

Unpacking the effective use of Teaching Assistants

Professor Jonathan Sharples, Susannah Schoeffel
and Dr Tanya Vaughan

Webinar, 3 September 2019



**EVIDENCE
FOR LEARNING**

Acknowledgement to Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the elders of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation and pay respect to their elders past, present and emerging.



Introduce yourselves

- What is your role?
- Where you are joining us from?
- What is your language for 'Teaching Assistant'?
- What is your relationship with TAs / TA supports?

Teaching Assistants in Australia

- There is a sizable workforce in Australia of teaching assistants (also known as TAs or integration aides), with on average 10 teaching assistants in every school in 2017 (Adapted from Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018; DEEWR, 2018).
- In 2017 92,800 TAs were employed in Australian Schools and this is predicted to increase to 114,700 by 2022 (DEEWR, 2018).
- Of those employed in 2017, 25.8 per cent work full-time with an average week involving 35.1 hours (DEEWR, 2018).
- The average age of a TA is 46, with 88.4 per cent being female (DEEWR, 2018).

Teaching Assistants in Australia

- The qualifications for TAs varies across Australia, with no common qualification required to join the workforce (Butt, 2018; DEEWR, 2018; Evidence for Learning in collaboration with Melbourne Graduate School of Education, 2018).
- In 2016, 37.5 per cent of employed TAs had a Certificate III or IV, with 10.2 per cent with a Bachelor degree and 7.4 per cent had a postgraduate qualification (DEEWR, 2018).

The effective use of teaching assistants

LONG READS

Authors: [Tanya Vaughan](#)

08 November 2018

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It's important that teachers and teaching assistants have allocated time to plan lessons. ©Shutterstock/Monkey Business Images

Teaching assistants are important resources and when utilised in an evidence-based manner, they can make a significant difference to the classroom environment. So what are the most effective ways to improve student learning with a teaching assistant? In today's article, Associate Director at Evidence for Learning Dr Tanya Vaughan explores this question.



The Toolkits – The Teaching & Learning Toolkit and the Early Childhood Education Toolkit

- Supports evidence-informed decision making
- Provides guidance on how to use their resources to improve outcomes for students;
- Is an introduction to education research

+5

Average months' worth of learning progress;



Security of evidence



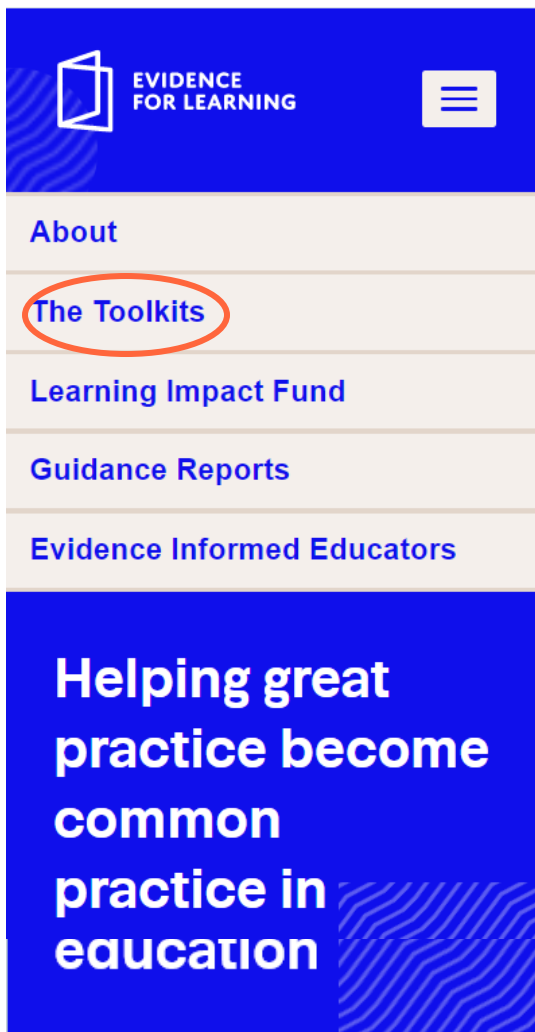
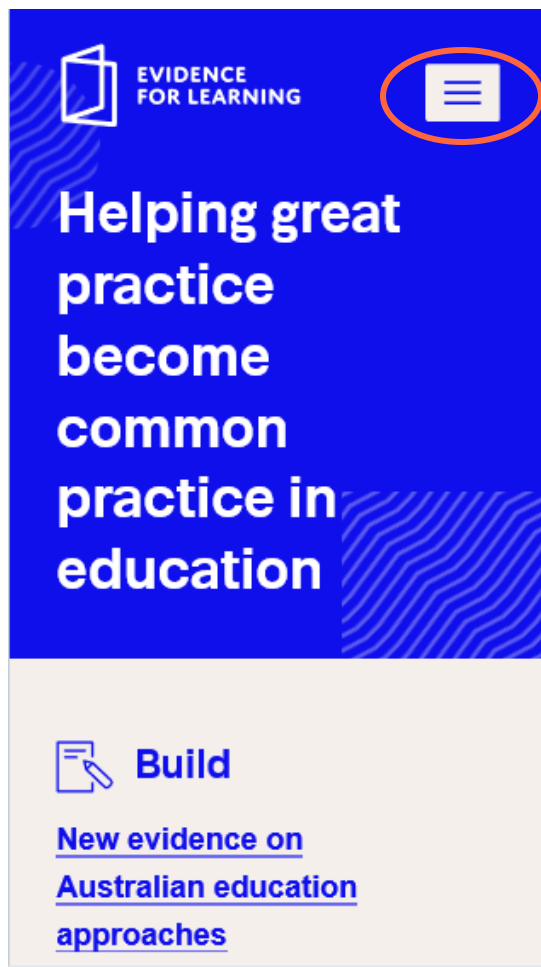
Cost to implement

Arts participation	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+2
Aspiration interventions	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	0
Behaviour interventions	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+3
Block scheduling	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	0
Collaborative learning	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+5
Digital technology	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+4
Early years interventions	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+5
Extending school time	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+2
Feedback	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+8
Homework (Primary)	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+2
Homework (Secondary)	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+5
Individualised instruction	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+3
Learning styles	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+2
Mastery learning	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+5
Mentoring	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	0
Metacognition and self-regulation	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+7
One to one tuition	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+5

