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Chapter 12: Effective practice in managing and working with support staff

Dr Helen Saddler

- Exploring effective management of support staff: A model of good practice
- Education Endowment Foundation: 7 principles of effective practice in deploying Teaching Assistants
- Modes of working associated with support staff: how to identify and utilise them
- Good practice approaches to leading an intervention group

- ✓ This chapter supports the NASENCO outcome: Professional Knowledge and Understanding Part B: (Section 5) Leading and Co-ordinating Provision to commission, secure and employ appropriate resources to reinforce the teaching of children with SEND and evaluate and report on their impact on progress, outcomes and cost effectiveness and (Section 6) To deploy and manage staff effectively to ensure the most efficient use of resources to improve progress of children with SEND

The aim of this chapter is to explore the factors that result in support staff being managed, deployed and supported effectively, leading to enhanced outcomes for children. For the purposes of this chapter, ‘support staff’ refers to members of staff whose role primarily involves assisting with learning; this includes Teaching Assistants (TAs), Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs).

The role of support staff in schools is complex, in terms of responsibilities, thus often difficult to define and conceptualise (Devecchi, Dettori & Doveston, 2011). Support staff primarily work with children identified with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), therefore there are significant links between the role of the SENCO and the management and accountability for attainment and progress. Many SENCOs undertake positional responsibility for co-ordinating and managing support staff, yet there are widespread ambiguities associated with the positional responsibilities associated with this role, as well as a lack of guidance on effective management of these staff members (Maher & Vickerman, 2018).

Exploring effective management of support staff: A model of good practice

Due to the complexity and variance in the roles that support staff often undertake, managing them both as a group and individually can be very challenging. The model below highlights an effective approach to successfully managing support staff, developed through exploration of relevant literature and school-based research (Saddler, 2015). The model is presented as a useful tool through which to review the efficacy of support staff management.

