

# IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE FOR CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

## Annex B

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS**

- B1. Classroom assistants work under the direction and supervision of teachers in order to help promote effective learning and teaching. They carry out tasks delegated to them by teachers and refer back to teachers issues requiring the exercise of professional judgement. The following list provides examples of the kinds of tasks which may legitimately be delegated to classroom assistants and is based on job descriptions already in use in education authorities. It is not intended to be a complete list of all the tasks that a classroom assistant could perform; nor is it intended that a single assistant would be able to take on all the tasks on the list.
- B2. The classroom assistant has a contribution to make in 4 major areas:
- the effective organisation and use of resources
  - the quality of care and welfare of pupils
  - the quality of learning and teaching in the classroom
  - the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum.
- B3. Examples of how the assistant can contribute to or support these areas of work are given below. The list is divided into 2 parts. The first is of tasks which an assistant should be able to carry out after a short period of induction training and with straightforward guidance from the classroom teacher. These are, in the main, administrative practical and organisational tasks. The second part covers tasks which are more focused on supporting the learning activities of pupils under the direction of the classroom teacher. It is expected that classroom assistants will need additional training in some of these tasks, although this will depend upon the previous training, qualifications and experience of each assistant.

### **Part 1**

- **contribute to the effective organisation and use of resources**

examples:

- organising and maintaining the stock of materials and distributing resources
- maintaining, and cataloguing collections of resources e.g. libraries, collections of computer software, mathematics equipment
- preparing classroom materials by duplicating, setting out and clearing away equipment, making booklets
- making displays e.g. mounting examples of children's work, pictures, interest tables under the supervision of teaching staff

- recording educational television and radio programmes
- helping pupils to follow instructions e.g. when moving to group activities and to find resources needed
- providing help to pupils in organising their work e.g. following classroom routines for placing work in folders or marking trays
- providing relevant information to teachers' records and reports on pupils' progress
- providing support to pupils in the dining hall.
- **support the quality of learning and teaching in the classroom**

examples:

- supporting children's play activities e.g. by listening and talking with children, joining in play activities, supporting individual children where they need help
- playing games which practice skills, encouraging sharing, turn taking and co-operation
- encouraging children's oral language development through play, books, stories and personal interaction
- supporting literacy development by, for example, reading or telling stories and rhymes, guiding them to information books, labelling children's drawings and models and providing an audience for their reading activities
- supporting numeracy development by counting and matching games and rhymes, practising number bonds and "tables", building with shapes and developing appropriate language, and supporting practical measurement activities
- supporting practical activities in the classroom, planned as part of the teacher's programme, e.g. baking, gardening
- supervising and supporting pupils while they undertake work set by the teacher
- supporting record keeping by completing checklists of tasks with individual pupils where appropriate.

- **contribute to the quality of care and welfare of pupils**

examples:

- building good relationships in contacts with pupils
- encouraging good standards of pupil behaviour
- supervising non-teaching areas e.g. corridors, cloakrooms, tuck shops, dining rooms, playgrounds
- supervising classes during “wet playtimes”
- escorting pupils within and outwith the premises e.g. between classrooms, to home or hospital, on educational visits, swimming lessons, sports events
- providing comfort and care for minor accidents, upsets or ailments e.g. cuts and bruises (reporting to teaching staff if considered serious)
- helping children who need support in putting on coats, shoes etc. whilst encouraging independence.

## **Part 2**

- **support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum**

examples:

- building a positive relationship with pupil and supporting the classroom/school ethos
- developing good teamwork with the class teacher and other staff who are supporting pupils; e.g. learning support teachers and SEN auxiliaries
- preparing the classroom for aspects of the day's work; e.g. setting up the art area, selecting measurement containers for mathematics, setting up computer for word processing, setting out science apparatus for an investigation or experiment
- supporting pupils in paying attention, concentrating and staying on task
- providing appropriate praise and encouragement to pupils during tasks
- supporting children working together to encourage teamwork and co-operation
- providing support to pupils in their classroom learning; e.g. use of computers and general class activities;

- helping with tasks where there are physical difficulties, whilst encouraging independence and ensuring safety.

## **General competences**

With the support of training, classroom assistants should work towards developing good

- relationships with pupils, teachers, parents and other staff
- understanding of the importance of confidentiality
- knowledge of child protection and safety procedures
- skills in oral communication, writing and numeracy
- administrative and organisational skills
- technical and ICT skills
- skills in working as a member of a team
- skills which facilitate, encourage and support learning
- working knowledge of children's development and learning
- working knowledge of aspects of the primary curriculum.