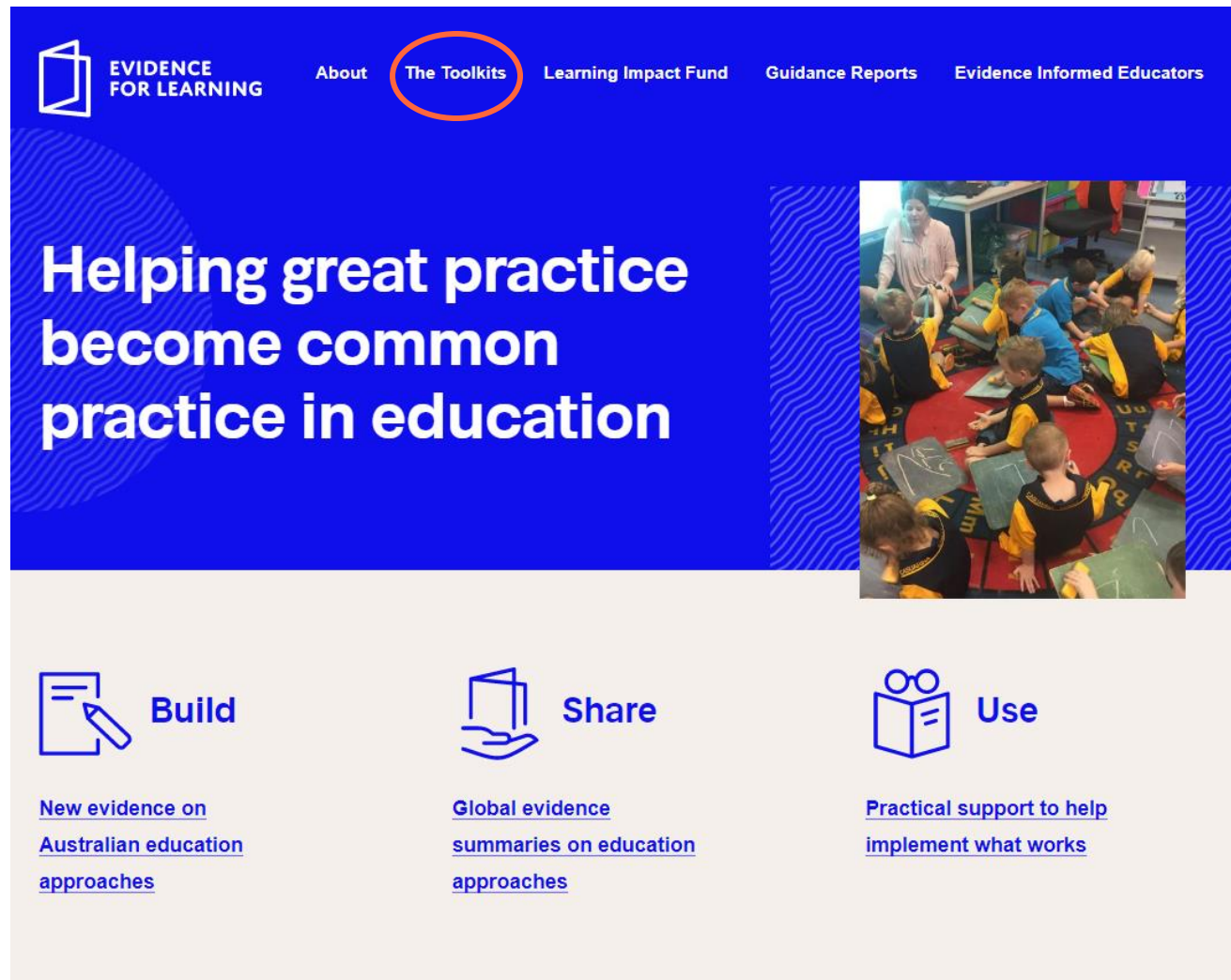
Oral language interventions	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+5
Outdoor adventure learning	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+4
Parental engagement	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+3
Peer tutoring	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+5
Performance pay	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+1
Phonics	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+4
Physical environment	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	0
Reading comprehension strategies	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+6
Reducing class size	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+3
Repeating a year	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	-4
School uniform	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	0
Setting or streaming	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	-1
Small group tuition	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+4
Social and emotional learning	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+4
Sports participation	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+2
Summer schools	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+2
Teaching assistants	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+1
Within-class achievement grouping	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	👤👤👤👤👤	+3

Accessing the Toolkits

Tablet or phone





Laptop



The Teaching & Learning Toolkit

Tablet or phone

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The Toolkits

Our Teaching and Learning Toolkit and the Early Childhood Education Toolkit are accessible summaries of education research. The two Toolkits are designed to support teachers, educators and school leaders who are making decisions about how to improve learning outcomes, particularly for children and young people from settings surrounded by disadvantage. The Toolkits do not make definitive claims as to what will work to improve outcomes in a given school. Rather they provide high quality information about what is likely to be beneficial based on existing evidence.

Laptop

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[The Teaching & Learning Toolkit](#)

[Early Childhood Education Toolkit](#)

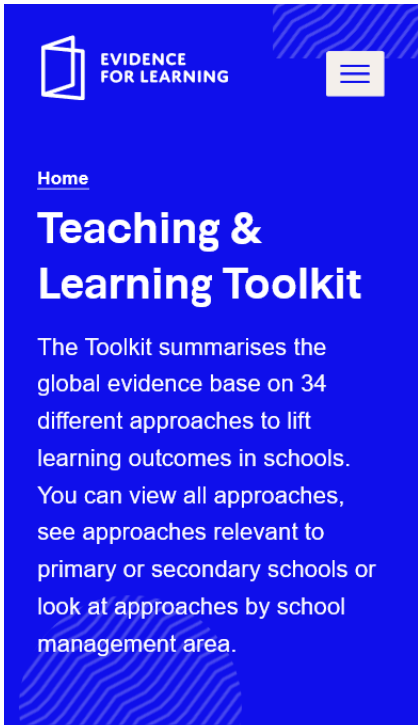
[About the Toolkits](#)

[Using the Toolkits](#)

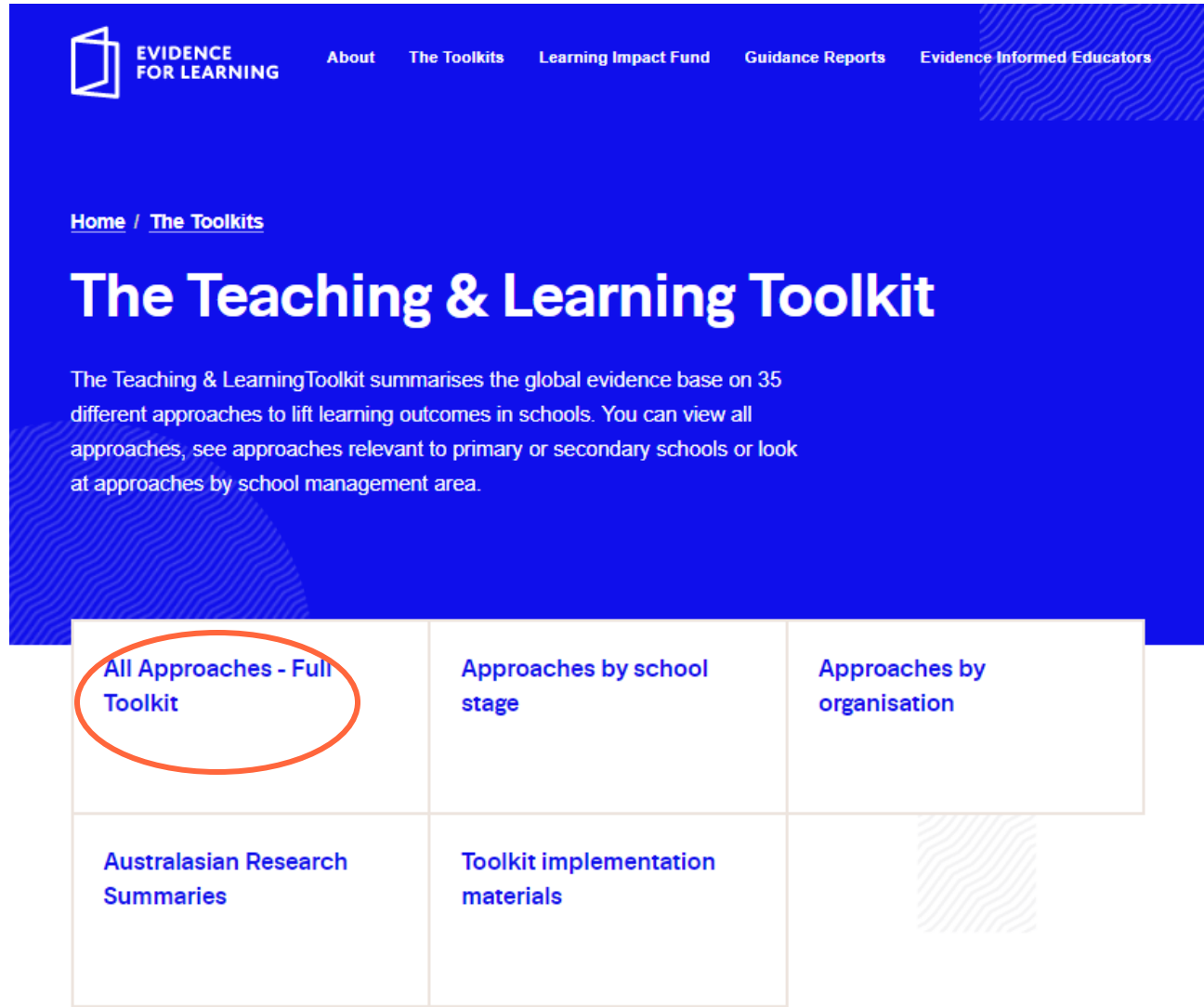
evidenceforlearning.org.au/the-toolkits/

