Specialist Teaching Assistant

Job description, 20 November 2026



Ambitious about Autism

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Job description

Job title	Specialist Teaching Assistant	**Team**	Ambitious College
Job band	Band 3	**Reporting to**	Learning Support Coordinator
Hours	35 hours per week; Monday to Friday, 9am – 4:30pm	**Line manages**	N/A

Role purpose

The primary role of our Specialist Teaching Assistants (STA) is to work collaboratively with each other and other professionals in the college (teacher, non-class-based specialists, Allied Health Professionals and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) colleagues) to ensure leaners experience positive learning opportunities that result in great outcomes/attainment across the college. Utilising training, knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies, with effective deployment and teacher led planning, our Specialist Teaching Assistants (STAs) will provide support to learners so that they can access the curriculum, participate in learning and experience and a sense of achievement whilst also promoting their independence, self-esteem and social inclusion.

The skills, knowledge and understanding set out in the person specification have been underpinned by the national professional standards for this role.

Key accountabilities and dimensions

Specialist Teaching Assistant

Personal and Professional Conduct (PPC)

- Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the college / Charity.
- Uphold public trust as professional members of staff and approach the role with positivity, creativity, problem solving and communicative and collaborative mindset which first and foremost supports quality learning.
- Be responsible for safeguarding leaners at all times.
- Be responsible for keeping up to date with safeguarding / health & safety policies.

- Know, implement and actively contribute to the development of risk assessments and plans (can be related to learning, medical care, positive behaviour support) and report concerns when necessary.
- Contribute and support to the overall vision, values and continual improvement of the college.
- Use the Ambitious Approach to underpin the focus on improving the quality of life of autistic young people through learning support.
- Value and use differences and diversities in learning support.
- Be self-reflective and professionally curious at all times.

Knowledge and Understanding (K&U)

- Actively seek to extend knowledge and skills relevant to supporting autistic learners with a range of barriers to learning and associate complexities (education, health, therapy and care).
- Know that every learner is unique and how autism can impact their learning / access to it.
- Know learners have likes, preferences, motivators and how to engage positively and actively communicate with them.
- Have an ability to adapt your support style to meet a range of learners needs operating and across a variety of ages.
- Be ambitious and committed to acquiring knowledge, skills and competencies required to support autistic learners. Commit to CPD to better yourself and your practice to better support learning and engagement of learners.
- Know the curriculum / subject offers to the school / college and the intended individual learning objectives for sessions.
- Understand and apply learners preferred learning styles, motivators and engagement tools to effectively support learning.
- Support teaching and learning with a view to reducing direct support and maximise learner independence wherever possible.
- Be able to apply skills, knowledge and competencies to a range to learners (within class, across college).

Teaching and Learning (TL)

- Seek to understand and apply knowledge about pedagogy (the art and science of teaching and learning) around autism and child / adult development to support learners learning.

- Ensure personalised approaches to overcoming barriers to learning.
- Support reducing / removing barriers to participation in all learning and extracurricular activities and value social and community access / participation.
- Know that behaviours are a communication and seek to understand these.
- Encourage self-regulation to support access to learning and be willing to alter your own behavioural styles to best support the learner engagement.
- Train in and consistently apply Positive Behaviour Support strategies / handling techniques (as a last resort).
- Ensure high-quality assessment takes place by:

1. Ensuring learners know what they are meant to be learning.
2. Finding out what the learners have learnt.
3. Providing feedback that improves the learners' learning.
4. Having learners help each other learn.
5. Developing learners' ability to monitor and access their learning.

- Train in and consistently use assessment / evidence systems e.g. Evidence for Learning.
- Train in and consistently use / ensure that learners always have access to their relevant communication modes. Actively engage in Total Communication Approach across learners (Verbal, visual, signing, digital augmentative, Picture exchange methods, objects of reference etc).
- Know the learning objectives for learners and be proactive with colleagues in ensuring that the resources and environments support learning.
- Actively consider using a range of appropriate, motivating, age respectfulness resources.
- Undertake personal care e.g. toileting, dressing, feeding and medication for learners.

Working with Others (WO)

- Recognise and respect the contribution of all stakeholders in effective learning.
- Understand the roles of colleagues and be an active member in creating and maintaining good working relations which put learning at the centre.

- Actively support and promote interventions with a clear understanding of the learning intentions.
- Actively share and celebrate progress and what is working well as well as concerns.
- Be active in agreeing / implementing strategies to address any impacts to learning and to address potential for under achievement.

Person specification

Role and band competencies

Specific knowledge, experience and technical skills	Essential
1. Five GCSEs or equivalent (including Maths and English).	X
2. Interest in, and / or knowledge of autism.	X
3. Willingness to support and manage behaviours of distress.	X
4. Good appreciation of, and a basic knowledge of health and safety, data protection principles and equal opportunities.	X
5. Proven ability to solve problems quickly and remain calm.	X
6. Basic level of IT literacy in suing Microsoft software e.g. Outlook, Word, Excel.	X
7. Excellent communication skills both written and verbal (in English).	X
8. Willingness to support and participate in community-based activities such as swimming and gardening etc.	X
9. Ambitious about Autism is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.	X

Personal attributes

10. Willing to learn about and commit to the Ambitious Approach.	X
11. Willing to work with autistic children or young adults with learning disabilities.	X
12. Willing to undertake direct intimate personal care tasks as required.	X
13. Willing to lone work as and when required.	X
14. To have the physical and emotional resilience to work with autistic children / YP who may have behaviours that challenge.	X
15. Punctual and reliable.	X

16. Good appreciation of health and safety in the workplace, data protection principles and equal opportunities.	X

How to apply

Stage	Timescale
Closing dates for applications	
Candidates informed of outcome of application	
Interviews (these will be conducted online via Teams)	

If you would like to find out more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or wish to have an informal discussion please contact <insert recruiter contact details>.

Equal opportunities monitoring

Ambitious about Autism is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and we warmly welcome applications from all suitably-qualified candidates. We welcome applications regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, disability, or age. All applications will be considered solely on merit.

Ambitious about Autism is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check. As part of our Safer Recruitment checks, an online search maybe carried out in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The Safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification.

Whether the post is exempt from the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendment to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2021. This means that when applying for certain jobs and activities certain spent convictions and cautions are ‘protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Further information about filtering offences can be found in the DBS Filter Guidance.

We are Ambitious about Autism

Our vision is acceptance and opportunity for every autistic child and young person.

We are the national charity helping autistic children and young people to learn, thrive and achieve in a world where they belong.

We work with autistic children and young people and those who support them to build the evidence of what works, deliver services and solutions, and influence change.

Contact us

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Ambitious about Autism is a registered charity in England and Wales: 1063184 and a registered company: 03375255.

Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust is an exempt charity in England and Wales and a registered company: 08335297.