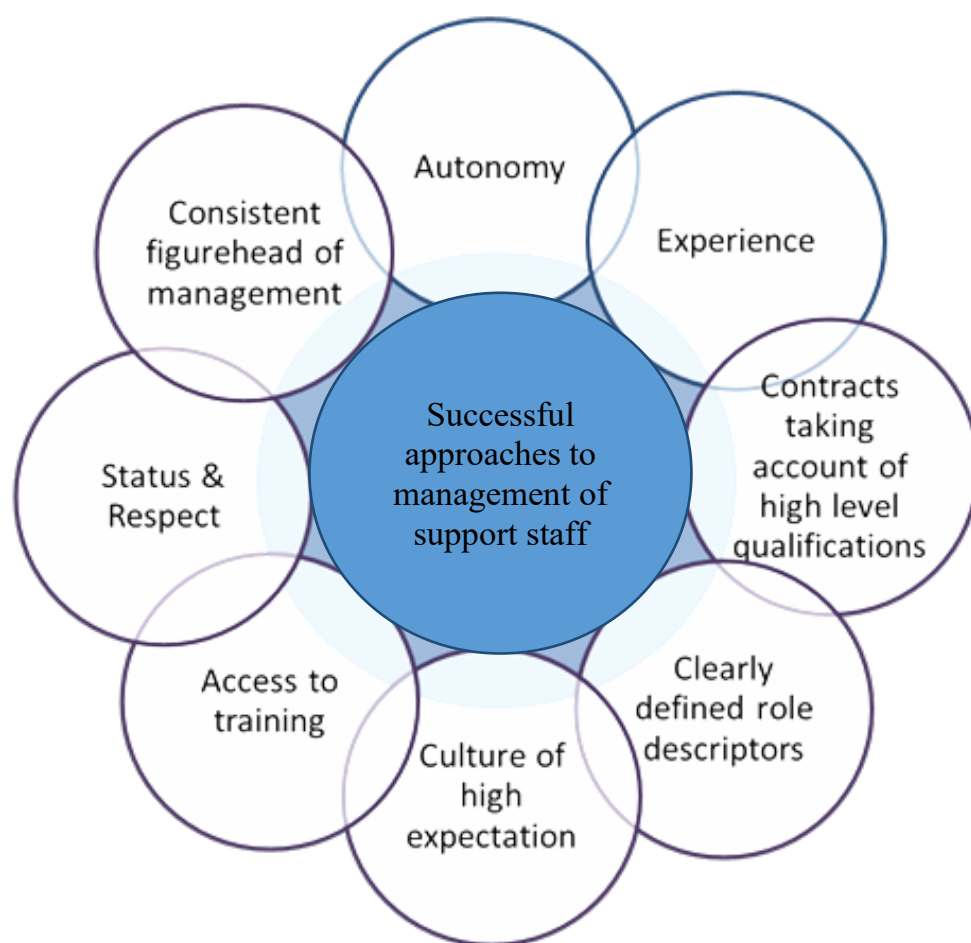


Figure 1: Successful approaches to the management of support staff (Saddler, 2015).

Each component of the above model is discussed below:

1. Consistent figurehead of management: The staff member with positional responsibility for managing support staff varies widely; it can be the Headteacher, Deputy Head, SENCO, or even an HLTA. A visible figurehead of management is likely to result in a better relationship between manager and support staff member, as the manager often appears more approachable.

Reflective Activity: Ensure that all support staff are aware of who their line manager is and the mechanisms for approaching them with a success/suggestion/issue.

2: Status and Respect: Basford et al. (2017) suggest that a culture of equality between support staff and teachers is often lacking in mainstream schools across England. It is important to create a culture and ethos of equality between support staff and other teaching staff, stemming from the senior management team, in order that children view support staff as professionals who command respect. This culture of respect will better support consistent behaviour management approaches and better teaching and learning practices.

Reflective Activity: Reflect on the status of support staff in your school.
How can you ensure that the children display respect for teaching staff at all levels?

3. Access to training: A lack of access to relevant training opportunities for support staff in mainstream schools has been widely acknowledged (Bowles, Radford & Bakopoulou, 2017). This research has indicated that support staff are likely to speak more positively about their senior leadership team if/when they have accessed training opportunities that align with their personal interests and/or are of direct relevance to the responsibilities that they undertake within their role.

Reflective Activity: Reflect on the historic/current training opportunities that support staff have access to in your school. Are they directly relevant to their role? Do they take account of individuals' interests?
How is the impact of the training on outcomes for children evaluated and measured?

4. Culture of high expectation: A culture of high expectation is regarded as an effective approach to management of support staff, in encouraging staff to achieve their potential within their role. However, schools should be mindful that unreasonably high expectations can result in low levels of job satisfaction and excessive pressure in terms of staff accountability for children's progress.

Reflective Activity: Is there a culture of high expectations for all staff in your school? Reflect on a reasonable level of accountability for support staff versus teachers to ensure your expectations are fair for all.

5. Clearly defined role descriptors: In many schools, the lack of clear job descriptions for support staff is leading to 'role blurring' between teachers and support staff, which can be detrimental to the teaching and learning process. Schools should document clear role profiles detailing their specific professional responsibilities in that school.

Reflective Activity: Reflect upon how fit for purpose the job descriptions for support staff are in your school. Do they reflect the diversity of their role(s)? How could they be made more transparent and avoid any 'role blurring'?

6. Contracts taking account of high level qualifications: In some schools, senior management have supported, and occasionally subsidised, additional qualifications for support staff, yet have not then provided promotional opportunities in their schools. For example, encouraging TAs to undertake HLTA status, but then not providing them with an HLTA role. Therefore, there can be some level of dissatisfaction amongst over-qualified staff members, as expectations have increased but pay and level of employment have stayed the same.

Reflective Activity: Identify the level of qualification of your support staff e.g. Level 2/3/HLTA status. Reflect upon how reasonable the expectations are for individuals versus their level of qualification.

7. Experience and Autonomy: These two areas of the model are discussed together, as they are interlinked. There is widespread evidence to suggest that more experienced support staff

are better able to support children identified with SEND. Support staff often experience higher levels of confidence in their role when autonomy is afforded to them by their management.

