



TEACHING LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT

A bit about the working environment of schools

Schools are professional teaching and learning establishments with a clear remit from the Department for Children, Schools, and Families. As well as operating to the national curriculum, each school has a fully-documented set of procedures and processes for dealing with every aspect of managing the day-to-day activity. Schools are regulated by Ofsted – the government agency responsible for standards in schools.

As a teaching assistant or educational support worker, you will be expected to follow these processes and be aware at all times of the importance of maintaining standards.

If you plan to be a LSA (or other temporary worker in a secondary school), there are some unique challenges and it is not a working environment that suits everyone.

Overview of the job

Learning Support Assistants have an active role within the classroom, often helping the teacher carry out activities and answering questions pupils may have. Commonly as a LSA you will be supporting pupils with learning difficulties in the classroom. This could be with matters such as spelling, reading, grammar or mathematics.

It is important that you can build relationships with pupils, encouraging them to enjoy learning and deal with the frustrations they may have with particular topics. They should feel safe and confident when you are assisting them.

You will also be involved in the preparation of lessons, organising the required materials and the learning environment. As well as liaising with teachers, learning difficulties departments and parents and maintaining pupils' records of progression.

As a teaching assistant with Higher Level Teaching Assistant status, you may have more responsibilities such as planning learning activities with teachers and conducting assessments of pupils' progress.

Person Specification

To work as a learning support assistant you really should enjoy working with children and recognise the value of assisting them in their progress through education. You will need to be comfortable exercising discipline, and be confident in dealing with children with learning and behaviour difficulties.

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In addition you should be able to exhibit many of the following skills and attributes:

- A good understanding of the principles of learning
- Enjoy working in a child-centred environment
- Ability and willingness to follow procedures set out in the school and by law
- Suitable experience and qualifications (see below)
- Effective two-way communication skills
- A team player able to establish effective working relationships with co-workers
- Comfortable interacting with people from all communities
- Able to work on own initiative if required to do so
- Flexible and adaptable – able to respond quickly to constantly changing demands and needs
- Committed and reliable – people will depend on you to be there
- Ability to cope under pressure
- Good organisational and planning skills

Qualifications

We are looking for teaching assistants who have at least 12 month experience within the classroom or who have taken a NVQ in teaching assistant. Teaching assistants should have a caring nature, exhibit patience and be good at dealing with children. This should allow you to build good relationships with the pupils and create a productive learning environment. You should be enthusiastic about helping children learn and be someone who can encourage pupils to be enthusiastic about learning too.

You must be able to provide suitable references which re relevant to working with children. You will be expected to undergo a CRB check.