Acronyms

ADHD	–	attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
AfL	–	assessment for learning
BEST	–	behaviour and education support team
BTEC	–	Business and Technology Education Council
BIP	–	behaviour improvement programme
CAF	–	common assessment framework
CASEL	–	Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning
CBT	–	cognitive-behavioural therapy
CPD	–	continuing professional development
CSBM	–	certificate in school business management
D&T	–	design and technology
DCSF	–	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DEE	–	Department for Education and Employment
DES	–	Department for Education and Science
DfES	–	Department for Education and Skills
DH	–	deputy headteacher
DISS	–	Deployment and Impact of School Support Staff
EAL	–	English as an additional language
EBP	–	Education Business Partnership
ECM	–	Every Child Matters
EiC	–	Excellence in Cities
EIT	–	early intervention teams
ELSA	–	Emotional literacy support assistants
EWO	–	educational welfare officer
FAQ	–	frequently asked question
FSM	–	free school meals
G&T	–	gifted and talented
GCSE	–	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HLTA	–	higher level teaching assistant
HoD	–	head of department
HoY	–	head of year
IAG	–	information, advice and guidance
ICT	–	information communications technology
IEP	–	individual education plan
IiP	–	Investors in People
Inset	–	inservice training
ITT	–	initial teacher training
LA	–	local authority
LAC	–	looked after children
LRC	–	learning resource centre
LRCA	–	learning resource centre assistant
LSA	–	learning support assistant
LSU	–	learning support unit

NEET	–	not in education, employment or training
NFER	–	National Foundation for Educational Research
NOS	–	National Occupational Standards
NQT	–	newly qualified teacher
NVQ	–	National Vocational Qualifications
OCD	–	obsessive-compulsive disorder
Ofsted	–	Office for Standards in Education
PLTS	–	personal, learning and thinking skills
PPA	–	planning, preparation and assessment
PSHE	–	personal, social and health education
PSPs	–	pastoral support plans
Q&A	–	question and answer
QCA	–	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QESS	–	Quality in Extended Service
QiSS	–	Quality in Study Support
QTS	–	qualified teacher status
SAT	–	standardised assessment task
SEAL	–	social and emotional aspects of learning
SEF	–	self-evaluation framework
SEN	–	special educational needs
SENCO	–	special educational needs coordinator
SLT	–	senior leadership team
SMT	–	senior management team
STA	–	senior teaching assistant
SWiS	–	support work in schools
TA	–	teaching assistant
T&L	–	teaching and learning
TDA	–	Training and Development Agency for Schools
TEACCH	–	Treatment and Education of Autism and related Communication-handicapped CHildren
TES	–	*Times Educational Supplement*
TOIL	–	time off in lieu
VAK	–	visual, auditory and kinaesthetic
VLE	–	virtual learning environment
WRL	–	work-related learning
YOT	–	Youth Offending Team

Seeing the big picture: organising effective whole-school deployment of support staff

To ensure effective whole-school use of this vital sector of your staff, you need to have a sharp overview of how best to organise their use and deploy them for maximum effect. **Gareth Morewood** proposes strategies, systems and procedures for developing and embedding a good balance of support staff for your school

During my five years as a mainscale teacher, and the subsequent seven years as SENCO, there have never been as many support staff employed in schools as there are now, nor has the teaching role been so clear and unburdened by admin. A Government consultation paper on the role of support staff (DfES, 2002a) indicated that there were more than 100,000 support staff working in schools – an increase of more than 50% since 1997, and figures continue to rise.

As with any systems, some schools have a balance that works extremely well, and others do not. Although I write from an SEN background, I have been involved in developing other support staff roles during the past five years, using my experience in managing and leading a large team of non-teaching and support staff.

Managing change
Ensuring the right balance of support roles and lead practitioners is not something that can be imposed on existing school systems. Any significant change in structures and development of new roles needs to follow a period of consultation. Individual schools may require quite different combinations of roles, and it is not always the headteacher or senior leadership team (SLT) that have the best view of these requirements.

Any remodelling and development of school structures needs to be done for clear reasons. During the past five years, the overarching one has been to lessen teacher workload, with regard to administration, and to increase direct skilled time with students.