Reflective Activity: Reflect upon the level of autonomy that support staff are afforded in terms of implementation of interventions, or identifying appropriate materials for use in teaching sessions. Is this appropriate? How can you better take account of individuals' levels of experience in your management of their role?

Education Endowment Foundation: 7 principles of effective practice in deploying TAs

In 2015, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) suggests seven recommendations for making best use of Teaching Assistants in UK primary and secondary schools (Sharples et al, 2015). These best practice principles provide a useful overview of the practical approaches that engender effective teaching and learning practices for children, but are also useful in ensuring support staff are managed effectively. SENCOs should use the information given under each principle as a tool for reflection.

In the Classroom

1. TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low-attaining children

Many TAs spend a significant proportion of their time implementing interventions and other structured programmes, yet research suggests that a significant proportion of their work is informal in nature (EEF, 2015). This informality is less likely to result in high quality learning experiences for children, therefore, it is important that support staff are engaged in as many planned teaching and learning opportunities as possible.

2. Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them

Evidence showed that many schools have drifted into a situation where, arguably, the most in need children aren't getting enough time with the teacher due to being with TAs for a significant proportion of their time in school. This often does not provide optimum teaching and learning opportunities for staff and children (Lamb, 2009). TAs can be a vital support to the children they support, but so are teachers, therefore the EEF recommends that schools do

more to make sure that the most in need children have access to ‘quality first teaching’ as well as support from TAs.

3. Use TAs to help children develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning

It is very important that the support TAs give to children encourages them to build the skills to work independently, otherwise children can become overly dependent on TAs and this can be difficult if/when they move classrooms or schools and can no longer work with the same adult; this is a situation known as ‘SEN Velcro-syndrome’ (Shevlin, Kenny & Loxley, 2008). Schools are encouraged to think carefully about the children that TAs work with across a given week, and to ensure that TAs’ language during a task is thinking-orientated rather than completion-orientated.

4. Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom

TAs and Teachers are required to find time to discuss expected teaching and learning approaches frequently. This will make sure that TAs are aware of what they need to say to children to support them and have the essential ‘need to knows’:

- Concepts, facts, information being taught
- Skills to be learned, applied, practised or extended
- Intended learning outcomes
- Expected/required feedback

(Sharples et al., 2015).

Out of the classroom

5. Use TAs to deliver high quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions

Evidence from the Sutton Trust shows that TAs’ delivery of targeted interventions in a one-to-one or small group setting can add up to four additional months progress for children (Higgins et al., 2013). This finding shows the real impact that many TAs are having on outcomes for children. However, this impact is only observed when TAs are working in a structured group, with high quality support and training. Therefore, making sure that TAs

have had training on how to implement the intervention programme that they're delivering is essential.

6. Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction

It is important that intervention programmes have evidence of impact behind them, so that schools know that they are likely to improve children's learning if they are implemented well. If the evidence behind an intervention programme is lacking, but it is still deemed appropriate for use, it is suggested that a school follows the 'good practice in running an intervention group' model, presented later in this chapter.

7. Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions

If TAs can help children to see the connections between what they are learning in their intervention and what they are learning in the main classroom, then children are more likely to understand it. This is because children can more readily apply, demonstrate and consolidate new learning.

Note: TA standards

In 2014, DfE asked a panel of experts to draw up some new TA standards. Although DfE have not published these themselves, a group of teaching unions were granted permission to publish these new, non-satutory standards in 2016. The standards document describes the primary role of Teaching Assistants as:

“To work with teachers to raise the learning and attainment of children while also promoting their independence, self esteem and social inclusion. They give assistance to children so that they can access the curriculum, participate in learning and experience a sense of achievement” (p.5).

SENCOs are advised to access these standards and use them as a reflection tool to explore the status and professionalism that the support staff in their school currently experience.

