



### LSA Deployment Review

<b>Reviewer:</b> Sally Franklin	<b>School:</b> St. Anne’s School	<b>Date of visit:</b> 17 and 18 November 2021
<b>Summary of Visit</b>	<p>The purpose of the visit was to identify areas of strength and improvement around LSA deployment, arranged by Martin Winward (Head teacher).</p> <p>Following a full SEND Review carried out by NASEN across Guernsey and Alderney in February 2021, St Anne’s also hope to use this process to support a proactive and thoughtful response to the report. My role is to support St. Anne’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review what their SEND provision looks like and how this can be further developed</li> <li>• Reflect how support staff are currently deployed including strengths and areas for consideration</li> <li>• Consider what might the ‘model’ look like with a view to maximising, strengths, energies and resource to improve even better outcomes</li> </ul> <p>This review is not intended to be as far reaching as a whole school SEND Review, but aims to provide a response to the recommendations made<sup>1</sup></p>	

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendation 13: Consider commissioning regular external SEND reviews at school and setting level to provide a more granular insight into inclusion in practice.

Recommendation 7: Build capacity in the workforce through a substantial and ongoing programme of professional development, with a particular focus on SENCOs, teachers, leaders and LSAs. This will build on work that has already begun in this area for SENCOs. As part of this capacity-building programme, the status and impact of LSAs should be improved through specialist accreditation and more effective deployment.

	<p>This report draws together evidence from the school visit, observations and discussions with staff, and a deep dive with Martin, Wendy Wilson (Deputy Headteacher) and Kim Smith (SENCo and Inclusion Manager). The visit helped to set out; aims and objectives of the review, staffing structure, timetables and areas of strength and development.</p> <p>A learning walk helped to establish general deployment of LSAs across the school. There was also an opportunity to meet with teachers and LSAs for their views and experiences.</p> <p>The SLT have been working to move pupil support away from a ‘Velcro model’ of encouraged learned helplessness, towards greater independence for pupils. LSAs are used across the school to run specific and targeted interventions and support pupils with more complex needs.</p> <p>As the only school on Alderney, it serves all families on the island. An all-through school from 3-16, there are just 140 pupils on roll, 18% of whom are identified as having SEND. The school have created a separate space (‘The Den’) to cater for pupils with more complex needs. Whilst some pupils spend the majority of their week here, others use it as an addition to their main classes.</p> <p>The school has many strengths, including the commitment of SLT to the project and the skill and expertise across the team. Staff report the fact that people get on well and support one another. There is no ‘one size fits all’ – St Anne’s will need to take a flexible approach to the recommendations, so they fit with their wider aims and development plans.</p>	
<b>Area of focus</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for development</b>
<b>Leadership of TAs</b>	<p>The SLT are proactive and thorough in their desire to maximise the effectiveness of support staff and LSA development forms part of the school SDP.</p> <p>Leaders are ambitious for the academic attainments of all learners, regardless of starting points and any challenges they might face.</p> <p>The SENCo understands pupils across the department very well. She is responsive to their needs and is very knowledgeable about the range of conditions and barriers to their learning.</p> <p>The role and contribution of LSAs has an increasingly high profile in the school.</p>	<p>The creation of a LSA policy may help to set out the climate and expectation of support in the school. <a href="http://maximisingtas.co.uk/assets/content/tapolicytemplate.pdf">http://maximisingtas.co.uk/assets/content/tapolicytemplate.pdf</a></p> <p>Consider the possibility of linking performance management targets for LSAs to the scaffolding framework following MPTA training in January to embed new ways of working. More formal observation of practice later in this academic year can feed into this. The observation schedule should be a useful tool to help with this. <a href="http://maximisingtas.co.uk/assets/content/observationframework.pdf">http://maximisingtas.co.uk/assets/content/observationframework.pdf</a></p> <p>LSA contracts are inconsistent, some appear not to have one and start and finish times do not always allow for structured opportunities to meet with class teachers. As recruitment continues and staff change, it’ll be important that these are pulled more in line with one another. Although it’s not</p>