The Teaching & Learning Toolkit

Tablet or phone



Laptop



Sort by Name ▾	Average cost –	Evidence security –	Months' impact –
Small group tuition	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒	+4
Social and emotional learning	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒	+4
Sports participation	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒	+2
Summer schools	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒	+2
Teaching assistants	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒	+1
Within-class achievement grouping	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒	+3

Average cost

The approximate cost of implementing an approach.

Evidence security

Based on the quantity and the methodological quality of the available evidence, and the reliability or consistency of impact estimates.

Months' impact

The additional months' progress you can expect students to make as a result of an approach being used.

Approach summary

Contents

- 1 [What is it?](#)
- 2 [How effective is it?](#)
- 3 [How secure is the evidence?](#)
- 4 [What are the costs?](#)
- 5 [What should I consider?](#)
- 6 [References](#)

[Print this page](#)

Further reading

[Australasian Research Summary](#)

[The effective use of teaching assistants](#)

[The effective use of classroom support staff](#)

[Home](#) / [The Toolkits](#) / [Teaching & Learning Toolkit](#)

Teaching assistants

Low impact, high cost, based on limited evidence	Average cost	Evidence security	Months' impact
In some cases teachers and TAs work together effectively, leading to increases in achievement.	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒	+1

What is it?

Teaching assistants (also known as TAs or classroom support assistants) are adults who support teachers in the classroom. Teaching assistants' duties can vary widely from school to school, ranging from providing administrative and classroom support to providing targeted academic support to individual students or small groups.

How effective is it?

Contents

- 1 [What is it?](#)
- 2 [How effective is it?](#)
- 3 [How secure is the evidence?](#)
- 4 [What are the costs?](#)
- 5 [What should I consider?](#)
- 6 [References](#)

[Print this page](#)

Australasian Research Summary

Summary of Australian and New Zealand research

References

Databases searched

Search terms



The summary below presents the research evidence on teaching assistants in the Australasian context.

The Teaching & Learning Toolkit focuses on impact; it presents an estimate of the average impact of teaching assistants on learning progress, based on the synthesis of a large number of quantitative studies from around the world.

This page offers a summary and analysis of individual Australasian studies on teaching assistants. In contrast to the Toolkit it includes studies which do not estimate impact, but instead investigate the implementation of interventions and how they are perceived by school leaders, teachers and students. This information is valuable for school leaders and teachers interested in finding out more about particular examples of teaching assistant interventions that have been delivered in Australia and New Zealand.

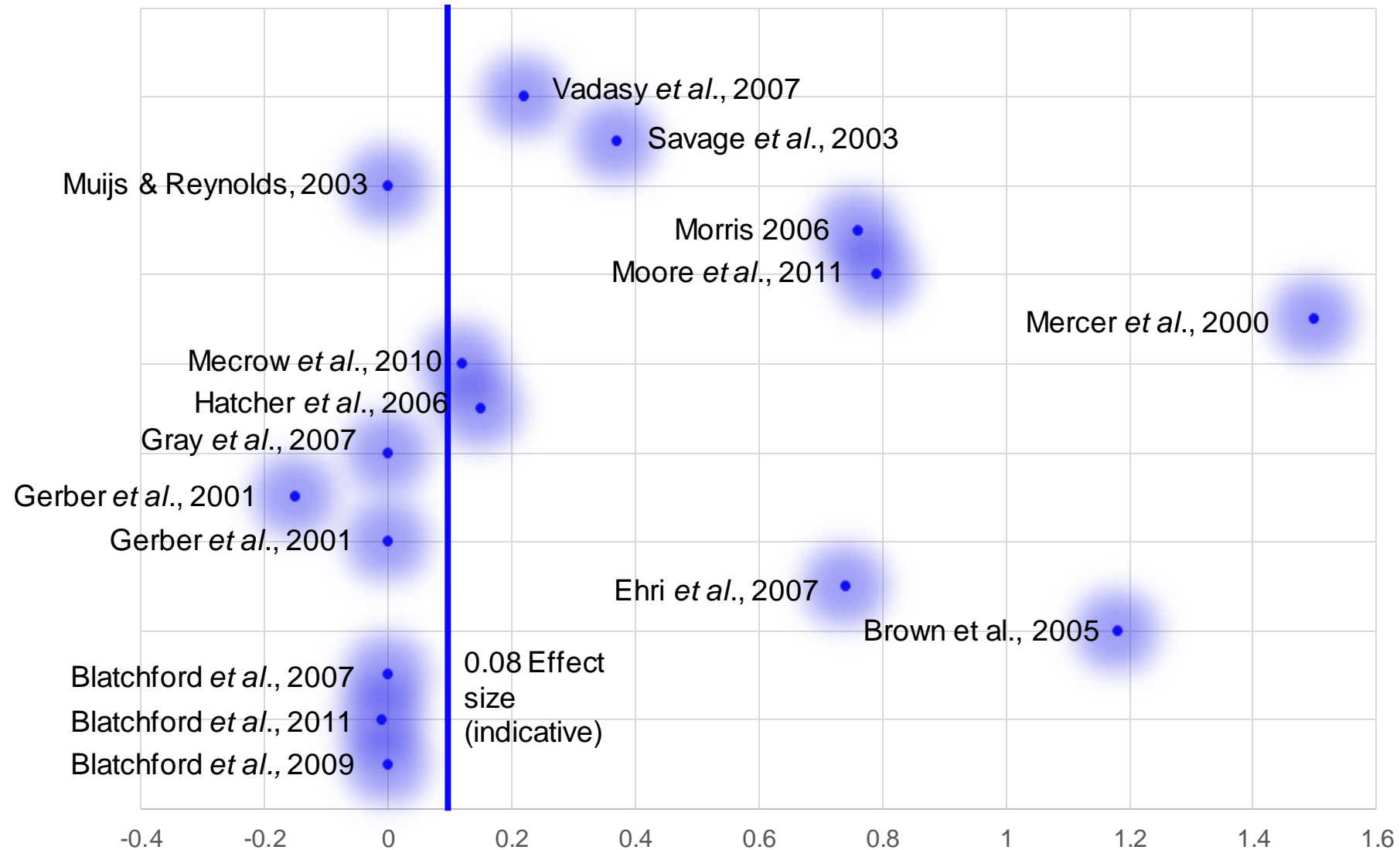
Melbourne Graduate School of Education generated this summary and it is current for June 2016.

