ORIGINAL ARTICLE

nasen
Helping Everyone Achieve

Teaching assistants' experiences in delivering additional support to pupils in UK primary schools

Emma. J. Vardy[1,2] | Clare Wood[1] | Helen Johnson[2,3] | Janet. I. Vousden[1,2]

[1]Psychology Department, Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, UK

[2]Centre for Research in Psychology, Behaviour and Achievement, Coventry University, Coventry, UK

[3]Lomond Educational Psychology, UK

Correspondence

Emma J. Vardy, Psychology Department, Nottingham Trent University, 50 Shakespeare Street, Nottingham, NG1 5FQ, UK.
Email: emma.vardy@ntu.ac.uk

Abstract

Teaching Assistants (TAs) (may also be known as Learning Support Assistants or Classroom Assistants) are important members of staff within a school environment. There is guidance on the deployment of TAs; however, little is known about how these recommendations are operationalised in a school setting. The aim of this research was to explore TA views and experiences of intervention delivery in their setting. Sixteen TAs participated in one of four focus groups, and data from these groups were analysed using reflexive inductive thematic analysis. TAs enjoyed delivering intervention groups, and felt this work was important, but they often described being left to deliver support groups with little training, relying on second-hand information from other members of staff or using their previous experiences in the absence of training. Communication was important to successfully support pupils' learning. The findings suggest that the guidance available is not well operationalised in practice and we highlight a number of recommendations from TAs on their deployment in school settings.

KEYWORDS

primary schools, pupil support, qualitative research methods, teaching assistants

Key Points

- Despite guidance available on the deployment of teaching assistants variation in roles and activities remain in the primary school sector, further work to support schools in building common practice is required.
- Dialogue between classroom teachers and school staff with teaching assistants was for the participants in this study really important, and thus time to discuss interventions and strategies for pupils needs to be built in to support pupil learning. The TAs wanted to be monitored and feedback provided to improve their practice.
- The status of TAs needs to be raised to harness their knowledge and also support them to access professional development to support pupils' learning. The TAs wanted to deliver interventions with fidelity and provide the best support for their pupils.

INTRODUCTION

The role of teaching assistants (TAs) in UK Primary schools has evolved over time and is ever-changing (Benstead, 2021; Clarke & Visser, 2019). A Department for Education (2019) survey reported that there were 263,900 TAs in schools in 2018, a rise of 0.5% from 2017, with the majority being in primary schools (176,700). However, with budget cuts, the number of TAs in schools is decreasing and there is increasing uncertainty over their future (Benstead, 2021).

Previous research has raised questions about the effectiveness of TAs in mainstream settings to support pupils' learning (Blatchford et al., 2009). TAs typically work with children who need the most support including children with special educational needs and disabilities (Benstead, 2021). The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff—the largest study to date—reported systematic failings in the deployment of TAs, which meant that pupils who spent the majority of their time with a TA made the least progress in core subjects (Blatchford et al., 2009). The effectiveness of TAs was then questioned because interacting with a TA meant pupils missed out on teacher-to-pupil interactions and curriculum coverage.

The role and activities of TAs, however, are difficult to define; therefore, the impact on learners will be mixed. TAs undertake administrative, pedagogical and pastoral roles within a school (Benstead, 2021). What is missing from the field is an understanding of TAs about their main activities and position within a school as schools will deploy their TAs in different ways at different times of the year (Wren, 2017). Only with this information, can ways of improving the quality of the support offered to all pupils be suggested (Farrell et al., 2010). Much of the research to date has been conducted by a small group of researchers, funded by government and focused on measurable outcomes (Clarke, 2019; Houssart & Croucher, 2013). There is a lack of research focusing on the voices of TAs and their perspectives on their role and impact (Clarke, 2019; Roffey-Barentsen & Watt 2014). Previous research has reported that TAs feel lonely, isolated and exhausted due to the lack of praise or acknowledgement for their work (Cockroft & Atkinson, 2015). Our research aims to extend the literature on TA deployment by exploring TAs' experiences of delivering intervention support.

