



SEN Teaching Assistant

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# Assignment 1

1. Summarise the main development of a child from the age range 0-2 years, 3-5 years and 5-8 years
2. Analyse key social, economic and environmental factors, which may influence development
3. Describe children's overall development needs

# The Role of the Teaching Assistant

The role of the teaching assistant is primarily to assist the educational institution in ensuring that the educational needs of a pupil are met. Although the teaching assistant is known to be the last point of support in education, they are still a crucial part of the educational process. They fall under the supervision and support the roles of the:

- Head teacher
- Deputy Head teacher
- Assistant Head teacher
- Curriculum and Pastoral teacher
- Subject teachers

As one of the last roles of support in education, teaching assistants exist to influence a positive environment and atmosphere. A positive environment and atmosphere helps pupils stay focused and interested in learning. With a role in supporting the different roles above them, as well as contributing to the positive atmosphere of the learning environment, teaching assistants should be well informed and knowledgeable in many of the aspects of education including being knowledgeable about the classroom, and the educational institution. Information that a teaching assistant should ensure that they are informed of, and have access to while functioning as a teaching assistant at any job includes:

- Information on the educational institution; this includes:
  - Where the institution is located
  - What types of pupils the institution serves
  - The goals, mission, and vision of the institution
  - The calendar or schedule of the institution

- The faculty and staff that the teaching assistant is there to assist and support, as well as the faculty and staff that the teaching assistant will work in partnership with
- The educational institution's policy and procedures including:
  - The policy and procedures manual
  - All policies that are in place to meet legislative and regulatory requirements
  - All policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety of the pupils
  - All policies and procedures about employee disciplinary practices, rewards policies, and opportunities for training and professional development
- An organisational structure that defines the role of those people that are above, parallel and under the supervision (if any) of the teaching assistant. This may include the teacher assistant's role in relation to the:
  - Head teacher
  - Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)
  - Pastoral manager
  - Local authorities
  - Secretaries
  - Health and Social care representatives
- Detail information on their responsibilities in their role including information on their:
  - Schedule
  - Rights
  - Responsibilities
  - Employee expectations
  - Wages and compensation

- Equipment
- Benefits
- Grievances

## The Role of the Teaching Assistant with Other Staff

The role of the teaching assistant is to promote, enhance, and support the educational environment. They are also there to assist the pupils that are there to learn. The most important way that the teaching assistant supports the educational environment, and the pupils that are there to learn, is to work closely in supporting and assisting the other staff that are there in their roles. The teaching assistant will have a role to support educational staff like the head teacher, the SENCO, Pastoral manager, the child protection officer (CPO), the local authority, and the institution's administrative staff.

### **Head Teacher**

The head teacher oversees the overall function of the educational institution. It is a very important role that is also regulated by the Education (School Government)(Terms of Reference)(England) of 2000. These regulations are set for the head teacher as well as for any committee or governing body that oversees the management of any educational institution.

As a teaching assistant, it will be important to have a basic understanding of not only the role of the head teacher, but also of the regulations that



the head teacher must follow. Being able to support the head teacher in meeting these requirements, as well as being able to avoid any costly mistakes from not complying with laws and regulations will be a very valuable characteristic to have as a teaching assistant.

Regulations for head teachers that teaching assistants should be aware of includes:

- The requirement for the head teacher and governing body to function as a corporate body and follow the principles of operations set forth in the School Standards and Framework Act of 1998.
- The requirement for head teachers, governing bodies, and educational representatives (including teaching assistants) to function with integrity, objectivity, honesty, and with the best interest of the school and pupils in mind.
- Procedures in place to explain and outline decisions and actions.
- Following the regulation's definition and outline of the role and responsibilities of the head teacher and governing body; this includes:
  - Developing a strategic plan
  - Developing a strategic framework
  - Setting objectives
  - Setting policies
  - Setting targets for achievement
- Managing the organisation
- Reporting the progress of the educational institution to the governing body or reporting agency
- Following the directions and delegation of the educational institution's governing body
- The requirement of regulation 9 for a written performance management policy
- Written and organised curriculum and procedures to ensure that the educational institution follows the curriculum

- The preparation of secular curriculums including reviewing the policy and the review for performance, standards, and relevancy each year
- Developing a written performance management policy
- Develop a process for appraising teacher performances