Modes of working associated with support staff: how to identify and utilise them

Support staff appear to work across three generalised ‘modes’ in the average educational setting: whole classroom, small group and one to one (Saddler, 2015). The three modes of working often require different approaches and skills, to maximise the teaching and learning experiences that children participate in. It is useful for SENCOs to be aware of these, to ensure that the skills, knowledge and understanding of individuals are considered in assigning responsibilities to support staff. The modes are explained below; effective support strategies associated with each mode are also presented. These support strategies can be used by SENCOs during observations, as a tool for highlighting areas of success and areas for improvement as well in promoting effective teacher-support staff working.

Mode 1: Whole Classroom

This mode is characterised by support staff undertaking the following:

- Usually spending time in the main classrooms of one or more teachers in the school
- Working with a range of children in the classrooms they spend time in
- Often supporting teachers with administrative duties, such as classroom displays and resources for lesson
- choosing the children that they work with during lesson time by moving around the classrooms and identifying children that require support
- Being assigned specific groups/tables of children to work with during lessons but they will usually work with that group inside the main classroom.

Effective support strategies in whole classroom mode:

Support staff and those they work with should take account of the following:

- *Try to work with children that have a range of needs:* It is often natural to go and support children of lower ability first, as they can be more vocal in their need for guidance and support. However, it is also important to support those children that are of other abilities, to ensure that they are experiencing stretch and challenge, as well as in maintaining high expectations of all.

- *Keep a time limit for each child:* Many children try to maintain the attention of an adult throughout a lesson. An appropriate approach to avoid this is to give each child that is being supported a time limit of 5/10 minutes, perhaps using a timer, so that the member of support staff can support multiple children throughout the course of a lesson. This ensures that children requiring support are noticed and helps to avoid over-reliance on support, as discussed earlier in this chapter.
- *Overseeing:* One of the most effective ways for both teachers and support staff to identify who would most benefit from their support in whole class mode is to scan the room regularly. Often, scanning the room after the allotted 5/10 minutes with one child is the best way to identify the child that is off task/in greatest need of support; it is not always the child that is most vocal.
- *Using time wisely:* The relationship between a teacher and support staff in whole class mode is key to engendering effective teaching and learning experiences for children. Whilst the teacher is engaging in whole class teaching, it is important that support staff engage in meaningful activity, for example creating/giving out resources, working on a wall display etc. However, in order to ensure that support staff hear the key learning needed for potential group work, it is often important that they stay within the classroom for this segment of the lesson.
- *Mirror the teacher's language:* To maximise children's understanding of a concept or task, it is important that support staff use the same language and terminology as the teacher at all times. It can be useful for support staff to note down key words and phrases used by the teacher during whole class teaching, so that children are not exposed to differing explanations and terms when it comes to group work.

Mode 2: Small group

This mode is characterised by support staff undertaking the following:

- Often implementing intervention programmes with small groups of children. This may be aligned to individuals' specialisms, e.g. pastoral interventions, booster groups for SATs/GCSEs or working with students identified with a specific SEND.

- Supporting specific groups of children in a space outside of the main teaching classrooms in the school e.g. the library or an intervention-focused room. However, staff in this mode may also spend some time working with small groups inside the main teaching classrooms.
- Carrying out assessment of children in the small groups; this is often related to an intervention programme implemented by staff members in this mode.
- Supporting children from across the school in different year groups.
- Creating resources to use within the small groups of children they work with.

Effective support strategies in small group mode:

Support staff and those they work with should take account of the following:

- *Ensuring familiarity with the content of an intervention programme before teaching it:* It will likely significantly increase the confidence of support staff if they can familiarise themselves with materials before implementation, which will, in turn, likely improve the efficacy of the intervention overall.
- *Promoting opportunities for students to partake in discussion:* It can be difficult to encourage and facilitate opportunities for all children to contribute during small group work. An effective approach to this can be to question quieter students more frequently and subtly, ensuring you don't make them feel uncomfortable, to balance out the discussion regarding more dominant children.
- *Discuss assessment arrangements with teachers:* If support staff are asked to assess children in small groups, it is important that they are aware of the assessment arrangements before the lesson. Sharing these assessments with class teachers is often particularly effective, as it ensures all teaching staff are better able to understand individuals' learning needs.
- *Regularly review children's abilities:* Children in small groupings will progress at different rates. Support staff working with small groups should regularly informally/formally review individuals' progress regularly, throughout the course of an intervention.