TAs are deployed in different ways despite guidance for schools; therefore, understanding the deployment processes directly from TAs could aid in the development of enhanced strategies to support TAs in their role. To date the research evidence has been small scale and outlining what TAs do (Sharples et al., 2018). There is guidance for schools on the deployment of TAs (Sharples et al., 2018); however, little is known about how this guidance is implemented and how this varies across schools. The research aim of this study was to give TAs a platform to voice their experiences of delivering interventions in primary school settings to better understand how schools deploy TAs, and to shape policy and practice. In this study, focus groups with TAs from different schools were conducted as a robust approach to capture these differences, particularly around the delivery of interventions.

METHOD

Participants

Sixteen individuals (all female) consented to participate in one of four focus groups. All participants worked as TAs in primary schools in the Midlands area of England, UK (14 in mainstream schools and two in an independent school). The participants were employed on a range of contracts from entry-level (Level 1) to higher-level status (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and Higher-Level Teaching Assistants).

Focus groups

Focus groups were conducted off school site to enable the participants to feel comfortable expressing their experiences. Focus groups were more suitable given the nature of the research, which was intended to explore experiences across a range of school settings. Participants were divided into four groups with four TAs in each. The groups were structured such that participants from the same school were allocated to a different focus group. The focus groups were all conducted at the same time, with a different researcher but all using the same prompt sheet to facilitate the discussion; the researcher role was to facilitate the discussion and not lead. Representative questions included 'Do you have any choice about what intervention groups you deliver and are you able to tailor the input you give to groups or do you have to stick to the plans you are given?' and 'how important are intervention groups in your school? Are they prioritised?' Groups were audio recorded and dialogue transcribed verbatim.

Analysis

Inductive reflexive thematic analysis was applied to the data. The Braun and Clarke (2006) framework was used, which has been developed to improve the rigour of thematic analysis whilst at the same time retaining flexibility. The first four phases (repeated reading of transcripts, initial coding, grouping codes into themes and refining them) were independently completed by the first and second authors, who then met to review and then work on the fourth phase

TABLE 1 Summary of primary themes identified from TA transcripts.

Main theme	Sub-themes	Describe
Intervention support		This theme outlines the support that TAs say they provide in their schools
Priority and status	• Space	This theme encompasses how TA interventions are seen in the school, and how perceived perceptions of other school staff of the TA role affects space made available for effective delivery
Accountability of TAs	• Dialogue with Classroom Teacher	Participants suggested there was no measurement of success relating to the interventions TAs deliver. This theme explores the accountability of TAs for pupil learning
Training vs. experience		The theme identified differences between informal and formal training alongside experience

of analysis together, before jointly refining and naming the final themes and sub-themes. The final themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 1.

Findings and discussion

Intervention support

This theme outlines what intervention support TAs provided in their school settings. There were variations in the intervention support TAs provided, with two main categories of support identified: curriculum top-up and specific interventions, such as Read Write Inc. for Phonics (Miskin & Munton, 2006). A priority for the TAs was supporting children's learning, and to do this the majority mentioned small group teaching or one-to-one teaching with targeted groups of pupils which the TAs named as 'curriculum top-up'. Discussions reflected what had been previously reported around the deployment of TAs (Blatchford et al., 2009), in that TAs were typically set to work with low-ability pupils, and rarely deployed to work with middle or high-ability pupils, '*It's normally targeted at either lower ability or selection of children. I mean I do a group with children who are SLI (specific language impairment) who actually with a little push are further on and it's just that where they are the lowest ability to push from the bottom*'.

One type of support discussed by the TAs was this curriculum top-up, typically delivered in the afternoon to small groups of pupils, who had not grasped the morning's teaching in numeracy or literacy. The top-up provided by the TAs for these pupils was developed by the teacher with the aim of helping pupils to progress to the next stage in their learning by giving the pupils additional time to recap curriculum knowledge, '*Or just like refreshers of what we doing in class phonics or numeracy. Just go over it again, if some children didn't get it*'. From the focus groups, it appears that much of the TAs' time is taken up with delivering curriculum top-up support rather than delivering targeted specific interventions. This echoes previous research which has found TAs spend most of their time on informal instructional support (Sharples et al., 2018).

