

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHING ASSISTANT AND KINGERGARTEN ASSISTANT AT NEWSTEAD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 2024

Introduction:

The role of a TA is invaluable in enabling each of our students to receive the education they are entitled to. The working relationship between teacher and TA is a key factor in this. To foster a co-operative, respectful working relationship, teaching assistants need to be aware of those responsibilities that are specific to teachers. Similarly, teachers need to be aware of job descriptions and the parameters of the responsibilities of teaching assistants.

To provide effective support for students, teachers and teaching assistants work together and share responsibility to:

- Develop a positive, respectful working relationship.
- Meet standards of professional and ethical conduct in relation to students, parents, and colleagues.
- Advocate for conditions of success for all students.
- Advocate for the protection of the legal and human rights of students and their families.
- Follow guidelines established by the school to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and youth.
- Maintain positive, supportive, professional relationships within the education community.

The Role:

There are three common tasks that all TAs are employed to undertake:

- Assist with student behaviour
- Assist with student development
- Assist with operational tasks

In a typical classroom, an TA will circulate from group to group or work one on one with a student. An TA is not expected to teach the whole class at once as that is the role of the classroom teacher. During class time, the TA is helping to ensure that students are meeting behavioural expectations (class rules for example) and are on task. The term 'on task' means that students are doing what they are supposed to be doing – normally learning something, completing an activity or task set by the teacher.

To understand the role of an TA you need to understand the roles and responsibilities of the classroom teacher. The teacher will:

1. Set the rules, policies and processes
2. Set the learning content, planning etc.

3. Develop resources such as worksheets for students to use
4. Coordinate the operation of the classroom (who sits where, budgets)
5. Keep in contact with parents, senior staff, other stakeholders as needed
6. Coordinate and supervise TAs
7. Deliver learning content to students (class, groups, individually)

Your role as a TA is to assist the teacher in one or more of these tasks. In all cases you should follow the instructions of your classroom teacher.

Some experienced TAs may operate their own program with a group of students (such as a literacy program) and be more independent than most TAs. Some TAs may be assigned a specific student or students and may take more responsibility for that child in terms of curriculum and behaviour. TAs undertake a wide range of jobs particularly when a need or gap has been identified.

Common tasks

In your role as a TA you may undertake some of the tasks listed below:

- Preparing resources for students
- Organising, cleaning and storing equipment
- Guiding student behaviour
- Ensure class and school routines are followed
- Recording student progress
- Reporting student progress to the teacher
- Gathering evidence for students on Learning Plans
- Cleaning and assisting with hygiene related tasks
- Assisting children with hygiene and toileting
- Assisting students
- Supervising students inside and outside of the classroom
- Monitor the environment for hazards and undertake risk management
- Develop rapport with students (and staff)
- Maintain professional conduct (dress, hygiene, punctuality, demeanour)
- Support student literacy development
- Support student numeracy development
- Support student cognitive development (thinking)
- Support student physical development (gross motor, fine motor, physical health)
- Support students to learn new skills (life skills, general knowledge, work skills)
- Assisting with excursions and incursions
- Administration tasks connected with the education of students