



Network Newsletter

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suffolktan@westbourne.atrust.org.uk @SuffolkTan

www.suffolktanetwork.co.uk

Coordinator's Comments

Feed your passion

At an interview a few years ago, I was asked what I am most passionate about. After a few moments pause for thought, I answered, "I am passionate about people". That passion has influenced both my professional and personal choices over the years. I have worked in youth work and support roles and volunteered for various charities with children, young people and adults. I could not imagine a life without the richness of human interaction and I feel so blessed to be able to work with so many fabulous TAs/LSAs/HLTAs across the county through the Suffolk TA Network.

I would encourage you all to find your passion and feed it daily. At work, that could be a particular curriculum area that interests you, a SEND need you want to explore further or a piece of research that intrigues you. Whatever it is, make sure you let the network know how we can help you to develop what you love.



Join Us

If you are not already a member of the Suffolk TA Network, please join via the following link:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=UyUudcf3sEGK8GkwZaFwfVhZAzV7zulGsO_6uPBfMz5UQkZBNOJRR0hUMehYMzFHOTdYTENHRIFDSi4u

Simply click on this link or copy it into the URL bar on your browser and complete the Microsoft Forms document. You will then receive the half-termly newsletter and other correspondence.

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A Day in the Life of a Teaching Assistant in a Secondary Setting

By Justine Jacobs

Sometimes our day can start off being very hectic. A student who has had a difficult morning might end up at the SEND Hub door and need support just to start their day off, or a parent might have emailed us saying they are finding things difficult that morning. Key TAs meet students at year group muster and do our normal check-in to support the SEND students. We have to be flexible with our young people as they are trying to understand the world around them and this can be challenging.

We are very routine-led so our students know what is expected. Registration starts at 8.45am and if a student is late there are consequences. As TAs we might work with a student with an adjusted start to the day and help them access tutor time. During tutor time, equipment and uniform checks are made and some of our students need organisational support if they have forgotten anything or they can't find their shoes or tie. This is all before 9 o'clock in the morning! Then our next role is to support students to get to their first session and support them to get focused on the work.

The pace of the lessons can be fast and challenging in Key stage 3 and 4 and many of the SEND students need tasks breaking down. Much of the time in class is spent supporting them to be resilient with writing, understanding the tasks (broken down in small chunks) or scaffolding to help with understanding. We teach mixed ability groups so some of the stretch content can be difficult for our SEND students to understand and our role is to ensure they have met their personalised targets. In some lessons, SEND students are sat near each other, and in some they are dotted around the class. Sometimes the classroom is difficult to navigate so we have to be aware of what is happening and always do this to the best we can. We aim to build strong relationships with our students who will always come to find us if they need us. We help sort out any issues we can by directing them to Achievement Leaders, their teachers, tutors, behaviour mentors or encourage them to be independent in sorting it themselves.

We support at lunchtime by running interventions for literacy, spelling, social skills, phonics or we are on duty around the school. This is a good opportunity to see how our caseload are engaging socially with their friends and enable us to catch up with other students!

At the end of the day, we run homework club where we work with students on home learning. We have the PLC (Personalised Learning Centre) or the SEND Hub for those students who need a smaller environment with closer TA support. There are computers to work on and we support them with the tasks they have been set. We also support a Games Club on a Friday where students can use some of the Lego or games we have available, and they often bring their own! End of days also provide a chance for the team to catch up with the SENDCo Assistant with any difficulties, challenges or even better, successes from the day!



Growing out of collaboration and partnership

Twinkl 'TA Top Tips' Resources

Here at [Twinkl TA](#), we value the work of all teaching assistants, HLTAs, learning support assistants and learning mentors. We know the difference you make to your school, colleagues, community and of course the children you teach. We understand your varied roles and growing responsibilities and we are dedicated to helping you support every child. From [EYFS](#) to [KS2](#) and [Beyond](#), supporting [SEND](#) and [EAL](#), our entire site is filled with fantastic resources - perfect for teaching assistants.

To get started, we have a range of [FREE TA Top Tips](#) resources to support you in your varied and demanding role.