For this additional support work with a TA, pupils are typically taken out of the class in the afternoon. In our discussions, it was apparent that taking pupils out of class caused the TAs a dilemma as they acknowledged that pupils '*missed so much*' because some pupils could be taken '*out of the class 2 or 3 times just in one afternoon*'. The TAs highlighted the difficulties faced when taking pupils out of class with teachers becoming protective of their pupils, but they recognised that for some pupils it was what they needed: '*without it some children would never get any further*'. The TAs discussed how the small groupwork gave some pupils the '*special treatment and attention*' they needed, and they felt that '*any intervention is good really I think for children*'. Intervention work delivered by the TAs was typically with those pupils needing support, echoing previous research (Sharples et al., 2018).

Priority and status

A pattern across the focus groups was that other tasks took over, despite supporting pupils' learning being considered a top priority. TAs were viewed by other school staff as an extra pair of hands to assist if a pupil was ill or a staff member was needed; as illustrated by the following extract which described how they were deployed where needed on any given day '*If you didn't do it Monday then it was missed you know and school trips, school photographs, lots of covering—I had to cover the teacher for PPA*'. This is consistent with previous research (Harris & Aprile, 2015). Support for pupil learning provided by a TA is considered flexible, and in that spirit, support was

swapped and changed at short notice to fit other priorities and needs within the school day. However, this meant that some pupils were missing out on their learning needs being supported, causing a dilemma for TAs: '*I would say, well they say it's a priority but it's not*'. This shows the impact of not using clear guidance on the role of TAs (Greenway & Rees Edwards, 2021).

Across the four focus groups, a common theme was that TAs felt they were pulled in many directions and one participant commented that they felt that TAs are '*underused*' in schools to support pupil learning. The TAs want to support the learning of pupils but had different demands on their time. They felt they had little control over how their time was allocated and, at times, the support they were providing, with their deployment based on the needs of the school (Harris & Aprile, 2015). For example, a TA might have to help if a pupil has been '*sick and you have got to help*', or for be called for '*general like first aid or to cover a lesson*'.

Whilst TAs felt they did not have control over their deployment, some of the participants did mention they had freedom to deliver intervention support as they saw fit. TAs noted they were given the freedom to shape sessions and make changes based on their knowledge of pupils, '*we are told which children you are doing and what you have to do within that say it was a reading one or a maths one if you're told to do something and it doesn't work—well I just change it. I just change it to suit the group*'.

The role of the TA was described as being flexible and ever-changing to meet the school demands that day. For example, one TA felt that '*if we are asked to do something we sort of have to do it*'. What is clear from the TAs here is that they felt undervalued and not respected (Benstead, 2021).

Space

Space to deliver interventions was frequently mentioned by the participants in the context of prioritisation and perceived status of their work. Lack of space was considered a barrier to the successful implementation of support. TAs felt they were constantly having to tell the pupils in their groups to be quiet for fear of disturbing pupils working in classrooms, or alternatively they could not hear what the pupils in their group were saying. TAs have to be creative in finding space, but this can lead to them using spaces not suitable for learning, '*I had a corner in the classroom in the Year 1 classroom and then they set up a shopping area near me and then sometimes kids would come to do their shopping and then it got difficult to hear children so that was a bit of a pain*'.

Across the focus groups, the TAs all seemed habituated to the idea that to run an intervention they needed to find their own space, '*We'll [just] try and find somewhere*'. Due to this, the TAs were well adept at finding spaces '*you have just got to trek around and find somewhere*'. However, this did take away time from intervention delivery. Without a dedicated space, TAs could not focus on their time providing support for those pupils who need it.