		realistic or practical to extend all LSA contracts, this may be possible with a small handful of key staff who could go on to disseminate information to the rest of the team.
<b>Strategic use of LSAs</b>	<p>There is a commitment amongst SLT to ensuring the learning needs of pupils are met first and foremost through high quality teaching. Good SEND teaching benefits all pupils and the school recognises that every teacher is a teacher of learners with SEND.</p> <p>LSAs and teachers work well together to support learning and relationships are generally very good.</p> <p>The strategic use of the EP service, specialist literacy intervention teacher, specialist teacher for complex needs and the development of the wider SEND team is a very positive model. It ensures that there is specific and targeted expertise across the school for both teachers and pupils to access.</p>	<p>High quality, differentiated teaching should be the first line of defence in meeting the needs of SEND learners. A consistent, shared and robust understanding of HQT and strategies that can be used to support additional needs across a whole classroom should be established with teachers. Whilst there is no question of the skills and expertise of teachers, HQT for SEND learners can drift and so needs to be re visited regularly to ensure that all teaches can demonstrate this in their practice. What are they doing as standard in every lesson to make work more accessible? How is work differentiated and how clear are the objectives for learners with SEND? Ensure this is demonstrated and made a feature of across the school.</p> <p>Construct, share and debate what QFT means at St Anne’s. All staff need to be able to identify and deliver ‘ordinarily-available provision’. This area of development forms part of the ‘Quality of Education’ priorities as a direct response to Recommendation 6 of the NASEN Review<sup>2</sup>. The EEF guidance report, Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send</a> is a helpful tool and Coe (2019) sets out key principles for QFT. This can then be reflected in the school’s SEND information report to provide clarity for families.</p> <p>Whilst some staff report that work is well differentiated, this is not consistent across the school and LSAs feel in a reactive position. As part of the ‘ordinarily available provision’, work for SEND pupils should be carefully differentiated by teachers so LSAs are clear of key learning objectives and</p>

<sup>2</sup> Provide a clear and unambiguous expectation of the ‘ordinarily-available provision’ in schools. This should provide absolute clarity for families, school leaders and teachers on what should routinely be provided in school and what might be provided centrally from other services. Explicit within these expectations should be that ‘every teacher is a teacher of learners with SEND’ and ‘every leader is a leader of SEND’

		<p>outcomes. There is scope for further alignment between specialist staff in The Den to plan with mainstream teachers. Pupils need an opportunity to consolidate and practice skills back in class.</p> <p>New timetabling in the primary phase means that some staff feel that children don't have enough time to consolidate and reinforce key learning. Whilst logistical and practical challenges can make timetabling a very difficult process, it might be helpful to revisit and review this to further understand these concerns.</p> <p>The library is a real strength of the school and has been significantly improved in recent years. There is potential scope for further training (RWI and other specialist interventions) for the library learning assistant, who could then utilise her time during quiet reading to support the needs of secondary pupils.</p> <p>LSAs do not currently come to IEP reviews or make any significant contribution to pupil progress meetings. Their work with pupils could better inform target setting and 'next steps' for pupils and consideration should be given to how they feed into this process.</p> <p>Not all staff seem sure as to who's 'responsible' for SEND pupils and there is lack of clarity around literacy in particular because of the overlap in roles between literacy lead / SENCo / RWI lead and literacy intervention teacher. Keys roles and responsibilities could be made more explicit, and the message that every teacher is a teacher of SEND, reinforced.</p>
<p><b>Classroom deployment</b></p>	<p>During the learning walk, it was observed that support staff assist pupils to access general classroom teaching e.g. by differentiating tasks and breaking down instructions for pupils.</p> <p>Teachers value the support within the class and recognise that it allows them to work with different groups of children.</p>	<p>For some LSAs, there was a suggestion that they felt more '<i>responsible</i>' for particular children, and this was observed during the learning walk. SLT have worked hard to ensure that teachers deploy LSAs to work with children across the attainment range – this model of support needs to continue to be reinforced so there is consistency in practice across the school.</p>

