

The Role of Teaching Assistants for Deaf Pupils in a Mainstream Primary School in England

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Abstract : This study was an investigation into the role of teaching assistants (TAs) for deaf pupils in an English primary school. This study aimed to provide knowledge about how TAs support deaf pupils in mainstream schools in England. It is accepted that TAs have an important role in the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream schools. However, there has been a lack of attention paid to the role of TAs for deaf pupils in the literature. A qualitative case study approach was used to address the research questions. Twelve semi-structured classroom observations and six semi-structured interviews were carried out with four TAs and two teachers in one English mainstream primary school. The data analysis followed a thematic analysis framework. The results indicated that TAs are utilised based on a one-on-one support model and are deployed under the class teachers in the classroom. The classroom activities are carried out in small groups with the TAs and the class teacher's agreement, as per the school's policy. Findings show that TAs carried out seven different roles in the education of deaf pupils in an English mainstream primary school. Supporting the academic and social development of deaf pupils is TA's main role. Also, they record pupils' progress, communicate with pupils' parents, take on a pastoral care role, tutor pupils in additional support lessons and raise awareness of deaf pupils' issues.

Keywords : deaf, mainstream primary school, teaching assistant, teaching assistant's roles

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