Accountability of TAs

Some TAs said that the performance of the children was not linked to targets or linked back to them but was attributed to the class teacher, '*you are not the teacher then you shouldn't be the one whose… you're there you're helping them as much as you can*'. Other TA comments mentioned '*Improvement but not a specific target*'. Some TAs thought their role was to help the pupils make broad improvements but did not think this was related to a specific goal. For other TAs, there was pressure to ensure pupils met targets. They felt accountable for the children's learning, and this pressure was mentioned by one participant as having a negative effect on the support they provided, '*pressure because sometimes I feel like there are children who are never gonna make progress*'. From the transcripts, it became apparent that there is a dilemma around accountability and communication of expectations blurring roles, as both the TA and teacher were responsible.

Dialogue with classroom teacher

Evident across the focus groups was the need for good communication with the classroom teacher. Decisions about a TA role or the intervention were made through communication with other TAs or classroom teachers. It was discussed how important it was that teachers and TAs discussed the support the TA was going to provide. These comments contradict the idea that TAs have little time with class teachers (Houssart & Croucher, 2013). All the TAs mentioned that they did have a dialogue with the classroom teacher '*we talk to the teachers a lot and we tend to have interventions that we have run in the past so if there are some children that need a certain intervention then they put the TA that runs that intervention*'. TAs here did have the time to discuss support with class teachers '*it is also to do with communication with*

the class teacher so if we decide oh [name] needs an intervention then [name] gets an intervention. And things like that as long as it is discussed with the head teacher at the same time. It tends to be like that really'.

The effective deployment of TAs rests on clear communication with class teachers (Sharples et al., 2018). Problems were evident if there was a breakdown in communication outside of intervention delivery. In some cases, the TAs felt they were not part of the school as there was no communication with other staff members, highlighting what Clarke and Visser (2019) termed internal exclusion, '*We don't even have a meeting—all the support staff. We don't get told anything, it all just gets word of mouth and if you miss it… that's it if you miss it, like a dressing up day or you have not been told*'.

Training versus experience

It is evident from the literature that opportunities for professional development for TAs are lacking (Webster et al., 2011), and our participants echoed this. Whole-school policy and within-general school training were attended by the TAs (e.g. all the TAs had received training on behaviour management). Beyond within-school training, there was an absence of formal training to deliver intervention support such as accredited courses, '*generally you don't get much do you really as a TA*'. The TAs reported that they received little training and any training they did receive was in-house (school-based). The in-house training was typically a member of staff feeding back after attending a training course and considered as informal by the participants, '*sometimes what they do is send someone from our school to the course and we get them to train back*'.

The TAs did mention that for specific programmes they had received formal training; it was considered formal as it was delivered by a professional outside of their setting, for example, '*Read Write Inc, I think it is the only training we have had otherwise we are basically tasked on curriculum isn't it*'. One TA had received training from an Educational Psychologist for an approach '*We did for the Precision Teaching we had about a half hour with the educational psychologist*'. However typically the approach is more informal as in school-based training, '*It's (usually) a talk with the class teacher or the SENCo and then find your own resources or use whatever resources are available in the school*'.

Due to a lack of formal training, the TAs operated mostly using their experience and training each other, leading one TA to suggest that their experience was worth more than training: '*it's on the job experience*'. The TAs seem to suggest through their comments that training was seen as redundant, as they should already know how to support their pupils, '*if you don't know it, you shouldn't be teaching it*' and '*you get training, it's just that you should already know it*'.

The idea that experience outweighs training was evident across all participants. However, previous research has highlighted the importance of training for TAs (Archer et al., 2014). In this study, TAs discussed that they received more informal training than formal training to deliver support for learning. In the absence of formal training, TAs shared knowledge and experience with each other through informal training methods (also noted by Houssart & Croucher, 2013). These comments echo conclusions that TAs are not being prepared for their role to support pupils' learning (Sharples et al., 2018).

> 'I think very informal training… perhaps we'd be lucky and we'd have a TA meeting and then run through a set of activities. But generally we're learning as we go along…
>
> And teach each other as well, over the years, what works well what doesn't'.

CONCLUSION

The TA role is diverse and continues to evolve with the needs of the education sector (Clarke & Visser, 2016). In this paper, we focused on the delivery of interventions and how the diversity of the TA role hindered the effectiveness of delivering support for pupil learning. Our findings suggest there is inconsistency in the deployment of TAs despite the guidance available. This variation can equate to variations in pupil outcomes (Sharples et al., 2018).

