



EDUCATION AUTHORITY – NORTH EASTERN REGION

Ballymoney Model Controlled Integrated Primary School

North Road, Ballymoney, Co. Antrim, BT53 6BW

Principal: Mrs J Jamison B Ed (Hons) PQH (NI)



**Effective and Efficient
Use of Classroom Assistants Policy**

*Ballymoney Model
Controlled Integrated Primary School*

Policy created February 2015

Team Responsible for the Effective and Efficient Deployment of Assistants:

Principal: Mrs J Jamison

SENCO: Miss H McCambridge (Vice Principal)

Chairman of the Board of Governors: Mr W Witherow

Designated Governor for Special Educational Needs: Mr B Knight

Policy approved by the Board of Governors: 203rd Meeting – 2nd June 2015

INTRODUCTION

Assistants (Classroom, Special Educational Needs, and General) make a major contribution to the work and success of Ballymoney Model Controlled Integrated Primary School. They do this through their learning support and assistance for children as individuals, as groups and as classes and through their support for teachers in the preparation and delivery of the curriculum. As a school we value developmental opportunities for our assistants in school to develop teaching and learning through continued professional development.

RATIONALE AND DEFINITIONS

'Assistant' is the term we ascribe to all paid staff that are not qualified teachers, but are involved directly with pupil learning.

Assistants within Ballymoney Model are employed to a specific role, whether temporary or permanent, depending on the nature of the employment contract and the post the assistant is assigned to. Below are the categories under which assistants are employed in Ballymoney Model CIPS:

- *Classroom Assistants:*
Foundation Stage Classroom Assistants employed by the school under the direction of the Education Authority to enhance the learning of Year One and Year Two pupils.
Also in some other classrooms when the need arises and if funds are available classroom assistants may be employed to assist on a temporary basis.
- *Special Educational Needs Assistants:* Employed by the school, funded by Special Education, to work primarily with the pupils who have been awarded a Statement of Special Educational Needs.
- *General Assistants:* Employed by the school, funded by Special Education, to assist with the physical and medical needs of pupils who have been assigned this need as part of their Statement of Special Educational Needs.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims underpinning this policy are to:

- Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of assistants employed in Ballymoney Model CIPS.
- Realise the significant contribution that assistants can make in increasing the school's effectiveness.
- Maximise children's progress in learning by assistants providing support for teachers in carrying out their role.
- Support differentiated learning by offering one-to-one sessions, enabling small group tuition and, when appropriate, assist in the delivery of a specific activity to the whole class.
- Improve curriculum access for any pupil who might need additional support.
- Provide support for teachers in performing a wide variety of tasks.
- Make full use of all the skills and expertise that the school's assistants have to offer.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and Responsibilities of Assistants

The roles of assistants are summarised into four main areas including supporting the pupil, supporting the teacher/s, supporting the curriculum and supporting the school.

Under the direction of the Principal, the SENCO and/or class teacher, the assistants will undertake a range of duties to ensure the above roles are carried out in the following ways:

- Actively supporting the planning process by collaborating with the class teacher.
- Actively supporting the class teacher in the delivery of the curriculum.
- Preparation of practical activities.
- Delivering one to one support as identified in Statements of Special Educational Needs and Individual Education Plans.
- Ensuring the health and safety of the pupil and other pupils.
- Working with small groups to provide additional support.
- Assisting the pupil in moving around the school where necessary.
- Motivating and encouraging reluctant learners.
- Explaining boundaries and operating these consistently and fairly.
- Modifying and adapting materials.
- Promoting inclusion.
- Assisting with monitoring and evaluating pupil/s' progress, record keeping and attending meetings as necessary.
- Complementing supervision at break and lunchtime or providing separate arrangements if identified in the plan.
- Toileting assistance where necessary.
- Medical procedures as specified in the Statement of Special Educational Needs.
- Keeping up to date with current legislation in relation to the needs of the pupil/s they are working with.
- Any other duties identified by the Principal, SENCO and/or class teacher.