	<p>There was some evidence across the school that LSAs are routinely deployed to work with pupils across attainment ranges rather than being restricted to working only with pupils with SEND and / or lower-attainers. Specialist staff were running some of the intervention groups and LSAs were observed gap-filling with pupils of different abilities.</p> <p>The primary classes benefit from a high level of additional adult support.</p>	<p>A barrier to effective LSA deployment in some instances is limitation of subject knowledge, skills and confidence required for particular year groups, which puts pressure on SLT when trying to timetable support. A skills audit would help the team to identify gaps in knowledge and confidence, which can then be addressed.</p> <p>Consider the use of a Teacher/TA agreement <a href="http://maximisingtas.co.uk/assets/content/teacheragreement.pdf">http://maximisingtas.co.uk/assets/content/teacheragreement.pdf</a> as a starting point to define roles and expectations where these are less clear between teachers and LSAs. The creation of a St Anne's version of this document should be a collaborative process. This will help to define expectations of LSAs during whole class input, plenary etc.. so that time is better used. In some classes, LSAs were observed watching teacher input, which may not be the best use of this time.</p> <p>Consider primary PPA cover to be run by experienced LSAs. This would free up secondary teachers to do other work and primary pupils would be more familiar with members of staff.</p> <p>Whilst primary teachers benefit from class-based support, evidence suggests that the most effective model of LSA deployment is when support staff are deployed to run structured, evidence based interventions. There is scope for some LSAs to receive further training and work in more specialist, focused roles.</p> <p>Support across secondary classes feels very limited, which will ultimately impact on pupil outcomes. Some pupils would benefit significantly from work with the specialist literacy intervention teacher, and this should be explored. Consideration should also be given to whether it's possible to provide further LSA support here.</p>
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<p><b>Effective interactions</b></p>	<p>Staff appeared to be generally aware of the overriding principle of <i>'least amount of help first'</i>.</p> <p>Children were observed to be comfortable working with LSAs and relationships appeared very positive.</p> <p>Pupils were observed using independent skills and strategies to support their learning, particularly in maths.</p> <p>There appeared to be a high level of skill and experience across the LSA team.</p>	<p>Ensure that tasks are consistently broken down into mini goals and process success criteria to support children with their learning. MPTA training has been booked in January 2022 for the whole team, which will focus on this. <a href="https://maximisingtas.co.uk/courses/maximising-the-practice-of-teaching-assistants.php">https://maximisingtas.co.uk/courses/maximising-the-practice-of-teaching-assistants.php</a></p> <p>Ensure that staff always know to focus on the key learning objective rather than task completion when working with children.</p> <p>There should be an explicit expectation across the school that children attempt to resolve any difficulties independently before asking an adult. A focus on pupil independence across the school will begin to shift a culture of learned helplessness in some children.</p>
<p><b>Preparation and training</b></p>	<p>There is a continued focus on ensuring that LSAs receive the same CPD and input as teachers, which is a recognition of the importance of their role.</p> <p>There is a significant level of skill across the team. There has been a conscious shift towards upskilling staff and creating specialist, bespoke roles which has a positive impact on pupil progress.</p> <p>Some staff reported being able to talk through planning with class teachers and feeling prepared for the lesson or intervention they run.</p>	<p>Not all staff are confident that they have the subject knowledge and there are potentially unmet training needs amongst the workforce. The skills audit will be useful to plug gaps here although this appears to be a confidence issue as much as anything for some staff. Staff should be encouraged to work in different year groups and observe practice across the school.</p> <p>Further training opportunities are needed to upskill staff and increase confidence, particularly with structured interventions such as RWI.</p> <p>Lesson plans do not appear to be consistently shared with LSAs which can lead to ambiguity about what the lesson objectives / outcomes are. A more robust approach to planning for LSAs may be needed, particularly for newer or more inexperienced staff who are less familiar with the curriculum and particular topics.</p> <p>LSAs would like more time to meet, plan and feedback. Discussions are ad hoc and fleeting which, in some cases, leaves LSAs feeling they're in a reactive position when they start working with pupils. Although this can be difficult to carve out, SLT should reaffirm the value of this time and set clear</p>