[FREE Top Tips for Teaching Assistants:](#)

- [Top Ten Tips for TAs](#)
- [Seven Super Tips for SEND TAs](#)
- [Top 10 Tips for HLTAs](#)
- [Top Ten Tips for Covering a Lesson](#)
- [Top Tips for Running a Successful Intervention](#)
- [Top Tips to Build Pupil Independence](#)
- [Top 10 Tips: Challenging Behaviour](#)
- [Top Tips for Supporting pupils with English as an Additional Language](#)

Further FREE Support for Teaching Assistants

- [A Teaching Assistant's Guide to Ofsted](#)
- [HLTA Standards](#)
- [EYFS Teaching Assistant Toolkit](#)
- [KS1 Teaching Assistant Toolkit](#)
- [KS2 Teaching Assistant Toolkit](#)
- [With Twinkl, I'm Prepared for Phonics](#)
- [With Twinkl, I'm Prepared for Reading](#)
- [FREE Teaching Assistant Membership Guide](#)
- [FREE HLTA How to Guide](#)
- [Free Teaching Assistant Taster Pack](#)



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Coming Soon...

- Top Tips for 1:1 TAs
- Top Tips for a TA Interview

Our Twinkl TA Top Tips resources are designed by and with the help of others in education to ensure you are prepared for anything and have all the support you need for your valuable work. Is there anything else you'd like to see? [Let us know.](#)

You can check out all the resources by following this link:

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/teaching-assistants/ta-top-tips-teaching-assistants>

We hope you find our TA top tips helpful. If you'd like to join our national TA and HLTA community, you can find our [Facebook groups here.](#)

Thank you to the Suffolk TA Network and your members for your continuous support and collaboration.

Have a great summer term,

From the Twinkl TA Team



Growing out of collaboration and partnership

Training Opportunities



Driver Youth Trust

Drive for Literacy

Supporting a learner's capacity to learn and enabling them to achieve their potential

This webinar is being delivered by the Driver Youth Trust. It will explore the cognitive challenges an individual may experience when learning. It will cover what it means to be 'ready to learn' and provide strategies to support those children and young people that may find learning a challenge. This might include, comprehending the class teaching, retaining it and recalling it when needed.

This webinar is free to members and will be delivered twice:

Wednesday 8th June 13.30-14.30 and Thursday 9th June 16.30-17.30

The first 50 members who sign up will also receive free access to one of two online quick courses, either 'Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties' or 'Using Cognitive Load Theory', until the end of term (approx. completion time 60 mins).

Email suffolktan@westbourne.attrust.org.uk to receive the sign-up form to register directly with the Driver Youth Trust.

TERMLY NETWORK INFORMATION SESSIONS



<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Twilight</u>
Tuesday 21 st June 9.30-10.30	Monday 20 th June 13.30-14.30	Thursday 23 rd June 16.30-17.30

Speakers to be confirmed soon by email.

To book a place on one of these sessions, please email suffolktan@westbourne.attrust.org.uk for a TEAMS invite.



Growing out of collaboration and partnership

Dyslexia- Themed Face-to-Face Networking



Are you interested in dyslexia? Are you a TA with a specialism in dyslexia? Would you like to meet similar colleagues across Suffolk?
Emma Pearce, Suffolk TA Network Champion for South Suffolk, is offering you an opportunity to network with other TAs in Suffolk with a focus on dyslexia support. This session will take place at **Birchwood Primary School, Martlesham Heath, Ipswich IP5 3SP** on **Friday 10th June between 13.30 & 15.00**. Refreshments will be provided.

TO BOOK A PLACE AT THIS SESSION AND FOR MORE DETAILS, PLEASE EMAIL ADMIN@BIRCHWOOD.SUFFOLK.SCH.UK BY 4PM ON WEDNESDAY 8TH JUNE (YOUR DETAILS WILL BE STORED UNDER BIRCHWOOD'S GDPR POLICY – ASK EMMA IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION).



Suffolk TA Network Conference



Tickets are now available for the Suffolk TA Network conference on Friday 16th September 2022 at Trinity Park Conference and Events Centre, Ipswich. This year, our conference is called 'Start Talking About Communication' and we are thrilled to be working in collaboration with Suffolk County Council Education Outreach Service for Speech, Language and Communication and NHS speech and language therapy services in Suffolk.



The conference will run from 9.00-15.00, opening with a keynote speech by Ros Somerville, Assistant Director Inclusion at Suffolk County Council, followed by a series of SLCN themed workshops/talks. Refreshments and lunch will be provided and a full programme will be available soon.

To find out how to register, email suffolktan@westbourne.attrust.org.uk



Growing out of collaboration and partnership

Information Webinar

Following on from the University of Bedfordshire's recent online TA conference, they would like to share some information with TAs from the Suffolk, Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire TA Networks about a flexible degree course they offer. While the Suffolk TA Network does not endorse this course, we feel that it could be of interest to some of our members.