A change-management process, which has helped remodel thousands of schools, was designed to enable teachers to focus more effectively on teaching, increase the role of support staff and provide every pupil with a chance to achieve greater success. The process is not prescriptive but gives schools tools and techniques for identifying their priorities and developing solutions appropriate to their circumstances. More details about the change process, including case studies of schools' experiences of remodelling can be found on the TDA website at: www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling.aspx

Core challenges
As with any significant changes to systems and structures, several challenges arise. Uncertainty is one of the main barriers in ensuring a successful whole-school approach to supporting learning, and ensuring positive guidance and support.

The national agreement, signed by unions and the Government on 15 January 2003, acknowledged the pressures on schools to raise standards and address

National agreement: phases of implementation

September 2003
■ Routine delegation of administrative and clerical tasks
■ Introduction of work/ life balance clauses
■ Introduction of leadership and management time for those with corresponding responsibilities

September 2004
■ Introduction of new limits on covering for absent colleagues (38 hours per year)

September 2005
■ Introduction of guaranteed professional time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA)
■ Introduction of dedicated headship time
■ Introduction of new exam invigilation arrangements

excessive workload issues for teaching staff. The agreement was implemented in three annual phases from September 2003 – see the box below left.

Significantly, the agreement does not focus solely on teachers. It acknowledges the vital role played by school support staff and has led directly to the establishment of higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) standards and the certificate in school business management (CSBM) (see: www.ncsl.org.uk/programmes-index/csbm-index.htm). It has also been instrumental in creating other new, non-teaching roles in schools for adults who support teachers' work and students' learning.

It was, and still is, important not to simply 'move admin tasks' from teachers and ask additional adults to undertake them in isolation. New non-teaching roles offer an opportunity for a unique combination of roles and tasks that need to be developed through consultation with existing staff, governors, pupils and parents/carers. Through this consultation, it is important to assess the impact of dovetailing non-teaching roles with traditional models, from the perspective of the different stakeholders.

This cannot be done by simply completing a questionnaire or delivering a prescribed set of interview questions; the individual ethos of the school and feel of the community it serves needs to be considered and it is vital that this process is based on assessing individual school need. All consultation should be bespoke and allow for individual community needs to be sympathetically supported throughout the process. It is imperative that face-to-face open meetings should be part of the process, as well as individual or small-group discussions; implementing any significant change without listening first provides a rocky foundation for growth.

Some of the challenges that will arise include those set out in the box on page 9.

Having implemented significant change over the past seven years, in terms of new structure and roles within my own faculty at Priestnall (see: Morewood, 2009), and developing whole-school support roles, I am very aware that consultation and information-sharing are key elements in any change process.

Sharing information and reducing anxiety
To reduce fear and resentment among teaching staff, it is important to show that additional roles are a positive solution to key T&L challenges. You should explain how new roles reduce teacher workload and complement effective learning and progression for students.

Training and staff development

For existing and newly appointed staff to work effectively within new structures and systems, training must be offered throughout the school. This should be for all staff, not just those directly affected. For more on staff training, see the article on page 19–23.

Developing systems and protocols

The way that support staff fit into school systems and protocols must stem from open dialogue. It is important that rigorous systems and procedures support any new roles. Traditional systems, for example, students being on a report card to the head of year (HoY), may need revising in light of the increased student-adult time that a non-teaching member of staff can afford. Rather than having to take a report card to a teacher at the end of the day, it may be appropriate for the non-teacher to visit lessons randomly throughout the day, reducing the bureaucracy and increasing the direct, personal support required.

However specific systems develop, it is important that schools support the roles and the people in those roles. It is no good expecting a non-teacher to have pastoral responsibility for a year group, for example, without first understanding how the school works. Established systems for reporting, rewarding and sanctioning pupils may need revising – for example, positive rewards and 'catching pupils being good' can often have a marked effect on the poor behaviour of a minority. Opportunities for systems that are more personal increase significantly when the lead professional does not have a teaching commitment to contend with as well. If members of staff can get on to break duties five minutes early and be proactive in establishing acceptable social routines, few incidents occur.

All of these issues need development with stakeholders to become an effective part of the whole-school response to supporting learning.

Creating effective communication systems

As in any organisation, particularly in large secondary schools, communication at all levels is key, but especially when developing and combining different teacher and non-teaching roles. Robust systems for communicating in different ways need to be clear and established. Many schools now use technology as a main form of communication: websites, emails, the virtual learning environment (VLE) and so on. However, such communication methods are not always suited to all; a non-teaching head of year, for example, may be able to answer emails regularly throughout the day, whereas a teacher may only access emails at certain points such as lunchtime, and after school. So different methods of communication need careful consideration.