At all times assistants should be working within school policies and promoting inclusion and independence for the pupil. The class teacher should be vigilant to ensure that 'learned helplessness' is avoided.

Assistants, unless otherwise instructed, will not liaise directly with parents and will observe confidentially in line with all school policies.

For further details on roles and responsibilities within SEN, please refer to Section Eight within the 'Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy'.

In addition to the above duties, the following responsibilities must be adhered to:

- **Punctuality** at work is essential (correct protocol to be followed if an issue arises).
- When in work, it is **vital that allocated posts are carried out at the set times** with specific duties to the post being undertaken.
- **During Language and Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy lessons, the focus is enhancing the teaching and learning experiences of the pupils, any other necessary duties are to be carried out over and above this protected time.**

Roles and Responsibilities of Class Teachers

In relation to effective and efficient use of assistants, class teachers must adhere to the following:

- Assistants are primarily employed by the school to enhance the teaching and learning experience for pupils and other duties deemed necessary to be carried out by assistants are to be kept to a minimum and should not occur during Language and Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy lessons.
- Collaborate with assistants to plan how best to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Recognise their own need for professional development within meeting the needs of SEN pupils and seek training from the SENCO and/or relevant subject leaders.
- Carefully differentiate learning to ensure that the curriculum is accessible for all.
- Establish, monitor and review IEP targets in collaboration with assistants.
- Be responsible for the day-to-day effective and efficient deployment of classroom assistants as part of the learning team.

WORKING AWAY FROM DIRECT SUPERVISION

At times it may be desirable for individuals or small groups to work with the assistant away from the classroom for short sessions. This could be for reasons such as to minimise distraction, calming down time and/or carrying out an activity to enhance learning that is best done in a quieter environment. This activity will be under the direction of the teacher and should generally be known to the SENCO. The assistant will have clear expectations to meet while carrying out duties in this manner.

SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS

Overall supervisory arrangements are the responsibility of the Principal and the needs of specific pupils, along with the available resource base are considered when arrangements are being put in place. (See 'Supervisory Assistants Policy' for further details)

LINE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The following arrangements are in place to ensure the smooth running of assistant related employment within Ballymoney Model CIPS:

- The Board of Governors, in collaboration with the Principal, oversees contractual and employment arrangements of assistants employed within Ballymoney Model CIPS.
- Procedures for absence from work and requests for leave are clearly defined within the 'Managing Attendance at Work Policy' and correct protocol should be followed. The Principal oversees this aspect within school.
- In cases of absence the Principal will try as far as possible to put alternative arrangements in place, depending on the length of absence and the nature of the impact on the pupil/s the assistants are involved with.
- Within the classroom the assistant works under the day-to-day direction of the teacher and any deviation from recorded duties should be in agreement with the classroom teacher, SENCO and/or Principal.
- Generally the SENCO will identify, through training, how assistants can best support the learning process and identify any concerns in relation to this aspect.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Principal oversees the professional development of all staff in Ballymoney Model Controlled Integrated Primary School including training for assistants. In consultation with the SENCO, training needs will be identified in line with school priorities as outlined within the School Development Plan. Due to the diverse nature of SEN pupils, there may be on occasion a need to provide training that has not previously been identified as necessary.

It is the responsibility of the assistants to keep up to date with legislation in relation to the pupil/s they are working with. All assistants are expected to participate in identified training. When appropriate, assistants will be invited to attend school based INSET and will be released to attend board and other relevant training whenever possible. The Principal/SENCO will arrange for specific advice on individual SEN as required. A record of all training attended by assistants will be kept by the SENCO.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE POLICY

- This policy entitled, 'The Effective and Efficient Use of Classroom Assistants' was devised in collaboration with staff, ratified by Board of Governors and will be reviewed regularly; taking into account changes in legislation and/ or practice.
- Other related policies in place within school include The Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy, Managing Attendance at Work Policy and Supervisory Assistants Policy.
- This policy has been issued to all staff and is available on request from the school office.

J Jamison (Principal) and H McCambridge (VP and SENCO), February 2015

Approved by the Board of Governors – 203rd Meeting – 2nd June 2015