As well as being a provider of initial Teacher Training, the University of Bedfordshire is also committed to supporting all members of the school workforce in their professional development. As well as hosting a free, annual TA conference they also offer a part-time degree that may be of interest. The BA (hons) Applied Education Studies degree is targeted at professionals working in support roles in schools who would like to progress in their career. While supporting TAs to become more skilled in their roles, the degree is ideally suited for someone who may be considering completing initial teacher training after graduation.

Recent developments in the degree has created a new, blended learning pathway which offers greater flexibility for busy TAs and for those who live a distance from the University. The four-year, blended learning degree provides a mix of weekly, remote teaching sessions, accessed using the University's virtual learning environment and face to face teaching on two Saturdays each term at the Bedford Campus. All teaching is outside of school hours and within term time.

The Applied Education Studies team, led by Allyson Goodchild and James Simpson, would like to invite you to a webinar which will provide further information about the degree. It will also give a taster of the type of learning you will undertake as an undergraduate and you will be able to hear from current Applied Education Studies students, who are all busy TAs, about their experiences of studying while working in support roles in schools.

Allyson and James hope that you will join them for the webinar even if, at this stage, you are still tentative about your next steps. Collecting as much information as possible will help you make an informed decision either now or in the future. The webinar is scheduled for **Monday 6th June at 4.30pm**. If you would like to attend then please contact James: james.simpson@beds.ac.uk who will send you joining instructions.



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Research Corner

LBL Reflections – Working with Parents to Support Children’s Learning

In the last edition of the newsletter, a Learning Behaviour Lead (LBL), reflected on the [EEF Guidance on Improving Behaviour in Schools](#). The LBLs have continued their training programme, focusing on the EEF guidance on the 5 pillars of the [“Learning Behaviour” framework](#) – Metacognition, Social and Emotional Learning, Behaviour, SEND and Parental Engagement.

Here, one of the LBLs reflects on applying the [EEF Guidance on Working with Parents to Support Children’s Learning](#) in their setting.

“Home – school – student communication is essential for a child to be happy and successful in school. Some parents of EAL students are not fluent in English and therefore may be less able to help and support their children with school work/homework. They could experience difficulties in communicating with staff about children’s progress or how to address concerns. Also, many of these parents may be unaware of education pathways and career opportunities that the UK school system can offer. Cultural diversities can sometimes create misunderstandings, but also have the potential to add richness and breadth to our community.

In order to address the above at our school, we organised parents’ meetings for our non-English speaking parents/carers. In these meetings, we tried to have translators available and we discussed everyday school related issues, like homework, cashless catering, reporting absence, etc. To take this further, parents/carers were invited to participate in a five-week English acquisition course (mainly based on ESOL courses) followed by meetings to discuss and debate things like aspirations and pathway, sex education, RE, the pastoral team etc. In this way, we are hoping to break down barriers and raise mutual awareness, openness and provide opportunities to share.

The English acquisition course has already started and takes place every Monday in school, with all resources and materials provided by the school. After these five weeks, we plan to continue having regular parents’ meetings, where we will have guest speakers, such as teachers from school, members of the pastoral team or a police officer. The programme will end with a visit to Suffolk New College and the University of Suffolk.

All the activities mentioned above are intended to give the parents/carers a sense of belonging in the local community, a better understanding of the UK school system and reassurance that we are all working together for one common cause - their children to achieve the best they can be.

Through this programme, we would like to enable parents/carers to feel more involved in their children’s academic journey, give them a voice to address any worries or concerns and continue to develop a close and supportive relationship.”



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Resource Information



I was contacted recently by the [Avanti Institute](#), who were interested in the Suffolk TA Network and the training and networking opportunities we offer to our members.

The Avanti Institute is part of the Avanti Schools Trust. "The Avanti Institute for Professional Learning is part of an overall workforce development strategy that views CPD as an ongoing, planned learning and development process that contributes to work-based and personal development."

The Avanti Institute website has a range of freely available resources that you might find useful:

- Links to [Research & Suggested Reading](#), such as "How do we solve the primary school literacy problem?" by Kate Parker
- Links to [Recordings and Resources](#), such as "Improving writing through creative talk" by Helen Prince

You can also view the latest [Avanti Institute newsletter](#).

Content: 9/10

Accessibility: 9/10

Overall: 9/10

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