 The DGAT Teaching Assistant Charter

Ten points have been drawn-up from the action research project undertaken by staff in DGAT academies. These are the key findings on impact and effectiveness of teaching assistants. The statements embrace knowledge, skills and understanding, deployment and management, and the quality of both academic and pastoral interventions. Financial investment in TAs is a significant percentage of an academy’s spending: application of these principles will help ensure wise deployment, improved progress and attitudes and consequently deliver value for money.

**Teaching assistants contribute best when they**

1. have appropriate subject knowledge, the ability to identify misconceptions and support children in their learning and have an understanding of child protection and safeguarding issues
2. benefit from clarity in their specific deployment which takes account of the many-faceted nature of their tasks and ensures that the skills they have complement those of the teachers
3. have a clear understanding of their role, be accountable for their actions and see how their work fits in and contributes to the ethos and priorities of the academy
4. are approachable for children, have the skills to analyse situations accurately and an ability to spot and act on any unexplained changes in children’s attitudes and behaviour
5. know that the academy values their work, be managed well through a robust performance management programme, have clearly defined parameters covering roles, responsibilities and workload and access to tailored training and professional development opportunities
6. have a well-defined knowledge of the next steps in children’s learning and understanding, the capacity to know when to intervene – to support and extend - and to record and communicate this with the teachers
7. are sufficiently skilled to use strategies which improve behaviour as well as learning
8. realise that when involved in academic support they respond directly to children’s learning needs which leads to progress, have high expectations and give appropriate praise and encouragement
9. establish good partnerships with parents, have a professional rapport with all staff and exhibit the confidence to work with outside agencies
10. understand that they play a vital role in enabling children to make progress in their work, improving children’s attitudes to learning and working together with other children and enhancing individual self-regard and confidence