What is the purpose of this policy?
This policy provides information about the teaching assistants (TAs) at Greentrees Primary School. It outlines how we deploy and use TAs as well as how they are managed in order to achieve maximum impact on outcomes for pupils in terms of their academic performance and physical and mental well-being.

How does the school see the role of teaching assistants?
Teaching assistants make a major contribution to the work of our school. They do this through their support for children as individuals, as groups and as classes, through their support for teachers in the preparation and delivery of their lessons, and through their support for the development of the curriculum.
We have two Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs). From time to time they plan for and teach whole class groups.

Why we have teaching assistants
At Greentrees Primary School we believe firmly that TAs play a vital role in the education and the wellbeing of the children at our school. They are a highly valued resource and an integral part of the teaching team. We deliberately have a large team of TAs and we invest in providing training for them so they can carry out their responsibilities well. We provide a clear management structure and ensure that our TAs have a high status in the school. We know that our TAs contribute to the raising of standards.

How are teaching assistants deployed?
We look carefully at the beginning of each year as well as throughout the year to ensure that the team of TAs are deployed effectively and in order for us to respond to the changing needs of the school. We believe that TAs usually work more effectively when they are attached to one class and we follow this principle wherever possible. It allows for better relationships to be built up between the TA, teacher and children. The TAs are able to manage their timetables better as they only have to consider their own class and communication is more effective. However, this is not always possible to achieve.

What do teaching assistants do?
The TAs have clear job descriptions that lay out their responsibilities. The job descriptions are provided by the LA and unions.

The TA role in the classroom is to provide support for the teacher and the pupils in a variety of different ways.

All TAs take a proactive role in the classroom, sometimes up front alongside the teacher and sometimes in more subtle ways. The TA will work with different children in the classroom, in all curriculum areas, supporting them during whole class teaching and during group work. The TA may work with the SEN children in each class, sometimes within a group and sometimes on a one to one basis to address learning plan* and provision map targets. They also support other groups of all abilities and aptitudes.

(*Learning plans include ‘My Support Plans’, personalised learning plans, one page ‘profiles, strategy sheets and provision plans.)
They will run intervention programmes with groups of children where appropriate, but the focus at Greentrees is on Quality First Teaching; support and differentiation for pupils within the class. TAs support the children’s social and emotional development as well as promote appropriate standards of behaviour.

If a child has a statement of special educational need (pre September 2014) or a statutory ‘My Plan’ (post September 2014), a TA may be employed specifically to support that ‘named’ child. Our aim at Greentrees is, however, to promote the full inclusion and independence of that child as far as is possible.

A ‘named pupil’ TA will take an integral role within the classroom as a whole and 1:1 support will be only as required to meet the stated objectives/outcomes for the child. Support will be directed and planned for by the class teacher. Other children may also be supported by the ‘named pupil’ TA, if the teaching and learning also matches their need and this will also be directed and planned for by the class teacher.

TAs support the teacher on a general basis within the classroom and this support is varied each day but can also include creating classroom displays, preparing resources, photocopying and mounting work.

TAs are also fully involved in the life of the school and attend meetings, go on trips, do playground duties etc. Some of our TAs are also MDSAs and we feel this provides good continuity for the children.

The role of the Teaching Assistant

Support for pupils

- Teaching individuals, small groups and whole class (see deployment strategies on page 3)
- attending to their personal needs
- providing emotional support
- helping them use any equipment, including ICT (e.g. use of iPads/IWBs for phonics games)
- establishing good relationships with them
- responding to their learning needs
- encouraging independence
- challenging and extending thinking
- promoting their self-esteem
- promoting inclusion
- encourage/model learning attributes e.g. the ‘4Rs’
- enabling individuals or groups of pupils to participate in learning tasks set by the teacher
- enabling pupils to work towards individual targets and learning plans
- liaison with parents

Support for teachers

- teaching individuals, groups and whole class
- Conducting assessments e.g. reading and spelling ages
- performing administrative and clerical tasks not requiring a teacher’s professional expertise, including photocopying
- escorting groups of pupils to different work areas
- preparing learning resources
- attending to ICT equipment

(Learning plans* include ‘My Support Plans’, personalised learning plans, one page ‘profiles, strategy sheets and provision plans.)
• maintaining appropriate intervention records including baseline and achievement data and providing feedback
• liaison with parents – home-school links

**Support for the curriculum**
• helping pupils understand instructions, through repetition, rephrasing and modelling
• undertaking small-group support work as directed by the teacher
• providing support through intervention programmes
• showing pupils how to use ICT to develop their learning
• selecting, preparing and maintaining learning equipment and resources

