

JOB DESCRIPTION



LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT

Job title:	Learning Support Assistant	Job Ref:	XS 10.4
Directorate:	Children's Services		
School:	Bovington Primary School	Grade:	Dorset Grade 5
Reports to:	Head of SEN/ SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO)/ Head of Learning Resource Base/ Principal or Supervisory TA / Class Teacher		

Main job purpose

Responsible for working across a varied range of responsibilities.

The postholder will play an important role in supervising the activities of pupils during the teaching period and midday sessional break within the school, including both indoor and outdoors areas, ensuring a safe environment is maintained at all times.

To assist the Headteacher/SENCO to promote pupils' academic, social and emotional development through the development and implementation of programmes of pupil work and support (individual and group) and in the provision of a stable, caring and supportive learning environment; to enable pupils to achieve their full learning potential and facilitate their personal, academic, social and moral development.

There may be a Special Needs input to support pupils in activities. Support is both on a one to one basis and in groups, to pupils with disability, learning difficulties or behavioural problems. This may include pupils with a high learning ability ('gifted/talented').

Main responsibilities and duties

1. To support the teaching and learning processes.
2. To assist the SENCO/Principal TA (PTA) in developing, implementing and managing individual/group pupil learning strategies aimed at the
 - management of pupil behaviour
 - establishing and maintaining of relationships with individual pupils and groups in support of pupils in learning activities
 - continuous review and development of the postholder's professional practice
 - Inclusivity of pupils with identified SEN needs

Under the guidance of direction of the teacher/SENCO/PTA:

1. Develop, maintain and apply knowledge and understanding of pupils' general and specific learning needs. To ensure that support is given to them at an appropriate level.

2. Teaching support is delivered individually and in groups through a range of tasks, mainly:
3. Supporting and directing literacy and numeracy tasks, clarifying and explaining instructions
4. Focus support in areas needing improvement both academic and social.
5. To support the use of ICT in the classroom and work with and support pupils to ensure they are able to use ICT and other specialist equipment to enhance their learning.
6. Motivate and encourage pupils to concentrate on and fulfil the tasks set.
7. Undertake learning activities with pupils of varying abilities to ensure differentiation and access to the curriculum.
8. Seek to ensure the promotion and reinforcement of pupils' self esteem, appropriate levels of effort and behaviour and to guide pupils to become independent learners.
9. Contribute to the assessment of pupils' learning, in particular with regard to Literacy, Numeracy, Science and ICT skills.
10. Contribute to the implementation of the National and/or Foundation Curriculum and specific individual pupil targets and/or group targets.
11. To promote pupils academic, social and emotional development and assist teaching staff in the development of learning strategies, with the provision of teaching and learning resources and in the preparation and maintenance of a safe, secure and suitable learning environment.
12. Assist in the development, monitoring and evaluation of programmes of work
13. To upkeep data files, catalogue resources, maintain inventories, photocopy, record TV programmes and use I.T. systems for administration and educational purposes.
14. Contribute to and assist in the development and monitoring of systems for review and recording of pupils' progress, both academic and social.
15. Assist in the preparation, organisation and maintenance of classrooms and their equipment, including assistance with and creation of displays, make basic visual aids, art and craft materials, mount and display pupils' work.
16. Assist teachers in timetabling of lessons and curriculum as required.
17. Assist in the preparation for educational visits, and where appropriate accompany/supervise students undertaking off-site activities.
18. Attend and contribute to school staff meetings and in-service training within contracted hours or outside normal hours by agreement.

19. Contribute to the process of school self review.
20. To liaise with parents and other professional agencies in support of pupil's needs.
21. To provide care and supervision of pupils within the classroom, within the school and outside of the school.
22. Supervise pupils using cloakrooms, showers and toilet facilities. Supervise pupils in playgrounds and when entering and leaving using school transport.
23. Escort pupils to school or parental transport, home or to hospital as necessary and/or support in the integration/re-integration of the pupil.
24. Develop an understanding of and provide for pupils' specific personal needs to ensure a safe learning environment. This may include providing some direct personal care, support and assistance to the pupil in respect of toileting, eating, mobility and dispensing medication.
25. To assume sole supervision of groups of pupils. This may include whole classes for short periods in the absence of the teacher.
26. Additionally, under the overall direction of teaching staff the job may include some or all of the following duties, depending on the needs of pupils:
27. Where a current First Aid qualification is held, in the absence of other medical facilities:
 - a. Maintain First Aid equipment and materials, and dispense medicines in accordance with school policy and Health and Safety guidelines.
 - b. Undertake First Aid
28. Under the direction of Health Service professionals, undertake activities in support of occupational, physio and speech therapy.
29. Under the direction of teaching staff and, where appropriate, to assist in the development of Individual Education Plans for pupils with special educational needs and contribute to IEPs.
30. To undertake a key worker role when required.
31. To work with pupil groups, using a range of strategies to gain acceptance and inclusion of pupils with special educational needs.
32. Monitor and support pupils/students/volunteers placed within the school on work experience programmes.
33. To assist in the supervision of Standard Assessment Tasks and tests / assessments as directed
34. To assist in the preparation and maintaining the learning environment

35. To contribute to the assessment by the teacher of pupil performance in maintaining records of pupil performance and achievement, noting areas of weakness and need for development and drawing to the teacher's attention areas requiring further review.
36. To observe and comment upon pupil performance, conduct, behaviour and interaction with peer group and parents.
37. To contribute to the planning and evaluation by the teacher of individual (and group) pupil's learning activities.
38. To undertake continuous professional development

Knowledge & skills

Experience of working with children in an educational setting is essential.

