

Would it be better if my child had full-time one-to-one support?

Not really. Very few children need this. There are many obvious advantages, but there can also be disadvantages to one-to-one help, such as:

- children can become isolated or made to seem 'different';
- it can create a 'social barrier' so that a child with individual support has very little involvement with the other children;
- a child can depend too much on having someone there to help;
- it can prevent a child from having direct contact with the class teacher and the other children. Children need to learn to relate to lots of different people.

Some children share support - how does this work?

Working with another child and an adult is often more effective than one to one. For example, if two children in a school or class (with five hours set aside for each) are brought together, they can have up to 10 hours where extra help is readily available.

How can I help?

You can help by keeping in touch with the class teacher.

You can go to reviews to discuss your child's individual education plan, and to give your views about how your child is responding. (The school will value your views as part of the overall picture of your child's progress.)

You can help at home by doing things like reading to your child and talking about what your child is doing.

If any changes are made which you don't understand, do talk to the school.

What if my child's teaching assistant is off sick?

The school is responsible for making other arrangements and they should tell you what these arrangements are. The school should not ask you to keep your child off school.

What about other children in the school or class?

Children often help each other and all children benefit from learning how to help, and how to accept help.

A school has responsibility for *all* the children in the school. However, as a parent, you are obviously concerned about the interests of your child. If you are concerned about the amount of attention the school gives to your child, talk to the school

Where do I get more information?

We are based in the voluntary sector and are supported by the Family Welfare Association and funded by Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council.

Parent Partnership Service
Clarendon Chambers
32 Clarendon Street
Nottingham
NG1 5LN

Phone, fax, or minicom: 0115 948 2888

Email: enquiries@ppsnotts.org.uk
www.ppsnotts.org.uk

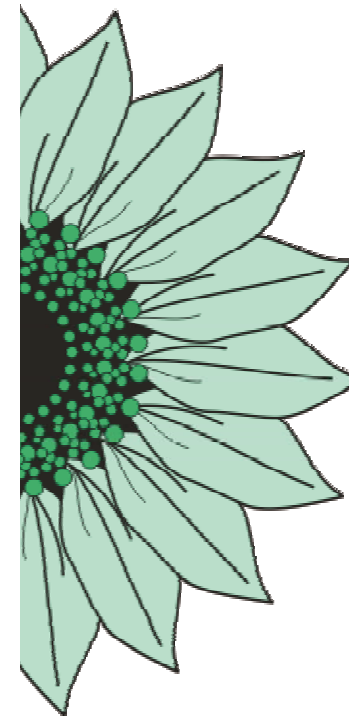


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Supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities in mainstream schools

An extra pair of hands

This leaflet is about teaching assistants working with children in schools to meet special educational needs.



An extra pair of hands

My child is to be given some extra classroom help in school

You will probably be pleased. You will certainly want to be sure that the help will be used to the best possible advantage. These are some of the things you may want to consider and talk over with the school.

The support aims to:

- make sure your child can go to a mainstream school and be fully included with the other children;
- give your child the same opportunities to learn as all the other children;
- make sure that your child takes part in every subject that is taught in school;
- help your child learn and make progress;
- help your child to learn more independently;
- work towards a time when your child has made enough progress so that the support may be reduced or not needed. This would be first discussed with you at a review meeting.

(You could add any other specific aims which are important to you and your child.)

Now my child's being given some help will I soon see some progress?

Having extra help should lead to progress, but the way the extra help is used is important. Schools have responsibility for planning how to use the help and they should make the best use of it for your child.

The school should consult you about this. It is important that the plans meet the targets set out in your child's individual education plan, and that everyone is clear about this. Your child's class teacher has the overall responsibility for your child's learning.

These are some of the ways teaching assistants can help in school

1 The teaching assistant can work directly with your child to:

- follow an individual education plan;
- check that your child has understood an activity or lesson;
- show how to do something your child finds difficult;
- make sure that your child takes part in a class activity, such as PE or listening to a story;
- help your child if there are physical difficulties, for example, with mobility, going to the toilet, dressing and getting around school;
- work with your child in a small group, involving one or more other children.

2 A teaching assistant can help your child indirectly by:

- helping your child to be part of the group in class;
- preparing materials and equipment;
- adapting materials for your child, for example, simplifying a worksheet which the teacher feels is too complicated;
- keeping records;
- doing an observation in class;
- helping other children relate appropriately to your child;
- working with other children (for example, reading a story) while the teacher works with your child;
- working with you.

3 A teaching assistant can also help the teacher or other members of staff in:

- planning teaching programmes;
- completing assessments or checklists;
- talking with you and professionals;
- going to review meetings.

