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Teaching Assistant Job Description

Working one-to-one or with small groups of pupils

Teaching assistants will often be assigned to individual pupils who are in need of additional help, this may be because English is not their first language or because they have learning difficulties and require additional help understanding or completing tasks. You may also be asked to help individual pupils who do not require additional support, but where one to one teaching is necessary – for example listening to pupils reading aloud.

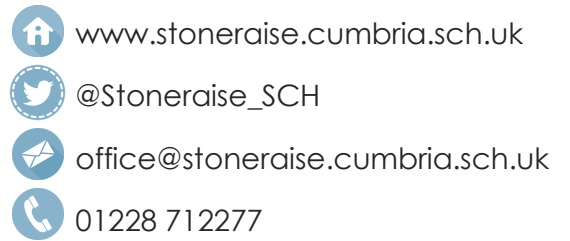
Teaching assistants are also often asked to support learning more generally, either by 'floating' and acting as additional support during class activities or by working with specific groups of pupils. Teaching assistants usually quickly become very adept at identifying where in the class additional support is needed and once they are settled into their role there is often some degree of flexibility as the teaching assistant and teacher work together to ensure that their time and energy is best spent in a way that optimizes learning for the class.

Supporting pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities

Pupils who have been diagnosed with learning difficulties will sometimes have a teaching assistant assigned to them for either all or part of the time to support their learning. This support may be necessary because a pupil is physically disabled, hearing or visually impaired and needs additional support accessing the curriculum. Or it may be because they have learning difficulties and need additional support to understand and complete tasks. Teaching assistants offer invaluable support to these pupils, helping them to keep up to speed with their peers and can often mean the difference between pupils accessing a mainstream curriculum or attending a special school.

Preparing the classroom for lessons

A key role of teaching assistants is in preparing the classroom for lessons. This may involve a variety of activities such as photocopying worksheets, setting up art equipment, weighing out ingredients, preparing computers, rearranging the furniture for a particular activity and so on. In short, the teaching assistant is responsible for organising all of the peripheral items that are essential to the smooth running of the lesson in order to ensure that when the class arrives they can get on with learning as quickly as possible.



Tidying up and keeping the classroom in good order

It's vital that classrooms are kept in good order to ensure an optimal teaching and learning environment. This means that teachers and pupils can find items that they need when they need them, and that the general environment is pleasant without the distraction of mess and disorder. Teaching assistants often take great pride in maintaining the classroom environment.

Creating displays of pupils' work

In addition to keeping things in good order, teaching assistants are also responsible for creating displays of pupils' work in conjunction with the class teacher. Seeing their work beautifully displayed can be a fantastic ego boost to pupils so this is an important role. As well as displaying pupils' work you may also be responsible for creating other displays for example about class rules, or pupil targets. You will work with the class teacher to decide how best to use the four walls of your classroom and your input will be invaluable and hugely appreciated by staff, pupils and visiting parents.

Helping on school outings or at school events

You may sometimes be asked to help support pupils beyond the classroom. This may be during lessons outside the classroom which may be within the school grounds, or it might be during official school trips or at school events such as school concerts or plays. In this circumstance, your role is likely to become more supervisory as you ensure that children are all safe and accounted for, though you will soon become adept at finding ways to inspire learning in any situation so you are likely to continue pupils' education no matter where you are working with them.