Having good interaction with others enables the right personnel and the right equipment to be available. Making sure there are secure communications links between key people is essential. (Homer-Dixon, 2000)

At my school, we ensure all supply staff and visiting professionals have a detailed booklet itemising key information and personnel. It is no good having excellent provision and procedures for regular staff if important information about structures and procedures is not communicated effectively to visiting staff. However, this does require coordination at SLT level, and is another example of how the effective embedding of support staff into school systems and structures requires whole-school thought and drive.

More flexibility within new curriculum arrangements

The new curriculum and the personalisation of learning have increased the amount of flexibility available to schools, so far as delivering subject/skills-based content.

The personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) framework (see: www.qca.org.uk/qca_13476.aspx) comprises six groups of skills:

- independent enquirers
- creative thinkers
- reflective learners
- teamworkers
- self-managers
- effective participators.

The manner in which schools embed these skills into curriculum and whole-school planning will be different from school to school. However, to ensure quality provision across all areas of learning and participation, non-teaching staff will play an essential part in the development of skills acquisition by bringing non-traditional skills into the learning opportunities for students. For example, if a member of the non-teaching staff is a qualified first-aid trainer, get them to do direct sessions with students about basic first aid and perhaps even enter students for additional qualifications. If staff have sports qualifications and interests in different creative and musical areas, utilise their skills, either through designated deep-learning days (when the traditional curriculum is suspended) or through life-education style lessons embedded into the curriculum.

Organising support staff

Organising support staff across schools to ensure optimum use of skills, time and high levels of performance must be a bespoke arrangement depending on the specifics of the school or institution.

Stephanie Lorenz (1998) identified that subject-specific support staff, as opposed to child-based support, increased performance outcomes for SEN pupils. It may be possible to transfer this idea to other support roles. Having a designated teacher in each faculty or department with responsibility for linking with non-teaching staff is one model. Another is for each faculty or department to have a non-teaching member of staff as part of its team, being line managed by a faculty or department head, or their deputy, depending on the size and structure. Any policy and rationale must be made clear prior to appointments; evaluation of the roles can then be undertaken in line with whole-school self-evaluation and development planning.

Even though ensuring quality time for joint planning is seen as good practice, it is often far away from reality because of the difficulties of arranging joint planning

New non-teaching roles offer an opportunity for a unique combination of roles and tasks that need to be developed through consultation with existing staff, governors, students and parents/carers

Challenges of creating new non-teaching roles

- Teacher resentment and fear at having other staff (not just SEN support staff) in their classroom
- Staff ignorance about the type of roles support staff play, and how to work with them well
- Poor organisation of how these staff are used
- Lack of systems and protocols for securing effective use of time and skills

At my school, we ensure all supply staff and visiting professionals have a detailed booklet itemising key information and personnel

Role of national standards

NOS can help staff to:
- define the coverage and focus of their role
- assess how well staff are performing
- identify training and development needs
- select qualifications that match the specific role
- make the links between the role and the school's overall aims and objectives.

However support staff are organised, senior leadership needs an overview to ensure it is in line with the learning and teaching aims of the school

sessions for teachers and support staff. So, it is important that support staff know what will be going on and have the chance to develop skills they feel less comfortable with. For example, each faculty at my school gives a weekly overview of topics and resources to support staff on Friday for the following week. If they are not aware of the topic and/or resource, or have not been with that specific key stage or lesson for a while, support staff can then ask the teacher for more detail prior to the lesson itself. While joint planning is something to aim for (even if it is just once a term at Inset), this seems to be an effective compromise.

Timetabling is always a difficult task, especially in light of the more flexible pathways through KS4 and additional vocational routes. It is vital that any non-teaching roles complement and support the timetable and offer additional supportive mechanisms where required. For example, students undertaking work placements, diploma lines or vocational qualifications offsite may require additional mentoring and support when in school for their two or three days each week. Using the skills of support staff to provide that individual mentoring and additional in-class support can often mean the difference between gaining five GCSE grades in addition to vocational qualifications or not.

However support staff are organised, senior leadership needs an overview to ensure it is in line with the learning and teaching aims of the school. This then needs to mesh with other support staff to ensure a cohesive approach.

Deploying staff

The structure of individual schools, in relation to teaching and non-teaching staff, can vary enormously. Some schools focus on academic positions (such as heads of department/faculty), some on learning zones, or combined areas of learning, for example communications, including English and languages, and other schools have a focus based around the guidance and welfare systems.