- *Be aware of friendships*: Small groups containing particular friends can provide opportunities for learning but can also be problematic. Often, children that work with their friends can become distracted or may dominate the group.
- *Build upon learning outside of the group*: This suggestion is linked to recommendation 7 of the EEF's 7 best principles of effective practice, as explored earlier in this chapter. Effective support staff will often acknowledge and praise children that display an understanding of a taught concept outside of the small group context. For example, children may spell a word correctly in an English lesson, which has been taught to them during an intervention group, or they may demonstrate effective friendship skills in the playground, which they have learned during a social skills intervention.

Mode 3: One to one

This mode is characterised by support staff undertaking the following:

- Spending most their time working with one child in the school.
- The child the staff member works with will likely have been identified with a SEND that requires significant support most/all the time that he/she is in school. He/she is likely to have an Education, Health & Care Plan.
- Attending review meetings regarding the support that the child receives in school.
- Supporting learning in a space outside of the main classroom, or may spend all their time in the main classroom.
- Specific intervention programmes may be implemented with the child by the member of support staff.
- May be asked to create/adapt resources to support the child(s) they work with.

Effective support strategies in one to one mode:

Support staff and those they work with should take account of the following:

- *Engage in open and regular discussion with the class teacher:* Riviere (2016) indicated that some staff members find it difficult to facilitate an effective balance in responsibility for the child being supported on a one to one basis. An effective approach to ensuring appropriate levels of responsibility is for both the class teacher and the support staff member to engage in frequent and open discussion regarding the child's needs. This helps to engender a supportive and inclusive culture amongst staff and the children they support.
- *Support children to find the answer, don't give it:* All staff should encourage the children they're working with to look for or ask questions to find the answer independently. Failing to do this is often a significant contributor to over-reliance on adult support, particularly when working in one to one mode. Staff must become comfortable with children failing to achieve correct answers; getting things wrong is often the only way that staff can gain a true reflection of children's abilities.
- *Include the child receiving one to one support in the rest of the class:* It can be difficult for the child receiving one to one support to feel included within the rest of the class. Often, working in pairs or small groups can result in the child consistently solely working with the member of support staff assigned to them. Encouraging collaboration can often help with both social inclusion and academic achievement.
- *Know when to adapt materials:* Support staff working in one to one mode often better understand the abilities and learning preferences of individuals than teachers. Therefore, it is often appropriate for support staff to adapt materials; effective teachers should recognise the importance of this.

The role of the SENCO is often pivotal in assigning individual support staff to work across specific modes. Recognising the strengths and weaknesses of individuals will ensure that children are optimally supported and that support staff are utilising their skills, as well as given the opportunity to build skills in different modes. The template below is intended for use by SENCOs, in exploring individuals' skills and abilities to work across each of the three modes associated with the support staff role. It is very appropriate for use during an annual review meeting to highlight areas of success and areas for improvement. It is also appropriate

for use in discussion meetings with class teachers, to identify areas of improvement with regard to deployment and management of support staff.

Template: Assessing competency across modes of working

Whole Classroom Mode		
Support Strategy	Prompts	Successes/Action points (Record your thoughts/discussion points in this column)
Working with children that have a range of needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the staff member able to consistently work with children that have a range of abilities? • Do they show the ability to provide adequate challenge for some children, as well as support those that require help to complete tasks? 	E.g. Susan works across whole classroom and small group mode. She can differentiate materials to ensure that Josh is challenged in her Maths Mastery group, as well as provide adequate challenge for those of lower ability in the group.
Keeping a time limit for each child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the staff member able to spend appropriate amounts of time with each child? • Can they move on to another child successfully after 5/10 minutes? • Does that child remain on task after having 	

	been supported?	
Overseeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the staff member make accurate judgements regarding the engagement of a whole classroom of children? • Is the staff member able to make appropriate independent decisions about which child to support during a session? 	Mohammad was observed moving from on from supporting Jack after 5 minutes of input, leaving him with an achievable task to complete independently before returning.
Using time wisely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the staff member consistently demonstrate effective use of their time in the classroom? • Are they always engaged in meaningful activity? 	