Contents

- 1 [Summary of Australasian Research](#)
- 2 [References](#)
- 3 [Databases searched](#)
- 4 [Search Terms](#)

Summary of Australasian Research

Understanding the variability of impact



A fundamental rethink

“Addressing the current situation is a school leadership issue.

School leaders must rigorously define the role of TAs and consider their contribution in relation to the drive for whole school improvement”.



The Guidance Report recommendations

Summary of recommendations

The effective use of TAs under everyday classroom conditions

1



TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low attaining students

The evidence on TA deployment suggests schools have drifted into a situation in which TAs are often used as an informal instructional resource for students in most need. This has the effect of separating students from the classroom, their teacher and their peers.

Although this has happened with the best of intentions, this evidence suggests that the status quo is no longer an option.

School leaders should systematically review the roles of both teachers and TAs and take a wider view of how TAs can support learning and improve attainment throughout

2



Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them

If TAs have a direct instructional role it is important they add value to the work of the teacher, not replace them – the expectation should be that the needs of all students are addressed, first and foremost, through high quality classroom teaching. Schools should try and organise staff so that the students who struggle most have as much time with the teacher as others. Breaking away from a model of deployment where TAs are assigned to specific students for long periods requires more strategic approaches to classroom organisation. Instead, school leaders should develop effective

3



Use TAs to help students develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning

Research has shown that improving the nature and quality of TAs' talk to students can support the development of independent learning skills, which are associated with improved learning outcomes. TAs should, for example, be trained to avoid prioritising task completion and instead concentrate on helping students develop ownership of tasks.

TAs should aim to give students the least amount of help first. They should allow sufficient wait time, so students can respond to a question or attempt the stage of a task independently. TAs should intervene

4



Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom

School leaders should provide sufficient time for TA training and for teachers and TAs to meet out of class to enable the necessary lesson preparation and feedback.

Creative ways of ensuring teachers and TAs have time to meet include adjusting TAs' working hours (start early, finish early), using assembly time and having TAs join teachers for (part of) planning time.

During lesson preparation time ensure TAs have the essential 'need to knows':

- Concepts, facts, information being taught
- Skills to be learned, applied, practised or

The effective use of TAs in delivering structured interventions out of class

5



Use TAs to deliver high quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions

Research on TAs delivering targeted interventions in one-to-one or small group settings shows a consistent impact on attainment of approximately three to four additional months' progress (effect size 0.2–0.3). Crucially, these positive effects are only observed when TAs work in structured settings with high quality support and training. When TAs are deployed in more informal, unsupported instructional roles, they can impact negatively on students' learning outcomes.

6



Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction

Schools should use structured interventions with reliable evidence of effectiveness. There are presently only a handful of programs in the UK for which there is a secure evidence base, and fewer in Australia, so if schools are using programs that are 'unproven', they should try and replicate some common elements of effective interventions:

- Sessions are often brief (20–50mins), occur regularly (3–5 times per week) and are maintained over a sustained period (8–20 weeks). Careful timetabling is in place to enable this consistent delivery
- TAs receive extensive training from experienced trainers and/or teachers (5–30 hours per intervention)
- The intervention has structured supporting resources and lesson plans, with clear objectives

Integrating learning from work led by teachers and TAs

7



Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching structured interventions

Interventions are often quite separate from classroom activities. Lack of time for teachers and TAs to liaise allows relatively little connection between what students experience in, and away from, the classroom. The key is to ensure that learning in interventions is consistent with, and extends, work inside the classroom and that students understand the links between them. It should not be assumed that students can consistently identify and make sense of these links on their own.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN EVERYDAY CLASSROOM CONTEXTS

TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low-attaining pupils

- Has been drift towards **TAs taking on role of 'primary educator' for low-attaining/SEN pupils**. Well-meaning, but flawed.
- **Results in greater separation** from the classroom, teacher, mainstream teaching/curriculum coverage, and their classmates. **Associated with significantly lower learning outcomes.**
- School leaders must review roles of TAs and teachers. Take a **wider view of how TAs can support learning** and improve attainment.

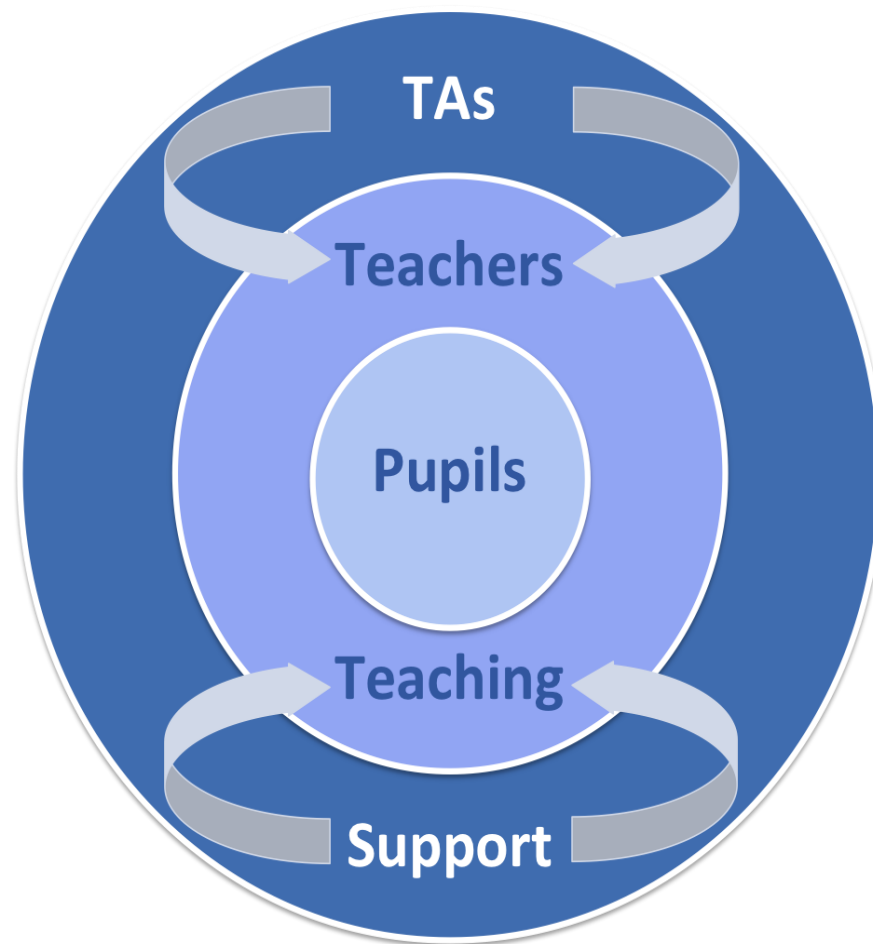
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN EVERYDAY CLASSROOM CONTEXTS