However staff are deployed, individual schools need to ensure that there is a rigorous audit of provision. Consultation with staff is paramount, prior to developing structures to support the needs of that specific school and community.

When I think back to the start of my teaching career, in a secondary school serving what was then the second biggest council estate in the UK, the roles of non-teaching staff as mentors, advisors, support assistants and so on were vital. Teaching and learning (academically) was often not the foremost priority for the young people who attended. Social issues stemming from the socio-economic catchment that the school served, often impacted on individual students' ability to learn. So it was vital that non-teaching, as well as teaching staff could work together in supporting shared aims and objectives. The most direct example of this was the use of additional adults to significantly reduce the adult-student ratio in lessons. Even though the school was relatively small (around 600 on roll), some class sizes were around 20 students, with an additional adult as well as the teacher. The highest sets were given as much priority and support as the most vulnerable – often 'top sets' would have 14 or 15 students; the value of learning was placed high on the agenda and resourced. Additional mentors and a large number of specialist support staff for students with SEN added to the mesh of support that was probably fairly innovative 14 years ago. This system provided students with opportunities to talk and discuss issues, which often stemmed from the community the school served. This then reduced their anxiety and better supported their learning.

Categories of support staff

Group	Job	Specific examples			
Site staff	Site staff	■ Cleaner	■ Caretaker	■ Premises supervisor	■ Site manager
Catering	Catering staff	■ Catering assistant	■ Assistant cook	■ Cook	■ Catering manager
Admin	General admin	■ Clerical assistant	■ Receptionist	■ Office manager	■ School-business manager
	Finance	■ Finance officer	■ Bursar		
Specialist and technical	Exams officer	■ Exams manager	■ Exams officer	■ Exams invigilator	
	ICT	■ ICT technician	■ Network manager		
	Science/design and technology (D&T)	■ Science technician	■ Lab technician	■ D&T technician	■ Food-tech technician
		■ Textiles technician	■ Art and craft technician		
	Librarian	■ Library assistant	■ Librarian		
Student support	Behaviour/guidance/support	■ Learning mentor	■ Careers advisor	■ Connexions personal advisor	
		■ Behaviour mentor			
	Care staff	■ Edn-welfare officer	■ Welfare assistant	■ Healthcare assistant	■ School nurse
	Midday supervisor/playworker	■ Midday supervisor	■ Lunchtime supervisor		■ Playworker
		■ Out-of-school-care worker/manager		■ Extended-school club worker/ manager	
Learning support	Early years	■ Nursery nurse	■ Early years assistant	■ Foundation stage assistant	
	Teaching assistants/bilingual support	■ Teaching assistant	■ Classroom assistant	■ Learning-support assistant	
		■ Bilingual-support assistant			
	SEN	■ Higher-level TA	■ SEN assistant	■ LSA	■ TA – special needs
	Cover supervisor	■ Cover assistant	■ Cover supervisor	■ Cover manager	
	Sports coach	■ Sports coach			

(Source: NOS – see: www.tda.gov.uk/support/NOS.aspx)

Other schools face different challenges. More academic schools have additional pressures regarding maintaining league-table status and high expectations of their students. However, simply because they are performing better against Government targets than other schools does not mean that they do not have additional, specific needs for their students.

A good example of this relates to one of the original support roles in schools; that of the teaching assistant or learning support assistant, a role that is still an important part of support, guidance and welfare today. As previously mentioned, research conducted by Dr Stephanie Lorenz (1998) highlights that SEN support staff located within subject areas increased performance of students with SEN, as opposed to being allocated to individual students and/or needs. Perhaps schools should consider specific roles that are task based (as indicated below, with regard to deployment) and subject orientated, and move away from year managers and pastoral leaders, for example? Maybe common strands of need, such as disaffection, family stress, and vulnerability will see support staff gaining expertise in specific areas and working across year groups and/or vertical pastoral systems?

The system developed must stem from the embedded aims and objectives of the school itself. Deployment of support staff should support learning and teaching, assist with the guidance and welfare of all learners and support teaching and non-teaching staff alike, via a bespoke system tailored to their school's individual community and environment.