<p>Consistent use of language with children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the staff member mirror consistent use in language/terminology with the children?• Can they provide accurate explanations of concepts when asked to by children?	<p>E.g. Sarah clearly referred to the 'key word' board in the classroom to explain the meaning of apostrophes to the group she was supporting in the main classroom. This shows consistency in language between adults.</p>
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Small Group Mode		
Support Strategy	Prompts	Successes/Action points (Record your thoughts/discussion points in this column)
Familiarity in programme content/resources used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the staff member adequately familiar with the materials used during the small group work? • Have they taken the time to explore/amend the materials as necessary before the group commenced? 	
Allowing all children to partake in the session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the staff member able encouraging quieter children to partake in the session? • Can they achieve an effective balance in the discussion? 	E.g. Tia targeted all children with questioning, encouraging quieter members of the group to speak.
Assessment arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the staff member articulate the 	

	<p>assessment requirements associated with the small group work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they accurately complete assessments of the children and use these to inform future sessions? 	
Regular review of abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the staff member able to undertake effective informal review of individuals' abilities after each session? • Does this review result in effective differentiation of content? 	E.g. John keeps a notebook in which he records key information about the successes and areas for improvement for every member of the group after each weekly session.
Effective grouping of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the staff member effectively group the children to ensure smooth running of the intervention? • Do they make good use of partnering/wider group organisation to facilitate learning? 	

Building upon learning outside of the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the staff member refer to the concepts explored in different contexts? • Do they make good use of praise and reward to consolidate the learning outside of the small group? 	E.g. Simon was observed praising one child in his group when they used addition effectively to count the number of mini-beasts they saw on the vegetable patch.

One to One Mode		
Support Strategy	Prompts	Successes/Action points (Record your thoughts/discussion points in this column)
Communication with class teacher/other staff members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the staff member engaging in frequent and open discussion regarding the needs and abilities of the child they regularly work with? • Does this communication help to inform 	E.g. Fiona and her class teacher have developed a system in which they use a shared notebook to record developments that occur during the day, regarding the child that Fiona supports. This helps to maintain a consistent dialogue between staff.

	<p>better teaching and learning approaches for that child?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the thoughts of the staff member listened to by other staff members? 	
Supporting independent working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the staff member mindful of the dangers of over-reliance? • Can they promote independent working during sessions? • Are they aware of how to avoid an unhealthy reliance between themselves and the child they support? 	
Encouraging collaboration between the child and his/her peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the staff member encourage the child they work with regularly to build relationships 	<p>E.g. Amin always ensures that another child works with Kate when she is asked to engage in paired working, rather than himself, supporting collaborative working.</p>

	with his/her peers?	
Knowing when to adapt materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can the staff member successfully adapt materials so that they are appropriate to the abilities of the child they work with?• Do they share these resources with others and notify the class teacher when materials are adapted?	

Good practice to leading an intervention group

As previously explored in this chapter, support staff often spend a significant proportion of their time in school implementing intervention programmes in small group, or one to one mode. These programmes often include children of a range of abilities and in a range of curriculum areas. The advice in this section is useful for SENCOs in ensuring that the interventions implemented for children identified with SEND are effective, and in identifying appropriate support staff members to lead the implementation of interventions.

The following good practice approaches have emerged from the author's doctoral study and professional experience, also informed by relevant literature (Saddler, 2015). SENCOs should use these approaches to identify support staff members with appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to run intervention groups, as well as identify appropriate training opportunities for support staff to gain these skills.

