.
5 Engage all staff in the process of implementing effective TA deployment	Effective TA deployment is complex and dependent on a range of factors. School leaders should focus on implementation as they look to embed effective practices. • Ensure TA deployment is informed by both the underpinning evidence and the challenges of putting it into practice. • Engage and align the school community to build a shared understanding of good TA practice. • Be deliberate about deployment decisions, which should be taken in the context of the school and its current priorities.

Appendix 4: Teaching Assistant - pupil interactions

Scaffolding framework

Teaching Assistant - pupil interactions



Successful TA-pupil interactions provide the support pupils need, but not more than they need. This means teachers and TAs should follow the principle of giving the **least additional support first**, informed by a deep knowledge of their pupils and what they might need for a specific task. The scaffolds that are provided to pupils might be visual, verbal or written.

This framework aims to show what this might mean for TAs' work with pupils, and offers examples to demonstrate how scaffolds can be used to gradually increase pupils' independence over time. This framework can be used by TAs reflecting on their practice, teachers considering how they work alongside a TA, and by leaders who are considering how to support colleagues.

Pupil works with greater independence	 Definition	 Visual scaffolds	 Verbal scaffolds	 Written scaffolds
Pupil is dependent on adults	Self-scaffolding Self-scaffolding represents the highest level of pupil independence. TAs observe, giving pupils time for processing and thinking. Self-scaffolding can: plan how to approach a task; problem-solve as they go; and review how they approached a task.	Pupils independently create their own visual reminders. This might be a mind map to layout key information or symbols/codes that support the child to condense the learning.	Pupils ask themselves questions to reflect upon challenges they have encountered previously and identify strategies that may be useful: <i>"What might be tricky here?" "What are my next steps?" "Why might this be useful?"</i>	Pupils independently create and use their own checklist of success criteria when monitoring and self-evaluating their work.
	Prompting TAs provide prompts when pupils are unable to self-scaffold. Prompts encourage pupils to draw on their own knowledge but refrain from specifying a strategy. The aim is to nudge pupils into deploying a self-scaffolding technique.	Encouraging pupils to draw upon their own knowledge to identify visual prompts in the classroom, such as task planners, a numbered list of actions, or working walls.	Asking questions that prompt a pupil to plan their approach to a task, including how they might overcome challenges: <i>"What will you do first?" "What will be most difficult? What could you use to help you?"</i>	Encouraging pupils to recall written scaffolds they have previously used, including a simple writing frame or a short list of key actions to guide a pupil while they work independently.
	Clueing Often pupils know the strategies or knowledge required to solve a problem, but find it difficult to call them to mind. Clues worded as questions provide a hint in the right direction. The answer must contain a key piece of information to help pupils work out how to move forward. Always start with a small clue.	Providing visual clues to scaffold pupils' understanding of key concepts or recall of essential information, such as manipulatives and representations in maths, images to support vocabulary learning, or simple images of events in a sequence.	Providing verbal clues to remind pupils to use strategies which have previously been successful: <i>"I remember that when you did this well before, you followed the writing frame..."</i>	Providing sentence stems, word banks, or partially completed examples to help a pupil get started on a task.
	Modelling Prompts and clues can be ineffective when pupils encounter a task that requires a new skill or strategy. TAs, as confident and competent experts, can model while pupils actively watch and listen. Pupils should try the same step for themselves immediately afterwards.	Providing a visual demonstration or model of the task for a pupil to use as a basis for their own work.	Giving a model of a successful response to a task: <i>"If I were answering this question, my sentence starter might be..."</i>	Providing a written worked example for a pupil to use as a basis for their own work.
	Correcting Correcting involves providing answers and requires no independent thinking. Occasionally it is appropriate to do this, however, the principle of providing least help first should be considered before deciding to do so.	Providing annotations to identify and correct misconceptions in a pupil's work (without requiring pupils to correct these for themselves).	Correcting any errors or misconceptions for a pupil: <i>"I can see a mistake here, the correct response is..."</i>	Writing the correct answer, spelling, or method for a pupil to copy.

Appendix 5: Effective teacher - Teaching Assistant partnerships

Effective teacher - Teaching Assistant partnerships

A starting point for discussion



This document shares a number of effective TA classroom practices, informed by the 52 research studies included in our systematic review. This document offers a starting point for discussions between a teacher and TA to inform their on-going communication and decision-making to support the learning of all pupils.

Agreeing expectations

Consider:

- The TAs position during the lesson, including whether they will assist specific pupils or move around to provide general prompts, allowing the teacher to focus on a targeted group.
- How to provide 'least support first' appropriate to the lesson - prompting, clueing, modelling or correcting as appropriate to pupils' needs – and which resources may be needed for this.

Possible actions for the teaching assistant

Supporting high-quality teaching and learning:

- Scribe key ideas/vocabulary on the class whiteboard during whole class input.
- Support all pupils to attend to the class teacher during whole class input.
- Circulate and prompt across the whole class so the teacher can provide support for target pupils/lead flexible groups.
- Note pupil progress and feedback to the teacher.
- Support pupils to consider their knowledge of the task they're doing, the strategies they should use and the personal qualities they need to show.
- Model correct use of visual, verbal or written scaffolds that support pupils' independence (e.g., a number line or vocabulary list), including through creating 'live scaffolds' (e.g., key words on a mini-whiteboard).
- Repeat key learning points and important vocabulary, to emphasise what needs to be learned.

Promoting social-emotional learning:

- Provide positive reinforcement of good behaviour.
- Redirect and respond to behaviour.
- Build supportive relationships with pupils.

Complementing high-quality teaching with carefully chosen interventions:

- Lead out-of-class interventions*.
- Pre-teach upcoming content or lead retrieval tasks with small groups.
- Provide 'same-day' targeted support to address misconceptions in preparation for future teaching.

* Out-of-class interventions can remove pupils from high-quality teaching and peer interactions. When used, they should be linked to classroom learning, closely targeted to pupils' learning gaps and time-limited.