

Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistants in Suffolk – A Collaborative Partnership

Teaching assistants are one of our most precious school resources, however evidence shows that without high-quality training, the impact of TAs can too often prove limited. The current context provides a timely opportunity to review best practice and engage with the evidence base in this crucial area of practice. We are therefore excited to launch a collaborative, local partnership where schools in Suffolk can access free training and support to aid the effective deployment of and development of teaching assistants.

Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistants



What does the programme cover?

This EEF designed programme supports schools to review and reform TA deployment based on recent research evidence to ensure that TAs can make a meaningful contribution to teaching and learning. The programme brings the evidence to life with practical tools to support policy and practice.

How will it be delivered?

The programme will be delivered across the following modules (up to 90 minutes per module).

Welcome and introduction to the programme (Wednesday 3rd February, 10-11am live via Zoom)

Module 1 – an introduction to the evidence base (self-study following welcome/introduction)

Module 2 – creating a vision and implementation plan (Thursday 25th February, 10-11.30am live via Zoom)

Module 3 – use of TAs in the classroom context (in-school activity following module 2)

Module 4 – fostering independent learning (Thursday 25 March, 10-11am live via Zoom)

Module 5 – whole school policy, implementation & practice (Tuesday 27th April, 10-11.30am live via Zoom)

Module 6 – sharing successes of implementation & next steps (Tuesday 22nd June, 10-11am live via Zoom)

Coaching conversations/visits will supplement the content at key stages of the programme.

Who is this programme for?

Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, SENCOs (colleagues who manage the strategic deployment of TAs)

What is the intended impact?

The programme assists schools to navigate the evidence base and critically explore what this means within the current context. Delegates will be supported to plan, implement and evaluate a strategy to improve the deployment of and development of TAs in their school and maximise TA impact on learning outcomes.

Maximising the Practice of TAs (MPTA)

What does the programme cover?

MPTA is a training package developed by the Institute of Education at University College London. Through sharing practical strategies and reflective activities, it provides TAs with the skills to scaffold learning and help pupils become confident, independent learners.



How will it be delivered?

The programme will be delivered across 3 online modules (up to 60 minutes per module).

Module 1 - Latest research on the complementary roles of teachers and TAs (asynchronous)

Module 2 - Scaffolding as a framework for developing pupil independence (synchronous)

Module 3 - Planning changes to practice (synchronous)

Additional module - MPTA: What teachers need to know

Coaching visits will supplement the content at key stages of the programme.

Who is this programme for?

Teaching Assistants, HLTAs (+ one module for teachers)

What is the intended impact?

This programme supports TAs to effectively scaffold learning and develop independent learners. Research indicates that the strategies promoted through the training are effective in supporting pupils to make progress. Evidence also indicates the importance of collaboration between teachers and TAs, hence the inclusion of a teacher specific module.

Programme dates:

Summer term 2021 (dates TBC)

FAQs

What is meant by synchronous and asynchronous?

Synchronous learning happens at the same time and includes real-time interaction e.g. a webinar.

Asynchronous learning doesn't happen in the same place or at the same time e.g. pre-reading and gap tasks. Both types of CPD can be effective and the best available evidence indicates the importance of interaction and opportunities for collaboration, therefore we have opted for a blended approach.

When in the day will the live sessions take place?

Research suggests that remote professional development requires supportive school conditions, including protected time, therefore the majority of training sessions will take place during the school day rather than as twilight sessions.

What is the cost to schools?

These programmes are available for schools in Suffolk to access for free. The only cost to schools is to protect the time of delegates to attend and complete the training.

How is the training funded?

The programmes are being funded through a collaborative partnership. The EEF, Ipswich Opportunity Area and Suffolk County Council have made equal contributions to support this project.

Do we have to engage in both training programmes?

We would strongly encourage schools to engage with both programmes to aid effective implementation, through a shared understanding of the evidence base. However, this can be discussed on a case by case basis.

Does the same person have to attend the entire programme?

Each programme has a distinct intended audience. MBUTA is aimed at members of SLT responsible for the deployment of TAs and MPTA is aimed at TAs and HLTAs (with one module for teachers). We expect that all modules of the relevant programme are completed by a consistent member of staff.

What support is available once the programmes are complete?

Schools can access coaching support alongside these programmes to support implementation in school, In addition, continued training and support is available through the Suffolk TA network.