## **SENCO**

The SENCO works with the head teacher in developing a strategic plan for the educational institution. They may also work with the governing body to ensure that the policy, procedures, and curriculum of the educational institution meet the needs and the set achievement standards for the pupils under the jurisdiction of the head teacher and the SENCO. The SENCO has a role in the everyday functions and processes of education. These everyday functions and processes have them working closely with the pupils, parents, caretakers, agents, health professionals, and anyone else that has a role in the education and wellbeing of the pupil. Specifically, the teaching assistant may need to help the SENCO with:

- Supporting and ensuring the everyday functions and operations of the educational institution
- Supporting the policies set for the institution
- Developing procedures and provisions for pupils with special educational needs
- Assisting the SENCO with working with other teachers and professionals that are there to supporting the child
- Working together with other teaching assistants to complete task and projects that are set by or support the SENCO
- Support and contribute to the programs that are there to train other faculty and staff
- Working with other agencies like the local authority, or health and social care professionals in supporting education

The SENCO commonly works with other professionals that a teaching assistant may also find themselves collaborating with to assist them in their role. Some of the other professionals that work directly with the SENCO include:

- A curriculum coordinator
- Literacy coordinator
- Numeracy coordinator

### **Pastoral Manager**

The Pastoral Manager is much like a head teacher except their role is to manage and oversee the religious aspects of educational institutions (should they have curriculum and standards in religion).

### **Child Protection Officer (CPO)**

The role of the Child Protection Officer (CPO) is to ensure that the children in educational settings are kept safe and that their wellbeing is one of the priorities of the institution's policy, procedures, and strategies. CPOs are often in charge of:

- Developing a policy for child safety and protection
- Ensuring that legislation, regulation, and guidance are met that dictate safety
- Ensuring requirements of disclosure and reporting are met
- Ensuring a policy for grievances and complaints
- Ensuring a policy of referrals and working relationships with other agencies and professionals
- Supporting the training of faculty and staff for elements of safety and risk

## **Local Authority**

The role of the local authority is to bring together, provide access to, and to support pupils with information, health and social care services, and policies, procedures and guidelines in ensuring that legislation and regulations are met. The local authority can be involved in many different aspects of education. However, a teaching assistant should be prepared to work with and support the local authority in:

- Ensuring education is accessible
- Supporting the educational institution in organisation, management, and compliance
- The assessment of the institution's policy, procedures, and outcomes
- Assisting with support services
- Supporting the implementation of government requirements
- Supporting the management of the institution's resources

# Teaching Assistants and Policies



There are many policies that are put into place to ensure consistency, strength, and accessibility in education. All professionals that are involved in education need to understand the policies that are there for them to consider and follow. It is also important to have a positive attitude and outlook on the role of policy in the everyday functions of education. A teaching assistant can further support those that are in leadership and support positions in education, when they understand the role of policy in education. There are 3 main policies that a teaching assistant should be well informed about. Those policies are:

- Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy

## **Child Protection Policies**

A child protection policy sets procedures, guidelines, and restrictions to actions that affect and support the wellbeing of a child. It is also a policy that addresses warning signs and risk factors that educators should consider when ensuring that the child is protected. While child protection policies exist to dictate and guide educational institutions and educational professionals, it includes guidelines and requirements of what to do and how to react to factors that threaten a child's protection outside of the educational institution.

Specifically, the child protection policy addresses protecting children against:

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse includes withholding acts of love, appreciation, and care to a child. It also includes verbal abuse. Verbal abuse occurs when words are used to attack, belittle or devalue someone.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse includes physical harm to a child.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse includes exploitation and inappropriate sexual acts towards a child.

### **Overall Neglect**

Neglect occurs when the basic living, care, and wellbeing of a child is ignored or neglected.

### **Components of a Child Protection Policy**

Child protection policy is defined and regulated under the Children Act of

1989. This act includes guidelines on “duty of care” in reference to children and details an educational institution’s role, responsibilities, and requirements in terms of:

- The welfare of a child
- The responsibility of staff
- The requirement of knowledgeable staff in terms of child protection policies
- Requiring the policy be clear on the needs of children
- Requiring the policy be clear about how educational professionals should react and respond to the needs of children

In addition, child protection policies should include directives and disclosures that inform children and direct professionals to inform children that:

- There is no guarantee of confidentiality for any particular issue that is discussed with a professional
- That children will not be questioned about their protection and safety if a professional suspects that the child’s protection and safety is at risk. Professionals should refer to the assigned institution’s child protection officer who will follow organisational and government policy and requirements for taking action to ensure the protection and safety of the child.
- Physical contact that is inappropriate or unnecessary is not supported or condoned by the institution, but the child may be touched in an appropriate way in order to show support or comfort.