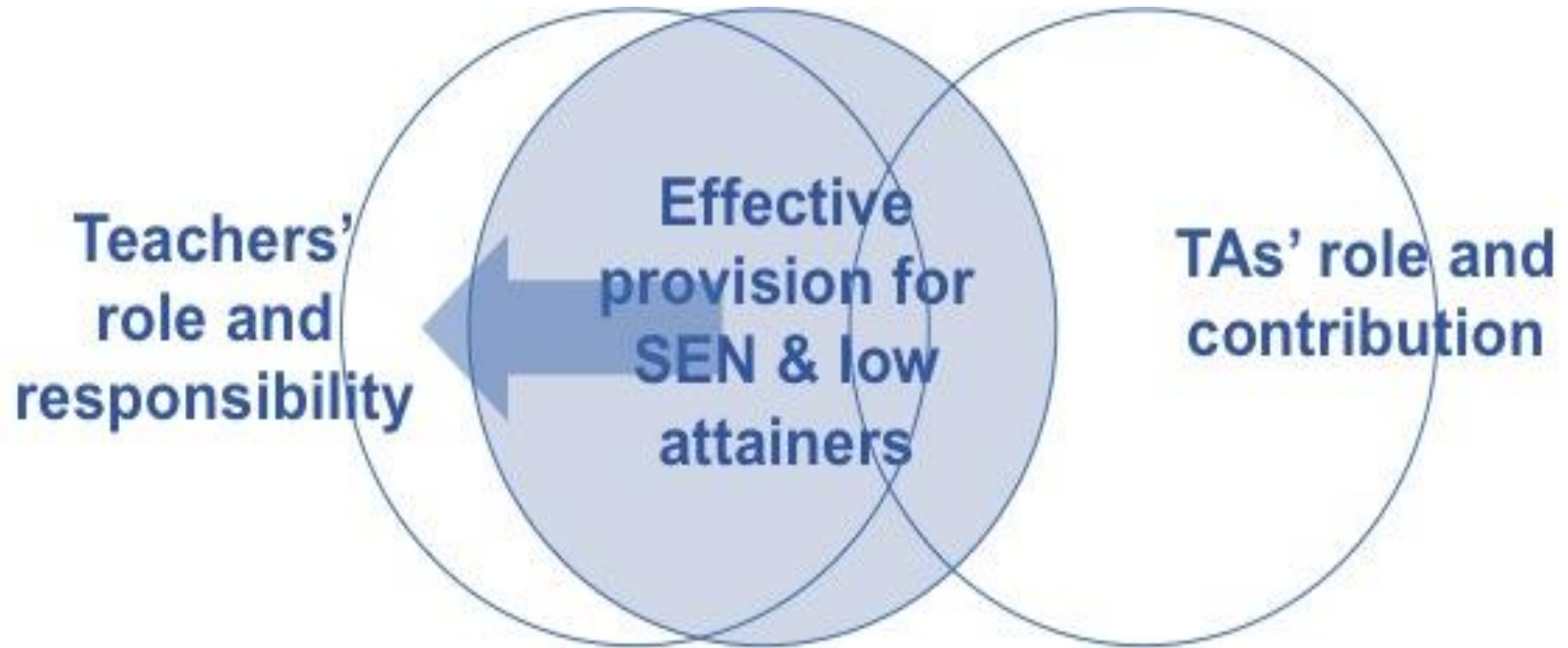


Use TAs to add
value to what
teachers do, not
replace them

- Schools must break away from the ‘Velcro’ model of TA deployment.
- If TAs have a direct teaching role, it is important to **ensure they supplement rather than replace the teacher.**
- Teachers need to use TAs more strategically to enable themselves to work **more often with lower-attaining/SEN pupils.**
- **High quality teaching, by the teacher,** is the foundation for all the recommendations.

Start with high quality teaching...





About school leadership!

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN EVERYDAY CLASSROOM CONTEXTS