The National Occupational Standards (NOS) considers different groups of support staff, in which specific jobs are undertaken – see the box at the bottom of page 10. It is vital that the standards are used to support any reorganisation; they provide a framework of the roles and responsibilities of support staff in schools, not a blueprint. The standards support individuals in their day-to-day tasks and help establish the link between the school's aims and objectives and what is required to achieve these, so they can be used to support the school-improvement planning process. But this requires a strong link between the use of the standards and whole-school leadership and planning. Schools can use them to support the design and evaluation of education and training for staff and in the choice of qualifications. The standards can also be used to manage and develop the school and individuals, job

CPD strategies that do not involve qualifications
■ Shadowing a more experienced colleague
■ On-the-job project work
■ Coaching and mentoring less experienced colleagues
■ Supporting other staff on projects
■ Visiting other schools and sharing in professional dialogues

descriptions, recruitment, team development, career planning and staff appraisal. However they are used, simply picking them 'off the shelf' and applying them will not add significant value to the developing provision. Used well, and National Occupational Standards (see: www.tda.gov.uk/support/NOS.aspx) have many benefits to offer – see the box top left on page 10.

As with any national standards, schools need to support the use of them and encourage support staff to engage in further professional training and development to achieve the standards.

Linking the standards into National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) can be a powerful development tool for non-teaching staff. The NOS units are the basis of NVQs and are used to define the way the units can be combined. During the qualification development process, the occupational standards are converted to NVQ units – assessment requirements are identified and qualifications are given an appropriate national qualification framework level. The Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools NVQs are available at Levels 2 and 3 on the national qualification framework (see: www.tda.gov.uk/support/qualificationsandtraining/nvqs/NVQ_supporting.aspx).

The right to continuing professional development (CPD) is not the preserve of a select few; all staff should be encouraged and supported in development – from those who support teaching and learning directly in the classroom to those who support the guidance and welfare of students, right through to caretaking staff and staff who work in the canteen.

For more details on formal training for support staff see the article on pages 14–18.

Inhouse CPD for support staff

Gaining qualifications is not necessarily the most effective form of professional development for support staff. Often schools have a lot of inhouse expertise that is more appropriate to the specific needs of the individual and their role within the school.

Alternatives to formal qualifications should always be considered. These include those strategies set out in the box middle left. For non-teaching staff, there are many training and qualification options opportunities

Raising profile: issues to consider

■ **School ethos and structures:** is the school forward-thinking and embracing opportunities to develop non-teaching roles?
■ **Headteacher's vision**: does the head have a clear vision of how non-teaching and support staff complement existing systems and organisation?
■ **Individual staff:** do the staff appointed have the necessary skills to develop their roles? Do existing staff embrace the addition of support staff as a positive move towards greater school effectiveness?
■ **Budgets and funding**: is funding appropriate to sustain developments? Ensure that any additional positions are sustainable and done for the correct reasons, not merely financial ones.
■ **Terms and conditions of employment:** are job descriptions and terms of employment in line with expectations of the post? Teachers often work outside of normal school hours, but it may be unreasonable to expect non-teaching staff to work outside of designated hours. For any successful system to be sustainable, these issues need clarifying prior to appointments being made.

Effective classroom use of support staff: action to take

■ When planning individual programmes, one-to-one teaching (either in class or on a withdrawal basis) should be combined with supported groupwork in mainstream classes that facilitates all pupils' participation in peer-groupwork
■ Support staff and teachers need to be sensitive to the needs and wishes of all pupils and to review the situation frequently to achieve the right balance of individual and groupwork; inevitably, some compromises have to be made
■ It is important for support staff, teachers and, where appropriate, pupils to work together in planning and implementing programmes of work
■ Senior staff in schools need to allocate sufficient time for this planning

(Source: Howes et al, 2003)

Schools should link the evaluation of non-teaching roles into whole-school systems and policies

Effective practice – top tips

■ Fully audit and evaluate existing practice
■ Ensure any discussions around new posts and roles support whole-school aims and objectives
■ Have extensive consultation, ensuring all stakeholders have an opportunity to share their views
■ Ensure support is 'embedded' into whole-school practice
■ Regularly undertake quality evaluation of provision and impact of the roles
■ Research existing good practice before under-taking whole-sale review and restructuring – what suits one school may not suit your establishment

available. These include those set out in the box top left. The 'Useful things to know' box below gives websites offering useful links for organising such opportunities.