This paper has contributed to our understanding the deployment of TAs within UK primary schools by moving away from just describing what TAs do but also their views on their role in schools. The TAs in this study provided two types of support. First, curriculum support, which was defined as small groupwork for pupils who have not grasped curriculum topics such as numeracy and literacy. Second was specific interventions developed by outside agencies delivered to target pupils such as Read Write Inc. (Miskin & Munton, 2006). For the curriculum support, the TAs highlighted that they had more freedom over delivery, less monitoring, and a lack of training. For specific interventions, TAs did receive training and discussed the need to implement programmes with fidelity to impact pupil attainment. Research has reported that when trained, supported, and monitored TAs have the greatest impact on pupil attainment

(Farrell et al., 2010; Houssart & Croucher, 2013). Our data suggest that one reason non-targeted support may be less effective is because there is more variation in practice and less training provided. These conclusions support the recommendations provided by the Education Endowment Foundation to reduce the informal instructional role of TAs and deploy them to deliver structured interventions (Sharples et al., 2018).

Farrell et al. (2010) argued that we need to find ways to improve the quality of the support provided to pupils by TAs. The TAs in this study wanted to be monitored and to have a dialogue with colleagues regarding the support they were providing to pupils. The importance of communication and support from the classroom teachers was mentioned across all focus groups. If the TAs needed advice on intervention delivery, they turned to the classroom teacher first. Although Rubie-Davies et al. (2010) found that communication between teachers and TAs tended to be ad hoc, this was not the experience of the TAs in this study. Effective communication between TAs and class teachers around intervention delivery provides a clear mechanism to enable intervention delivery to be optimally adapted to classroom practice.

Opportunities for professional development continue to be an area of concern. What is echoed throughout the TA literature is the variation in training (Griffiths & Kelly, 2018) and quality of it (Houssart & Croucher, 2013). In the absence of formal training, TAs rely on each other, sharing experiences and knowledge (Houssart & Croucher, 2013). However, with TAs increasingly deployed to deliver structured interventions, training is crucial. Slavin et al.'s (2011) best evidence synthesis suggested that TAs can support struggling readers to make progress, if they are trained. To impact learning by using interventions, training and ongoing support are key (Farrell et al., 2010). Insufficient training opportunities for TAs may explain why the support provided does not always have the impact intended. From the TAs' perspective in this study, rarely was their work monitored by someone else within the school, despite a desire for it. Without monitoring and feedback frameworks in place, it is difficult to see how their impact on learning can be maximised. TA work needs to be given a higher status in schools, support monitored, feedback offered, and most importantly professional development provided.

A limitation of this study is the modest-sized and female-only sample, although this reflects the gender imbalance of the role. Furthermore, there were insights in the participant discussion that need further exploration. This includes the concept of top-up activities for curriculum material and the different sets of skills TAs need to deliver this support in comparison to a research-informed intervention with a clear model of implementation. This point is associated with the TAs' considerations that their knowledge is currently not utilised in the best manner in schools and therefore further exploration of these insights is needed.

Despite this, the TAs in this study did echo some conclusions mentioned in previous literature. The findings of this study therefore reemphasise the need to return to and further discuss the role of TAs in primary schools. To start these conversations, below we use the voice of the participants to outline four recommendations. It is recommended that to effectively deploy TAs to support pupil learning, policy and practice need to consider the following in guidance provided to schools:

- TAs be given the opportunity to attend professional development, enhancing their talents and moving away from the idea of 'jack of all trades' (Harris & Aprile, 2015).
- The status of TAs in the school environment needs to be enhanced.
- TA's time to deliver intervention work needs to be protected (echoing that of Griffiths & Kelly, 2018).
- The work of TAs should be monitored, and feedback provided similar to teacher observations to improve practice.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT
The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Data from this project are not available.

ETHICS STATEMENT
Ethical approval for the project was received from Coventry University before the research commenced.