Qualities required are discretion, loyalty, commitment, patience, flexibility, good personal organisation, firmness, to be numerate and literate, a team worker and to have good oral communication. Background knowledge of the Foundation and National Curriculum and School's procedures and policies.

Knowledge of pupils' individual targets and, where appropriate may require more specialised knowledge in specific curriculum areas.

Significant empathy with pupils who have additional or special educational needs. Where appropriate, to be prepared to undertake special skills training e.g. signing, to meet additional educational and communication needs.

A willingness to attend courses as required to enhance the knowledge, understanding and skills to improve the level and quality of support given to pupils and teachers.

Sound interpersonal and supervisory skills, supported by recognised training are required to assist in managing the resources available.

Knowledge of legislation and regulations applicable to the support and care of pupils.

They must have achieved a qualification in English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy and NVQ Level 2 of the National Framework and ideally be working towards Level 3.

Supervision and management

Typically there will supervision available from the classroom teacher on a daily basis and regularly within the day. Additional support may be provided by the SENCO/PTA or Supervisory TA within the team. The postholder may be required to support the induction and further training of classroom TAs.

Problem solving and creativity

On a daily basis, within prescribed school guidelines and under the direction of the teacher, develop a range of strategies to engage individuals and groups of pupils, often with differing requirements, in the experience of learning and in their personal, social, health and moral education. For example, a reward system appropriate to an individual pupil.

Use a variety of interpersonal techniques to establish supportive relationships with pupils, parents and carers.

There will be occasional interruptions. Deadlines will relate and be appropriate to the timetable being followed.

Additionally, creativity and innovation are needed to meet the special education and care needs of individual pupils, such as those with significant physical disability and emotional difficulties, including regular exhibitions of challenging behaviour and aggression.

A creative approach to supervisory duties, training and in supporting staff is required.

Key contacts and relationships

Contact with all staff in school to pass and receive information, advice, guidance, suggestions and ideas.

Contact with Health Service professionals to provide daily support for the pupils with known medical conditions.

Contact with parents / carers and other agency staff to provide support for pupils, such as giving feedback on pupils progress. Such communications can be of a delicate nature depending on a pupils particular needs.

There will be regular contact with the Headteacher, relating to on-site supervision of TAs, deployment and cover arrangements.

Decision making

Within the agreed school policies, guidelines and rules, decide on when and how to apply a range of strategies for the benefit of pupils in relation to their education activities behaviour and care. These decisions often need to be made immediately to deal with the situation presented.

Guidance is normally readily available from teaching staff and more complex or controversial decisions will be referred to a teacher.

There will be often a need to make immediate decisions, without initial referral to teachers, in relation to immediate care, control and safety of pupils with special educational needs.

Decisions are made on the day to day deployment of TA staff and resources, under the overall direction of teaching staff.

Resources

Books, stationery, writing equipment
ICT and AVA equipment

Working Environment

The range of areas, number of classrooms/halls etc will depend on the particular school.

Most of the working day is spent standing, with periods of crouching / bending to engage pupils in activities.

Occasionally, substantial physical effort may be required in providing assistance to pupils with significant physical disability. There may be an occasional need to physically lift pupils such as for safety or care needs and occasional unpleasant conditions relating to pupils' personal hygiene needs.

There are often physical risks associated with intervention in incidents of challenging behaviour, including aggression, which are encountered with pupils.

A normal school environment, although the job holder may be involved in external school activities, such as swimming and educational visits.

Equipment used will include photocopiers, computers, medical /sport /science /art /technology /home economics equipment and in the case of special schools additionally plus hoists, wheelchairs and minibuses.

While the level of pupil needs will vary from time to time, the job holder will be predominantly working with pupils who are especially difficult to engage in activities, may present more frequent behavioural problems and where the attention span presents greater challenges and a need for high levels of patience to attain pupils' individual targets.

Progression in Post (if applicable)

Grade 6 will be payable where the postholder works, for the majority of their role, in a Special School or designated Special Unit or Base and;

Support pupils with complex and unpredictable needs, requiring greater levels of problem solving and creativity.

The need to apply creativity and innovation to new and challenging situations when interacting with pupils.

Job description prepared by:	Chris Matthews
Designation:	Pay and Reward Manager
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