		<p>expectations of how it should and shouldn't be used. This time then needs to be monitored, so there is no drift.</p> <p>Current staff training (e.g Level 5 Dyslexia) should feed into the HQT offer and become a feature of every class.</p>
<p><b>Structured interventions and provision mapping</b></p>	<p>There is a culture across the school which recognises the limitations of poorly run interventions, and a shift towards a focus on HQT within the main classroom.</p> <p>The SENCo has an overview of the interventions that are run and the number of these has been reduced in recent years.</p>	<p>Research would suggest that TAs are likely to have most impact when being deployed to run structured and evidence based interventions <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistant-interventions">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistant-interventions</a></p> <p>Whilst the SENCo has begun to look at the impact of provision, a comprehensive and costed provision map should further outline decisions to introduce certain interventions, rationale, cost and evidence base. There needs to be a more robust approach to tracking the impact of interventions that are run.</p> <p>An explicit link needs to be made between the intervention and what is happening in class so that pupils can practice new skills and consolidate their learning. The SEND team and intervention teachers should be able to support with this, but it'll be important that their work isn't seen as 'separate' from the main class teaching. It should supplement, not replace what is happening in class.</p> <p>Whilst LSAs and specialist teachers are used to successfully run interventions, progress in these could be celebrated if class teachers were more involved in what's happening outside of the classroom. Teachers could watch, lead or join in with interventions occasionally so that pupils can demonstrate what they've been learning.</p>

		<p>Further consideration to be given to intervention timetabling so that pupil's broader curriculum isn't limited.</p> <p>LSAs reported that interventions often don't run or are cancelled at short notice. It's important that interventions are run with fidelity to maximise their potential impact.</p>
<p><b>Further suggested action points for the school</b></p>	<p>Change is a complex process. In order to have impact, the LSA work that St Anne's has started should be seen as a process, not an event (Sharples, 2019) <a href="#">EEF Guide to Implementation</a>.</p> <p>Further recommended steps are outlined below, but the key message is that there are already many strengths across the school which should be valued and celebrated.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SLT should use a staff meeting to set out the 'climate' for action relating to the LSA Review. Keep the emphasis on the team approach: everyone is working together to refine and improve LSA deployment and practice across the school.</li> <li>2. Continue to track and fully audit interventions. What is / isn't working and how do you know? Continue to pick a small handful of subject specific interventions that you can provide a rationale for. <a href="#">Helen Arkell Literacy Interventions</a> is a useful link for literacy interventions and the EEF Toolkit continues to be a useful resource here. For the Early Years, The Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool may be helpful <a href="https://ican.org.uk/media/3208/tct_bcrp_csc_update.pdf">https://ican.org.uk/media/3208/tct_bcrp_csc_update.pdf</a>. LSAs will need to be trained on delivery and practice should be monitored.</li> <li>3. Ensure that the SEND provision map includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Details of the intervention (rationale, evidence base)</li> <li>- Cost</li> <li>- Key objectives</li> <li>- Logistical details (staffing, timetabling, pupils etc..)</li> <li>- Progress data i.e. baseline scoring and output data at regular intervals to demonstrate impact.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Arrange for support staff to become involved in at least one 'peer to peer' observation to share best practice. Establish a mechanism for support staff to meet and discuss practice and impact to improve confidence and collaboration across the team.</li> <li>5. Share the expectation that all teachers should deploy support staff specifically in planning and share plans with colleagues ahead of lessons. SLT to monitor this. LSAs did not always feel adequately prepared e.g. with regard to understanding of concepts and information to be taught, skills to be learned and applied or intended learning outcomes.</li> <li>6. Consider protected time for teachers and support staff to meet to discuss planning and learning objectives for the week which could be trialled in just one other year group to begin with. SLT should set clear expectations for this time and monitor it, so it doesn't drift back to a</li> </ol>	



	<p>more 'ad hoc' model. Because of the complexity of contract start and finish times, this might be arranged at points during the school day, such as an assembly time.</p> <p>SEND can be a difficult area for schools and it can feel overwhelming when funding is stretched and the needs of pupils are increasingly complex, but St Anne's have many strengths in this area and, importantly, have a team who are keen to make it even better. A positive and inclusive ethos permeates through the school, and I very much hope that this is recognised by external moderators and visitors.</p> <p>It has been a pleasure to work with the team and I would like to thank the whole staff time for their time, commitment and openness during a very busy term. There are many challenges around SEND provision for mainstream schools to face, and yet it feels that St Anne's are striving, within a very complex system, to provide the absolute best for their pupils.</p>
<p>TA Review 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021</p>	<p><b>S. Franklin</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>Sally Franklin</p>