ORCID

Emma. J. Vardy https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7825-2270
Clare Wood https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1492-6501
Helen Johnson https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3630-9301
Janet. I. Vousden https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7237-1490

REFERENCES

Archer, K., Savage, R., Sanghera-Sidhu, S., Wood, E., Gottardo, A. & Chen, V. (2014) Examining the effectiveness of technology use in classrooms: a tertiary meta-analysis. *Computers & Education*, 78, 140–149. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2014.06.001

Benstead, H. (2021) Primary initial teacher trainees' perceptions of and perspectives on the role of teaching assistant in english primary contexts. *Support for Learning*, 36(4), 630–649.

Blatchford, P., Bassett, P., Brown, P., Koutsoubou, M., Martin, C., Russell, A. et al. (2009) *The impact of support staff in schools: results from the Deployment and Impact of Support Staff (DISS) project. Strand 2 Wave 2*. London: Department For Children, Schools and Families.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Clarke, E. (2019) Paint pot washers or pedagogues? Is gender an issue for teaching assistants? *Educational Review*, 73 (2), 1–16. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2018.1559800

Clarke, E. & Visser, J. (2016) How do teaching assistants view their role in managing behaviour and cultivate their learning and understanding in relation to managing behaviour? *Tean Journal*, 9(1), 66–79.

Clarke, E. & Visser, J. (2019) Is a good Teaching Assistant one who 'knows their place'? *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 24(4), 308–322. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2019.1625207

Cockroft, C. & Atkinson, C. (2015) Using the wider pedagogical role model to establish learning support assistants' views about facilitators and barriers to effective practice. *Support for Learning*, 30(2), 88–104. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.12081

Department for Education. (2019) *School Workforce in England: November 2018*. accessed September 13, 2024. Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018

Farrell, P., Alborz, A., Howes, A. & Pearson, D. (2010) The impact of teaching assistants on improving pupils' academic achievement in mainstream schools: a review of the literature. *Educational Review*, 62(4), 435–448. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2010.486476

Greenway, C.W. & Rees Edwards, A. (2021) Teaching assistants' facilitators and barriers to effective practice working with children with adhd: a qualitative study. *British Journal of Special Education*, 48(3), 347–368. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12377

Griffiths, D. & Kelly, K. (2018) Beyond the broom cupboard: teaching assistants' reflections upon the wider impact of their specialist dyslexia training. *Reflective Practice*, 19(3), 345–357. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2018.1479685

Harris, L.R. & Aprile, K.T. (2015) 'I can sort of slot into many different roles': examining teacher aide roles and their implications for practice. *School Leadership & Management*, 35(2), 140–162. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2014.992774

Houssart, J. & Croucher, R. (2013) Intervention programmes in mathematics and literacy: teaching assistants' perceptions of their training and support. *School Leadership & Management*, 33(5), 427–439. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2013.800475

Miskin, R. & Munton, G. (2006) *Read Write Inc. phonics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Roffey-Barentsen, J. & Watt, M. (2014) The voices of teaching assistants (are we value for money?). *Research in Education*, 92(1), 18–31. Available from: https://doi.org/10.7227/RIE.000

Rubie-Davies, C., Blatchford, P., Webster, R., Koutsoubou, M. & Bassett, P. (2010) Enhancing student learning? A comparison of teacher and teaching assistant interaction with pupils. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 21(4), 429–449. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2010.512800

Sharples, J., Webster, R. & Blatchford, P. (2018) *Making best use of teaching assistants*. London: Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). accessed December 23, 2024. Available from: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/making-best-use-of-teaching-assistants/

Slavin, R.E., Lake, C., Davis, S. & Madden, N. (2011) Effective programs for struggling readers: a best-evidence synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, 6(1), 1–26. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2010.07.002

Webster, R., Blatchford, P., Bassett, P., Brown, P., Martin, C. & Russell, A. (2011) The wider pedagogical role of teaching assistants. *School Leadership and Management*, 31(1), 3–20. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2010.540562

Wren, A. (2017) Understanding the role of the teaching assistant: comparing the views of pupils with sen and tas within mainstream primary schools. *Support for Learning*, 32(1), 4–19. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.12151