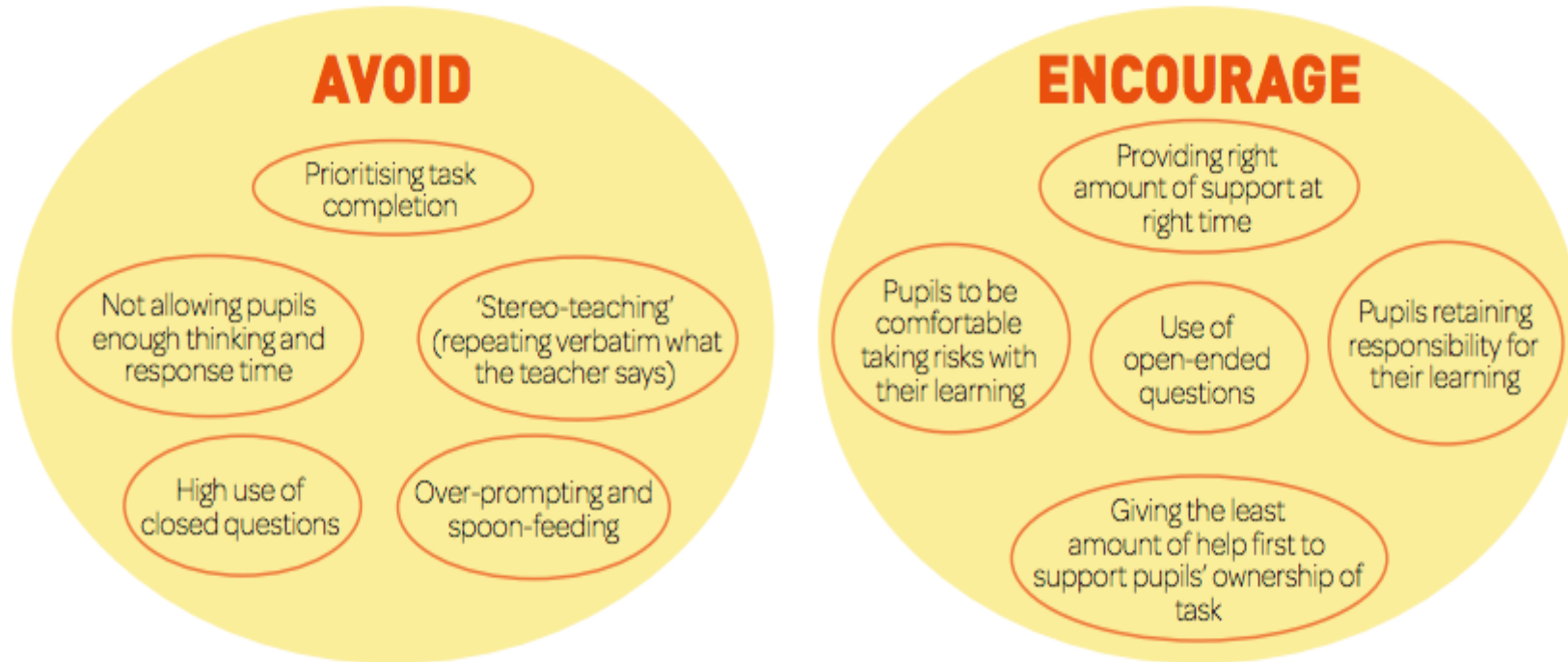


Use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning

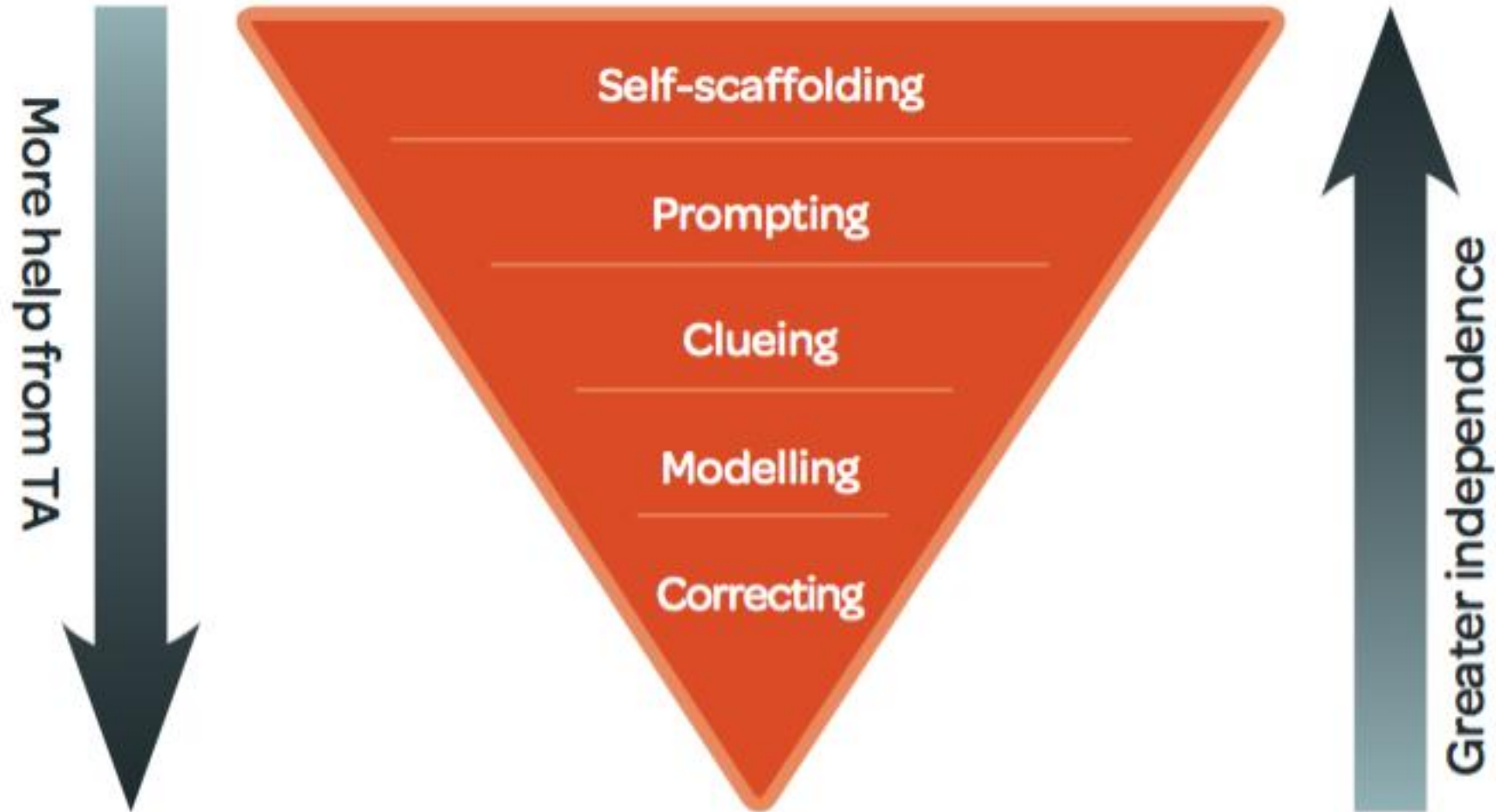
- **Improve the nature and quality of TAs' talk** to pupils to help pupils develop the independent learning skills associated with improved learning outcomes.
- Instead of prioritising task completion and correction, TAs should be encouraged to give pupils '**the *least* amount of help first**'.
- TAs' interactions should **help pupils to develop ownership of tasks** and to be comfortable to take risks with their learning.

Using TAs in the Classroom

Figure 1. *TA teaching strategies that encourage and inhibit independent learning*



Scaffolding framework



Rob Webster, Anthony Russell and Peter Blatchford

MAXIMISING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AND TEACHERS

MAXIMISING
THE IMPACT OF
TEACHING
ASSISTANTS



MAXIMISING
THE IMPACT OF
TEACHING
ASSISTANTS



Paula Bosanquet, Julie Radford and Rob Webster

THE TEACHING ASSISTANT'S GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE INTERACTION

HOW TO MAXIMISE YOUR PRACTICE



MAXIMISING
THE IMPACT OF
TEACHING
ASSISTANTS



MAXIMISING
THE IMPACT OF
TEACHING
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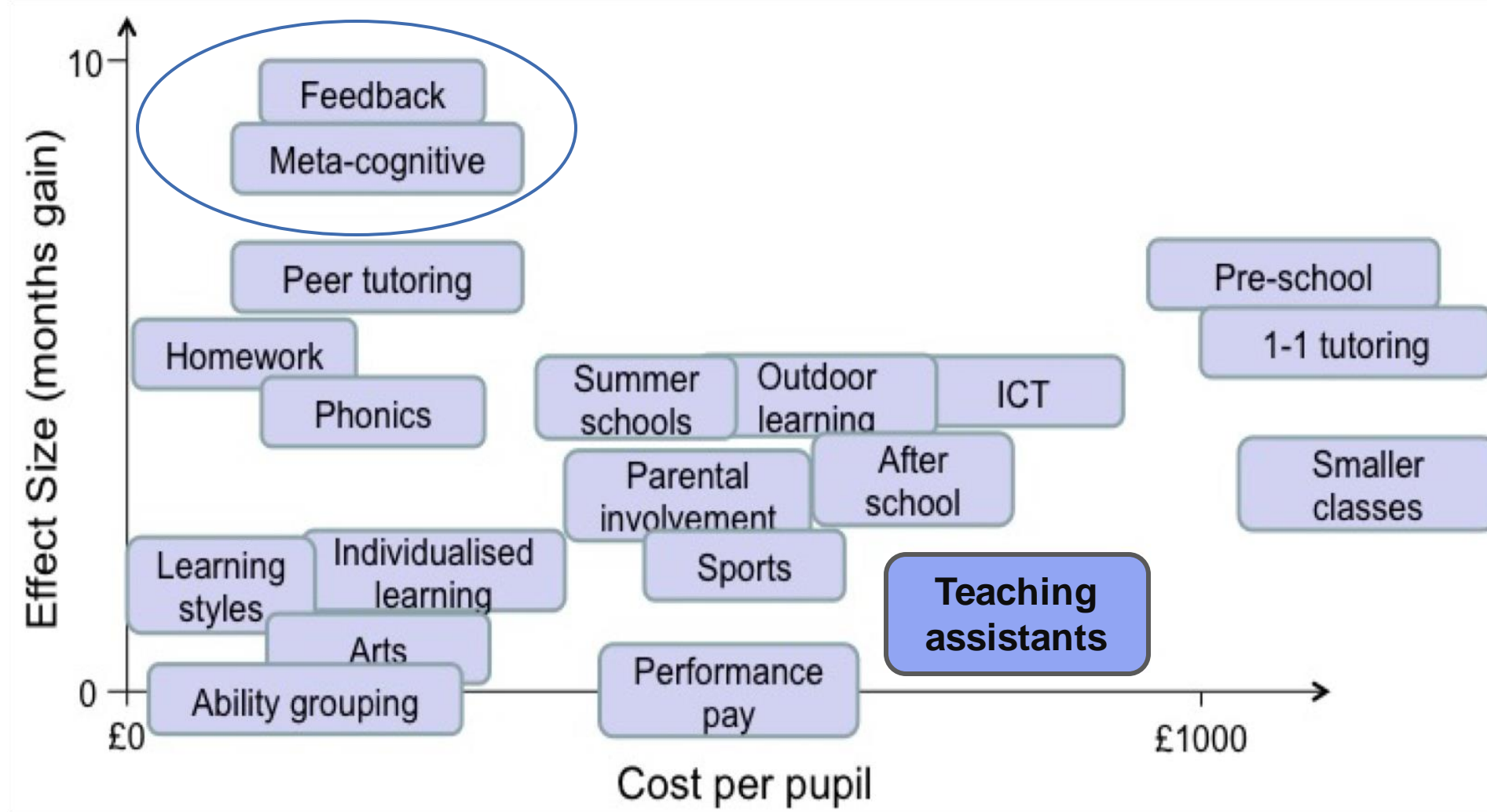
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN EVERYDAY CLASSROOM CONTEXTS

IV

Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom

- Lack of opportunities for out-of-class liaison can result in poor teacher-TA collaboration in the classroom.
- Schools must **provide sufficient time for teachers and TAs to prepare for lessons and for feedback afterwards.**
- TAs should not 'go into lessons blind'. Teachers must **provide the essential lesson 'need to knows'** ahead of time.
- TAs must be fully trained for roles they are given; for example, in having effective interactions with pupils.