- *Conduct a basic analysis of children's existing abilities before commencing the intervention:* All staff implementing an intervention programme should endeavour to gain a basic understanding of children's existing knowledge and skills in the curriculum area explored in the intervention. This may involve simple observation of children during lesson time, reviewing children's prior work, or conducting a more robust baseline assessment.
- *Discuss assessment arrangements before the intervention begins:* SENCOs/class teachers should clearly communicate any assessment/monitoring expectations to support staff implementing interventions before the intervention begins. Capturing consistent indications of children's abilities not only ensures that the content is pitched correctly throughout the course of the intervention, but also allows staff to evidence that their approaches are supporting learning.
- *Draw up group rules:* An effective intervention in small group mode will be led by a staff member that is able to effectively communicate the basic rules associated with behaviour and participation within that group, during the first session. It is often very appropriate to involve children in the creation of these rules, as they support staff to

gain ‘buy in’ from the children, which can better inform behaviour management approaches.

- *Model the activities required of children:* An effective implementer of intervention programmes consistently models all activities that children are requested to undertake. This ensures that children better understand what they are being asked to undertake and can help to reduce children’ anxiety towards sharing with the group/completing an activity.
- *Encourage all children to participate:* Children are likely to gain more from the intervention if they actively participate in the activities associated with it. Effective support staff will encourage participation through the use of praise and reward, being mindful not to expect unachievable levels of participation from individuals.
- *Build on learning on return to class:* If the intervention takes place outside of the main classroom setting, effective support staff will ensure that the learning taking place is build upon in other contexts, wherever appropriate. This links to a previous point regarding the efficacy of promoting children’ transference of knowledge in different contexts to build sound understandings of concepts.

Presented below is an ‘Effective Intervention Cycle,’ which serves as a visual tool for capturing the process of implementing an intervention programme effectively, summarising the bullet points explored above.