Staff should have the opportunity to work under the guidance of a senior member of the staff team looking at their own professional development and career paths. The Career Development Framework (see: www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/f/framework_guidance_handbook.pdf) maps support-staff roles against national training and professional development. It is still in early development, but that does not mean that your school cannot embrace training and development opportunities for all staff. The guidance in the handbook sums up the current position well:

The impact of skilled and committed support staff on children's attainment and wellbeing is only just beginning to be identified and understood. Our aim is to help all those working with the wider workforce to develop staff to their full potential and support them in meeting their career aspirations.

As we start to measure the impact of a variety of support staff roles on pupil performance, professional development and further training is going to become an important part of whole-school performance. Now is the time to start structuring development opportunities in line with teachers' development and training.

Managing performance

Five years ago, I was fortunate enough to do some work in Clark County Schools District in Nevada, looking at CPD and professional development. I was amazed that, even in 2004, they had a rigorous performance-management system for all support staff. Everyone working within that school's district had a chance to progress, develop professionally and have their work evaluated against agreed performance indicators. Increasing satisfaction in jobs at every level, providing opportunities for development in all roles and showing that every position within an organisation is valued and performance-rewarded and developed had a marked

positive effect on the workforce. On returning to my school, I developed a comprehensive development record for the TAs within my faculty, summarised in the box at the bottom of page 13. Although I did not have the luxury of linking this into pay, I was able to identify areas for development, reward success with praise and increased self-esteem, and show my staff they are valued. Whatever teaching staff's personal misgivings about the use of performance management in schools, systems of measuring performance against agreed outcomes for support staff are crucial in managing and maintaining the workforce.

Ensuring all staff have status

One of the main challenges that faced schools, in light of workforce reform and school restructuring, has been ensuring that support staff have appropriate 'status' in the eyes of all stakeholders, other teachers, students, parents/carers, governors and so on. This has often depended on a number of related issues, including those set out in the box at the bottom of page 11:

While it is important to have a good balance between teaching and support staff, previous suggestions that non-teachers could lead schools have seen high-profile failures (see, for example: www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6010842). While status for support staff must be central to school organisation and structure, it would appear that fast-tracking non-teachers into senior leadership positions may be short lived.

Evaluating use of support staff

As with any whole-school development, after implementation it is important to have rigorous self-assessment and review. Schools should link the evaluation of non-teaching roles into whole-school systems and policies: for example, performance management for teaching staff. Clear assessment and evaluation of support roles should be embedded through the SEF and school development plan.

From the point of view of developing effective class-room practice, the findings of the EPPI-Centre review (Howes, et al, 2003) suggest action that schools can take with respect to direct teaching – see the box top left.

It also suggested action for policymakers at a national level – see the box top right on page 13. This has been taken on board with the NOS, and review of non-teaching positions. New research from the EPPI-Centre (Alborz et al, 2009) indicates that the deployment of the TA workforce has been successful in providing support for teachers on a number of levels and in delivering benefits to pupils.

To enhance these impacts, it is necessary to ensure:
■ effective management and support for TAs
■ they have good training and a clear career structure
■ collaborative working if teaching assistant support is to be employed to its best effect

Useful things to know: links for training and qualification options

■ Children's Workforce Network: www.childrensworkforce.org.uk
■ Learning and Skills Council: www.lsc.gov.uk
■ Learndirect: www.learndirect.co.uk
■ skills4schools: www.skills4schools.org.uk

- teachers are trained in these approaches
- that the ongoing effect of this emphasis is monitored in professional standards for teachers.

It is important to have a rigorous review of systems, structures and performance, especially when developing new structures. Individual performance-management-style reviews for staff are useful: the enhanced self-esteem and value attached to speaking directly with all individuals is a powerful motivational tool. Schools should also evaluate the impact of new positions by matching outcomes against job criteria. Auditing and identifying areas for improvement should be carried out as part of whole-school review and evaluation, not as a 'bolt on'. In evaluating performance through the self-evaluation form (SEF), school systems should embrace non-teaching roles equally within this process – only then can you effectively evaluate performance and usage.

Good practice

Ensuring effective whole-school use of support staff has to be part of whole-school policymaking, aims and objectives. Simply creating a role and expecting a non-teacher to fit into the complex school environment will not work long term, or provide sustainable support for the lifeblood of the environment: that of ensuring high-quality teaching and learning. The box middle left on page 12 gives top tips on good practice you can adopt so that your school is in the best position to ensure that the whole-school use of support staff has maximum positive impact on teaching and learning.