**Support for the school**
• implementing and following whole school policies, e.g. safeguarding children, health and safety, presentation, marking and feedback
• participating in training, in order to keep up to date with current school issues;
• contributing to information gathering on pupils’ progress, e.g. by liaising with the class teacher, providing notes on pupils when required, feeding back on observations, participating in Assessment for Learning (AFL), commenting on children’s targets.
• contributing to meetings about pupils, e.g. attending annual review meetings, pupil progress meetings
• assisting with the supervision of pupils outside lesson times, i.e. in the playground, or in the school grounds generally;
• promoting positive behaviour in line with the school policy
• contributing ideas for the development of the school, e.g. through attendance at TA meetings and ‘Blue Skies’ meetings
• participating in school trips (including residentials)
• HLTAs may teach classes

**At Greentrees School, we recognise the following strategies as examples of good practice for TA deployment:**
• Observations of pupils (sometimes leading to identification of further need). Writing comments on ‘post-its’ for learning journals etc.
• Teaching specific ability groups (including ‘mixed’) to increase range of provision across classes (e.g. phonics phases)
• Teaching specific ability groups during mental oral starters and lesson plenaries.
• Providing verbal feedback for pupils who need to ‘re-learn’ concepts
• Provide written feedback, including next steps, when working with small groups or individuals
• Support children in implementing their ‘next steps’ in learning
• Pro-actively supporting children in ‘whole class’ teacher input sessions e.g. enabling children to manage distractions and focus on learning.
• Identify children who have understood the task and encourage them to ‘teach’ children who are lacking in their understanding.
• Implement specific behaviour management strategies devised for individuals/groups/class
• ‘Pre-teach’ topic vocabulary

(Learning plans* include ‘My Support Plans’, personalised learning plans, one page ‘profiles, strategy sheets and provision plans.)
• Provide links to learning in other contexts e.g. Speech and Language, Booster groups
• Link learning in interventions to class learning
• As respond to the wide variety of needs of pupils using strategies recommended in ‘Strategy Sheets’ e.g. visual support, prompts for physical support, use of timers, ‘talking tins’ and manipulatives etc.

How are teaching assistants managed?
The Deputy Headteacher is the line manager for the TAs, but the Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for all issues concerned with TAs including recruitment, induction, deployment and timetabling. The Headteacher will deal with day to day issues as well as concerns and TAs can bring their concerns (and possible solutions to problems!) to the Headteacher although they may wish to discuss issues with the class teacher in the first instance. The Headteacher will be advised by the Deputy and Vulnerable Learner Lead (VLL).

The teaching assistants have a fortnightly meeting run by the Deputy Headteacher where they discuss a variety of issues and where TAs are kept up to date with whole school developments. Training can also be delivered through these meetings.

The Deputy is responsible for appraisal, training and performance. The VLL oversees the intervention and provision work carried out by the TAs. Class teachers also guide this work. The TA is jointly responsible with the teacher for the learning plans* of children at school. The teachers will write targets but the TAs will often carry out the tasks and make notes on progress. The targets are then reviewed by the teacher in consultation with the TA. The VLL supports TAs with activities to meet the targets.

The Teacher manages the TA attached to their class or named pupils on a day to day basis. Each class teacher is responsible for overseeing and supporting the work that the TAs carry out in class and will be in the best position to give feedback on tasks. The teacher will be invited to give feedback to the Deputy before the appraisal. In addition to the constant informal dialogue that happens throughout the day, the teacher and the TA meet formally once a week to discuss planning and progress of the children on ‘learning’* plans and/or the ‘vulnerable learner’ list and to review and set new targets once each half term as and if appropriate.

What access do teaching assistants have to professional development?
The school is firmly committed to the professional development of our TAs.

LA TRAINING: The LA run a comprehensive range of courses that TAs have the opportunity to sign up for on a range of subjects. Courses are advertised on the Wiltshire website www.wiltscpd.co.uk

SCHOOL BASED TRAINING: This takes place in school and is usually carried out by visiting professionals or led by members of staff. The training is targeted on areas of need by the school and TAs can also request sessions.

OTHER TRAINING by different providers is offered. This includes long term training such as NVQs and Foundation degrees.

(Learning plans* include ‘My Support Plans’, personalised learning plans, one page ‘profiles, strategy sheets and provision plans.)
What opportunities do teaching assistants have for appraisal?

All TAs have an annual appraisal. The review is a way of encouraging professional dialogue allowing the TA and the Deputy to discuss needs and future development in a systematic way. Each TA completes a self-review which is discussed at the Appraisal meetings held throughout the year (2 per year). From this, targets are set to allow TAs to work towards developmental goals. The TA is supported in meeting these goals within the constraints of the budget.

How else is the work of the teaching assistants monitored and evaluated?

When teachers are observed then the role of the TA in the lesson will also be looked at. The progress that SEN, Disadvantaged and other children are making is looked at on a regular basis through Pupil Progress Reviews and this provides information on how the TA and Teacher are impacting on pupil progress. The work of TAs is also monitored through the whole school monitoring approach so for example support and intervention programmes may be monitored. The appraisal process provides an opportunity to evaluate the work of TAs.

When was this policy written and when will it be reviewed?
Policy drafted: February 2015
Policy due for review: February 2017