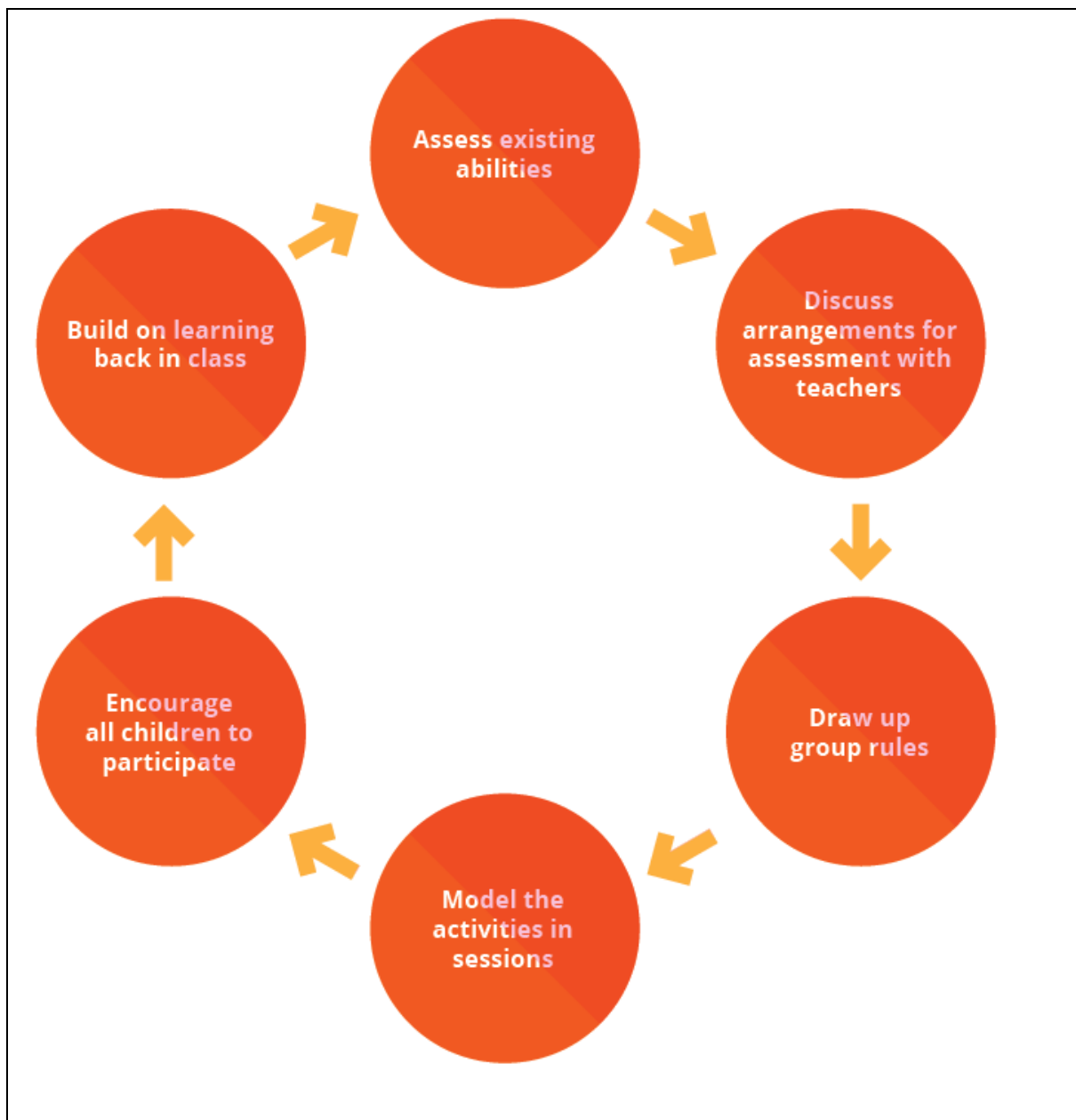


Figure 2: The Effective Intervention Cycle

The following template is intended to be used by SENCOs/relevant staff members in exploring the effectiveness of current interventions. It will serve as a useful note-taking prompt during observations of intervention sessions.

Template: Assessing the efficacy of an intervention

Cycle Stage	Observation Prompt	Areas of success/Action points
Assessing existing abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the staff member showing signs that they understand individuals' abilities?• Can they differentiate the questioning used/task assigned to individuals?• Did they undertake any formal/informal assessment of individuals' abilities before the intervention began?	E.g. Kate made notes about how well individuals could add two digit numbers before group began; Simon could have made better use of differentiated questioning during session
Assessment during/at the end of the intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the staff member aware of all assessment requirements during/at the end of the intervention?• Can they able to demonstrate effective use of the assessment tools?	E.g. Muhammad complete assessment form effectively, once the session had ended; Sarah appears unaware of the assessment requirements for this group

Group rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any group rules in place? • Were children involved in creating them? • How often are they referred to by staff member? 	E.g. Action point for Sara to draw p group rules for this session, involving children; John clearly referred back to group rules during an instance of problematic behaviour as a way to reinforce behaviour expectations
Modelling of activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the staff member model all activities children are expected to undertake? • How clear is the modelling process? 	E.g. Tariq clearly modelled all activities in an accessible way, children were aware of the expectations associated with the activity; Leah did not model the use of adverbs in a sentence in a clear and accessible way
Participation of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did all children participate in the session? • Does the staff member take appropriate measures to encourage quieter children to participate/reduce the input of more 	E.g. Julia used targeted questioning to encourage less confident children to vocalise their thought processes; Kyle could have worked harder to reduce the input of some more confident and vocal students, as they overwhelmed the discussion at times.

	confident children?	
Building upon learning in different contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the staff member refer to concepts in different contexts to reinforce learning? • Have you seen them building upon learning in the group back in the main classroom? 	E.g. Fiona was observed praising a child for using the good touch rule on the playground, making reference to the learning they completed in the group setting; Gavin could have extended learning in the main classroom by making reference to the spellings learned in the intervention during writing activity.

SENCO Points/Summary

- The role of support staff is under increasing pressure and scrutiny from schools, children, Local Authorities and government. Yet, practitioners still regard the role of support staff as vital to providing effective teaching and learning experiences for some of our most vulnerable children (Fox, 2016).

This chapter has outlined some effective approaches to the management of support staff. It has also explored the characteristics of the three main modes that support staff work across (whole classroom; small group; and, one to one), as well as suggested supportive strategies within these three modes. Finally, good practice approaches to implementing intervention programmes have been explored. The two practical templates presented are intended for use by SENCOs in assessing the efficacy of the practices associated with the management and deployment of support staff in their settings.

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