Rethinking TAs' Interactions



Source: Sutton Trust/EEF's *Teaching and Learning Toolkit*

Catch Up Numeracy and Literacy

- Targeted one-to-one interventions, delivered by TAs, for pupils struggling with numeracy and literacy
- Support is tailored to the needs of the learner
- 2 x 15min sessions per week, for 30 weeks
- Two, large, independent RCT evaluations (54 and 85 schools respectively)

Group	Number of pupils	Effect size*	Estimated months' progress
Catch Up Numeracy vs control	336	+0.21	+3
Catch Up Literacy vs control	557	+0.12	+2








RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN DELIVERING STRUCTURED INTERVENTIONS OUT OF CLASS

V

Use TAs to deliver high-quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions

- Given the right support and training, **TAs can make a significant contribution to pupil attainment delivering 1-2-1/small group interventions** (0.2 – 0.3 ES, 3 to 4 additional months progress) .
- Positive effects **only observed in structured settings, with high-quality support and training.**
- When TAs deployed in *informal*, instructional roles they can negatively impact on pupils' learning (DISS study).

TA-led interventions - positive effects

Project	Summary	Age	Toolkit areas	Effect size	Padlocks and stage
Catch Up Literacy	One-to-one tailored TA support on phonics and comprehension.	Years 3-6	Phonics	+0.12 (2 months)	 Effectiveness
Catch Up Numeracy	One-to-one TA numeracy instruction for struggling learners	Years 2-6	-	+0.21 (3 months)	 Effectiveness
Nuffield Early Language Intervention	Oral language intervention for nursery and reception pupils, delivered by TAs	EYFS	Communication and language approaches (Early Years toolkit)	+0.27 (4 months)	 Efficacy
REACH	Language and comprehension intervention for struggling readers, delivered by TAs	Year 7	Reading comprehension; Oral language	+0.34 (4 months)	 Efficacy
Switch-on Reading	10 week TA intervention drawing on Reading Recovery	Year 7	Reading comprehension	+0.24 (3 months)	 Efficacy
Talk for Literacy	Speaking and listening interventions delivered by TAs.	Year 7	Oral language	+0.20 (3 months)	 Efficacy
ABRA: Online Reading Support	Small group, online literacy support with phonics and comprehension activities	Year 1	Phonics; Reading comprehension	+0.23 (3 months)	 Efficacy

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN DELIVERING STRUCTURED INTERVENTIONS OUT OF CLASS

VI

Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction

Characteristics of effective interventions:

- Brief (15-30mins), regular (3-5 times per week) sessions maintained over a sustained period (8-20 weeks). Carefully timetabled.
- Extensive training and coaching from experienced trainers/teachers (5-30hrs).
- Structured supporting resources and lesson plans, which are followed closely.
- Assessments used to identify pupils, guide areas for focus and track progress.

Examples of evidence-based interventions include *Catch Up Numeracy*, *Catch Up Literacy*, *Switch-on Reading*, *Talk for Literacy*, *Reading Intervention Programme*

See EEF website for latest evaluation findings and new TA projects

Talk partners ✓✓✓✓	P.A.T.
In-class (Teacher plan TA-Led interventions) ✓	Level Up (Maths)
Catchup Literacy ✓	SRA Reading L
Dynamo Maths ✓✓	Spell zone
Precision Teaching ✓✓✓	Duct tape group
Speech and language Toolkit Intervention (Barnet) ✓	SALT vocab gp
Number Shark + Wordshark ✓✓✓	Starway to Spelling
Social skills/stories ✓✓✓✓✓	Jungle Memory
Barnet Motor skills programme ✓✓	Write Dance
BBC Dance mat Typing ✓✓	London Phonics
Nessie Fingers ✓	Premiership Readers
Wordblaze	Better Reading Support Partners
Power of 2 + 1 ✓	Reading Boxes
Toe by Toe ✓✓✓✓✓	Sound linkage
Fun Friends	Project X Code ✓
Shine (Rising Stars) Maths	1st Class at Number
ELKAN ✓✓✓✓	1st Class at Number 2
Power of 2/1 ✓✓	Success at Arithmetic
Talkboost ✓✓	1st class at writing
Reading Eggs ✓✓✓✓	Early Talk Boost ✓
→ Numicon ✓✓✓✓	Rapid Maths
Occupational Therapy Programme ✓✓✓	Rapid Read ✓
'Writing without tears' ✓	Project X ✓
Talking Boxes (SALT)	Chatter-box
Art Therapy ✓✓✓	Reading with phonology
Peer learning ✓	5 Minute Box, 2nd 5 Min
Family Learning Interventions (PLIC) ✓	Box
SMILE (SLT) ✓	Number box
Read & write Inc. ✓✓✓ (secondary)	2 Simple 2 Type
800 Talk about ✓✓✓	Word Aware ✓
Lexia ✓	Beat Dyslexia
Accelerated Reader ✓✓✓	

We need to talk
about
interventions...

Interventions 'Health Check'

- Are you using evidence-based interventions? If so, are they being used as intended, with the appropriate guidance and training?
- If not, do they reflect the characteristics of effective interventions?
- What does your data show for those pupils involved in intervention work? Is it in line with the expected progress from the research?
- Is appropriate planning provided for timetabling out-of-class sessions so that they complement classroom teaching?
- How effective are TAs and teachers reviewing work taking place in intervention sessions? Are pupils supported to make links being made with general classroom work?

RECOMMENDATIONS
ON LINKING LEARNING
FROM WORK LED BY
TEACHERS AND TAs

VII

Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions

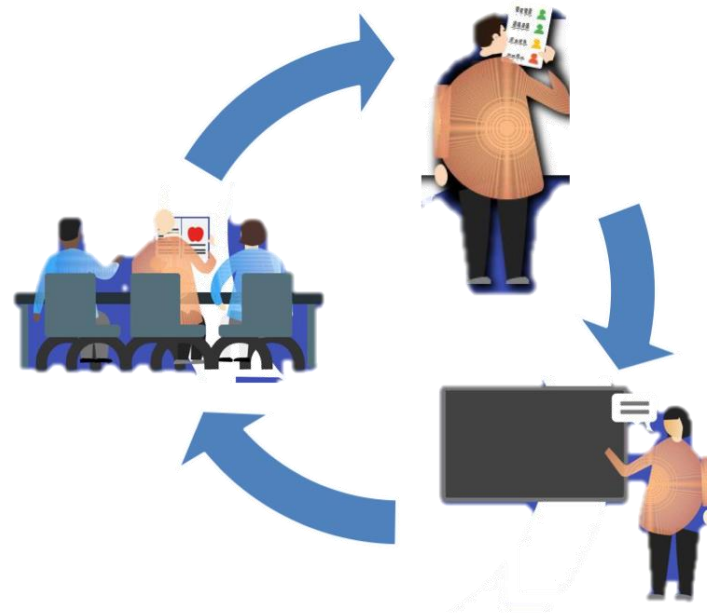
Overall use of interventions:

- **One or two well-chosen, evidence-based interventions**, used judiciously to support pupils that are struggling with their learning.
- ***At least*** compensate for time out of class. Don't assume pupils can make connections with the general curriculum.
- Supplement 'quality first' teaching in the classroom, with **clear links made between learning in each context.**

Explicit connections between interventions and classroom teaching (Rec 7)

“The key is to view the intervention from the pupils’ point of view, so when they return to lessons, teachers can ask questions that help them apply, demonstrate and consolidate new learning”

Sharples, Webster & Blatchford (2018)



Putting it all together

- A 'tight, but loose' approach
- Use the recommendation as a basecamp
- Contextualise for your school and your pupils - faithful adoption, intelligent adaptation
- Common, meaningful language
- **The implementation challenge:** the 'how' + the 'what'

‘Acting on the evidence’ process

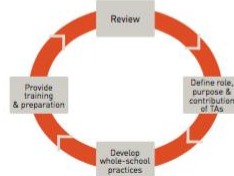


MAKING BEST USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Acting on the evidence

Development work with schools has revealed several key principles to successfully taking action on the TA guidance report.

The model below shows a cycle for school improvement that Senior Leadership Teams have previously found useful in reviewing the current use of TAs and guiding a process of change. Refer to this to help shape an action plan using the Action planning template.



Have you...

Got the headteacher on board?

The headteacher forms and leads a development team of people with responsibility for managing the changes.

Dedicated time to discuss your TA strategy?

This team schedules dedicated time over the course of two or three terms for discussion, planning, decision-making and action. Time is ringfenced for these discussions.

Conducted a full audit of your current situation?

Consider:

- Completing the 'Self-assessment guide'
- Surveying staff (and pupils) for their views and experiences
- TAs keeping a work diary to obtain information on how they spend their week
- Conducting a full audit of your current situation
- Making a plan for improvement
- Asks specialists for advice

Tested your...

Change is in school with who are will

Adapted from Impact of Teaching Assistants

A self-assessment guide

RECOMMENDATIONS V, VI AND VII TAs delivering targeted, structured interventions

1 INEFFECTIVE

TAs deliver mainly unstructured interventions, for which there is little reliable evidence of effectiveness. TAs may deliver commercial intervention programmes, but in an unstructured way (e.g. not as prescribed by the developer).

Intervention sessions are long (>30mins), poorly timetabled and irregular. Consequently, pupils routinely miss significant portions of classroom teaching.

TAs have little formal training in delivering interventions. Limited structured resources mean that sessions often have vague objectives and are slowly paced. As such, they may not be adequately compensating for the time pupils spend out of class.

Teachers have little or no awareness of the structure and coverage of intervention programmes.

Teachers rarely plan or review intervention sessions with TAs and there are few opportunities for meaningful feedback after sessions.

It is left largely to pupils to make the links between what is covered in interventions and their learning in general classroom teaching.

IMPROVING

TAs deliver some well-chosen interventions that have the potential to effectively supplement classroom learning, although this is not always occurring (e.g. use of assessments to monitor impact and inform next stages of development is inconsistent).

Although interventions are structured, they are not always delivered as intended. Timetabling of sessions is reasonable although sessions are sometimes missed.

Some TAs have received training on intervention programmes, although this may need updating.

Teachers have limited awareness of the structure and coverage of intervention programmes.

Teachers and TAs meet occasionally to review the coverage and impact of interventions. Practice across the school is inconsistent.

Pupils receive some assistance in applying their learning from interventions to the wider curriculum, although again this is inconsistent.

EXEMPLARY

TAs deliver one or two evidence-based and structured interventions, chosen to deliberately complement and extend class-based teaching and learning.

Intervention sessions are brief (<30mins), regular and sustained, with clear objectives and expectations. Sessions are well-paced, well-resourced and carefully timetabled to minimise time spent away from general class teaching.

TAs are extensively trained to deliver interventions faithfully (i.e. as intended by the developer), and over time develop deep expertise in the approach.

Teachers have good awareness of the structure and coverage of intervention programmes.

There are regular opportunities for teachers and TAs to plan and review learning taking place in interventions, with regular assessments in place to guide this process.

Teachers and TAs both help pupils make connections between the learning in interventions and the wider curriculum.

Contents

- Introduction
- Your school's context
- TA deployment at school level
- TA deployment at classroom level
- Preparing TAs
- Structured interventions
- Linking learning
- Next steps

1.1: Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants Introd...



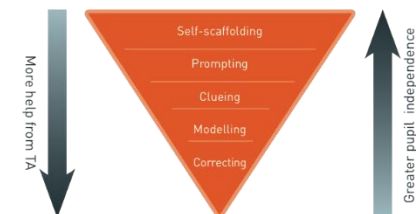
MAKING BEST USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Scaffolding framework for teaching assistant-pupil interactions



This practical framework is designed to help TAs scaffold pupils' learning and encourage independent learning. TAs should move down the layers in turn.

The initial expectation is that pupils self-scaffold whilst the TA observes their performance. TAs should intervene appropriately when pupils demonstrate they are unable to proceed. It is important the tasks set by teachers, and supported by TAs, provide pupils with the right level of challenge.



Self-scaffolding

Self-scaffolding represents the highest level of pupil independence. TAs observe, giving pupils 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

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. For example: 'What do you need to do first?'; 'What's your plan?'; 'You can do this!'

Clueing

Often pupils know the strategies or knowledge required to solve a problem, but find it difficult to call them 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.

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.

Correcting

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

Adapted from: Bosanquet, P., Radford, J. and Webster, R. (2016) *The teaching assistant's guide to effective interaction: How to maximise your practice*, published by Routledge.



RAG Assessment

A self-assessment guide

RECOMMENDATIONS I AND II Deployment of TAs in the classroom



! INEFFECTIVE

TAs routinely have a direct, informal teaching role with lower-attaining pupils and/or those with SEN. They regularly adopt the status of 'primary educator' to these pupils.

This arrangement causes a 'separation' effect: high-supported pupils have fewer opportunities to engage with whole-class teaching, and have fewer interactions with teachers and peers.

Teachers assume that a high amount of TA support meets the needs of lower-attaining and/or SEN pupils, and as a result spend less time working with these groups.

Personal relationship may be good, but there is a lack of cohesive and effective teamwork between teachers and TAs in the classroom.

TAs rarely rove around the classroom and support whole-class teaching (such as demonstrating equipment, or working at the whiteboard).

IMPROVING

There is variability in the quality and appropriateness of teachers' moment-by-moment decision-making regarding TA deployment.

In some lessons, TAs are effectively supplementing the whole-class teaching, although this is not consistent.

There is a tendency to drift back towards TAs working in an isolated teaching role with lower-attaining and/or SEN pupils, particularly as the lesson progresses.

There is little or no attempt to redeploy TAs during lessons in response to the 'real time' needs of pupils.

✓ EXEMPLARY

The learning needs of all pupils are met, first and foremost, through high quality teaching by the teacher. Teachers spend at least as much time working work with lower-attainers as others.

TAs work with a range of pupils within the class and supplement and extend teachers' work, rather than replace them. Support for specific individuals or groups is structured so it helps them access general classroom teaching.

Teachers and TAs work effectively as a team, with a shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives. Teachers' moment-by-moment decisions regarding TA deployment are driven by pupils' needs.

TAs support whole-class delivery at the front of the class, rove the room or undertake administrative tasks to ease teachers' workload.

Questions?



Where to now?

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