A modern staff group

However non-teaching and support staff are used in your school, it should be done with a clear educational purpose in mind. The ultimate aim for employing additional staff who are not teachers is to enhance learning opportunities and increase outcomes for the young people with whom we work. To succeed, all staff need to feel valued and part of the team, and should be part of whole-school planning and evaluation.

Modern schools are complex places but an effective support staff whole-school T&L team can enhance experiences for young people. Valuing their expertise and ensuring they are part of the team will increase standards and reduce barriers to learning and participation. As a continually developing area, change is inevitable; how we embrace that opportunity will define schools in the 21st century.

Gareth D Morewood, Director of Curriculum Support and Special Educational Needs Coordinator, Priestnall School, Heaton Mersey, Stockport

The ultimate aim for employing additional staff who are not teachers is to enhance learning opportunities and increase outcomes for the young people with whom we work

National action taken to secure effective use of non-teaching staff

This national action should be in place across the country but some local authorities are still in the process of implementing it.
- Local authorities and schools should continue to employ support staff to work alongside teachers in mainstream classes.
- A nationally agreed structure for salary and conditions of service should be developed so that the job of a TA can be viewed as a profession in its own right.
- There should be an agreed procedure whereby TAs can, if they wish, progress from being assistants to qualified teachers, without having to undergo a traditional four-year degree programme.
- Policies for TAs and teachers who work with them should be continually reviewed. New entrants to the profession should be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to make an effective contribution from the start; they should be given sufficient induction and inservice training opportunities and there should be regular opportunities for teachers and assistants to undergo joint training.

(Source: Howes et al, 2003)

Areas of focus for teaching assistant development record

Supporting the student	Comment/evidence	Outcomes and targets
■ Support learning by working with students, either individually or in small groups, either inside or outside the classroom, under the direction of the teacher		
■ Aid pupils to learn as effectively as possible by clarifying instructions		
■ Motivate and encourage students, as required		
■ Support weaker areas such as language, behaviour, reading, spelling, maths		
■ Show evidence of development of appropriate resources to enable pupils to learn		
■ Establish supportive relationships with students		
■ Support students with development of their social skills		
■ Encourage acceptance and inclusion of students with additional needs, in relation to their peers		
■ Develop methods of promoting and reinforcing self-esteem		
■ Assist, under the direction of the teacher and other professionals, in developing suitable programmes of support for students with additional needs		
■ Contribute to individual pupil records and report for the annual review process		
■ Provide regular feedback with the teacher and establish and maintain clear lines of communication		
■ Undertake observations of students to assist in identification of areas of need		
■ Support the teacher with the assessment of work, as required		
■ Support the whole class, under the direction of the teacher		
■ Support the teacher with planning and evaluating lessons and modules of work		

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Useful resources

Useful websites

■ Antidote: www.antidote.org

■ BBC Learning: www.bbc.co.uk/learning

■ Children's Legal Centre: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

■ Children's Workforce Development Council: www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/learning-mentors and www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/learning-mentors/materials-to-support-practice

■ *Education Guardian* supplement 'Impact of support staff in schools': www.tda.gov.uk/about/publicationslisting/tda0663.aspx

■ EQUALS – Entitlement and Quality Education for Pupils with Learning Difficulties: www.equals.co.uk

■ Fun Brain: www.funbrain.com

■ Incentive Plus (resources): www.incentiveplus.co.uk

■ Institute of Education page on deployment and impact of support staff in schools: www.ioe.ac.uk/study/departments/phd/5619.html

■ Managing mentoring programmes: www.pearsonpublishing.co.uk/education/catalogue/704322.html

■ National College for School Leadership: www. ncsl.org

■ NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

■ School Support Staff: www.schoolsupportstaff.co.uk

■ Schoolzone: www.schoolzone.co.uk

■ Teacher Development Agency: www.tda.gov.uk

■ TDA career guide for school support staff: www.tda.gov.uk/about/publicationslisting/TDA0662.aspx

■ TDA support staff website: www.tda.gov.uk/support.aspx

■ Treatment and Education of Autism and related Communication-handicapped CHildren (TEACCH): www.teacch.com

■ Teachernet: www.Teachernet.com

■ TeacherNet area for school support staff: www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/supportstaff

■ Teachernet publications: www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

■ Teachernet, learning support units: www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/learningsupportunits

■ Teachernet, teaching and learning: www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning

■ *Times Educational Supplement (TES)* resources: www.tes.co.uk/resourcehub.aspx

■ The National Association of Professional Teaching Assistants: www.napta.org

■ Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Useful books

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