We will look at child protection issues in more detail later in the course.

## **SEN Policies**

Special educational needs (SEN) policies are required under the SEN Code

of Practice. The current SEN Code of Practice of 2001 is an amendment of the 1994 SEN Code of Practice and addresses:

- Principles and policies
- Working in partnership with parents
- Pupil participation
- Identification, assessment and provision in early education settings
- Identification, assessment and provision in the primary phase
- Identification, assessment and provision in the secondary sector
- Statutory assessment of special educational needs
- Statements of special education needs
- Annual review of learning outcomes and educational needs
- Working in partnership with other agencies
- The Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations 2001
- The Education (SEN) (Provision of Information by Local Education Authorities) Regulations 2001
- The Education (SEN) Regulations 1999

SEN policies are normally overseen by a SENCO who ensures that the policy follows the requirement under the SEN Code of Practice and that the educational institution has the knowledge and resources that it needs to implement and follow the a SEN policy. Some of the things that should be considered when developing SEN policy include:

- Provisions, requirements, and procedures for special education needs
- Procedures for the identification of children with special education needs
- Procedures for preliminary and continuous assessment of special education needs and special education outcomes
- Procedures for addressing all aspects of special education needs and resolutions



- Provisions, requirements, and procedures for staffing
- Provisions, requirements, and procedures for partnerships and collaboration with other educational institutions, government agencies, and private organisations

### Components of a SEN Policy

An SEN policy will need to address the requirements and guidelines set out in the SEN Code of Practice. As a teaching assistant, you should understand the basic components that are found in a SEN policy so that you can support the SENCO and the school. When reviewing an institution's SEN policy, a teaching assistant should expect to see and understand the following components:

#### **Statement of Special Educational Needs**

The statement of special educational need can sometimes be referred to as a "school action" plan or a "school action plus". The statement of special educational need requires that children who have been suggested or questioned for special education needs be issued an intervention through this statement. The statement of special educational need can be issued through 3 different degrees:

- The statement of special education need
- The school action plan
- The school action plus

#### **Individual Educational Plan (IEP)**

The IEP is the educational institution's plan for meeting the needs and supporting the development of the educational needs of a child. The IEP is basically an outline of how the child will be educated. It is normal for a teaching assistant to be quoted directly as a resource in a child's IEP.

## **Pupil Reviews**

Pupil reviews occur when the educational outcome and the assessment of IEPs are reviewed to determine if there are any required changes or updates. The review may also find need for more involvement of a teaching assistant or additional support from health or social care professionals.

## **Behaviour Policy**

Behaviour policies are required under Annex B of Circular 10/99: The Secretary of State's Guide on Pupil Behaviour and Attendance of 2004. This guide includes resources and guidelines for discipline which includes:

- Development of policies that are easy to understand and accessible to all involved
- Development of policies that set and define boundaries and definitions of acceptable behaviour
- An outline of the disciplinary hierarchy
- Development of policies that ensure that discipline is applied fairly and consistently
- Development of policies that define and outline rewards for good behaviour
- Development of policies that support and promote respect and combat bullying
- Development of policy that teach and support educating children on self-discipline, the difference between right and wrong, as well as what to do if they are being bullied or harassed

### **Components of a Behaviour Policy**

Behaviour policies will contain components that depend greatly on the

actions of all those involved in education. In addition much of the behaviour policy is taken in practicum (or in action). We have already outlined that a behaviour policy should include elements of defined boundaries and definitions of acceptable behaviour, an outline of the disciplinary hierarchy, fair and consistent application, defined rewards for good behaviour, and factors that support and promote respect, self-discipline, and combat bullying, and harassment.

When putting a behaviour policy into practice teaching assistants and professionals should be:

- Calm and firm
- Supply explanations to children as to why their behaviour is unacceptable, or why their behaviour deserves a reward
- Contain control in the situation

