



Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants in Portsmouth and Gosport Schools: Final Summary Report

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Introduction to the project

This project was developed to evaluate the impact of training delivered to both teachers and teaching assistants in a range of Portsmouth and Gosport Schools. The project was influenced by the Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants (MITA) project, originally designed by University College London (UCL). As noted on their website “utilised by over 1000 schools, the Research Schools Network and developed with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)” (MITA, 2024). Dr Rob Webster and Dr Sophie Hall were originally involved in the evaluation. When they left the University of Portsmouth in 2024, Dr Nikki Fairchild and Anisa Sultana undertook the final stages of the project. This programme is described in the following books: *Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants in Primary Schools: A Practical Guide for School Leaders* by Rob Webster, Paula Bosanquet, Sally Franklin & Matthew Parker. This book was based on research involving teachers and teaching assistants, and detailed how to design a whole school plan to improve teaching assistant deployment, practice, and preparedness to recognise the difference teaching assistants make to the classroom and the school. The second edition of the book focused teaching assistant-pupil interaction. It explored the ways teaching assistants develop pupils’ independence and ownership of learning. MITA provides strategies for:

- Responding to additional needs
- Understanding the principles behind effective classroom talk
- Carefully scaffolding pupils’ learning
- Delivering intervention programmes

The schools taking part in this project were:

- Brockhurst
- Cornerstone
- Elson and Gomer Fed.
- Newtown CofE
- Ranville’s infant
- Ranville’s junior
- Rowner infants
- St Johns CofE
- St Judes
- Uplands
- Whiteley
- Woodcot

Please see table 1 below for details of the training delivered in Portsmouth and Gosport Schools.

Table 1: Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants (MITA) - Action Plan

Year 1					
Working with school leaders, teachers, and teaching assistants to promote and support independent learning for young people with SEND.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that all staff are trained to how rethinking teacher-TA partnerships in classrooms can facilitate more equitable learning experiences for pupils and improve engagement. • Delivery of the strategic input for school leaders • Blended offer of training materials for teaching assistants on promoting independence and scaffolding learning • network or meeting for SENDCos / leaders 					
Delegates	Resources	Session	Date	Focus/Implementation	Intended Impact
<p>Head teacher and SENDCo 3 x 0.5 sessions.</p> <p><i>Governor attendance is encouraged.</i></p> <p>Cherry Chope (LA) to attend.</p>	<p><i>All schools to receive a copy of the MITA primary leadership book and materials, including audit tools and EEF resources</i></p>	Session 1:	<p>2nd November 2022</p> <p>(9.30 - 12.30)</p>	<p>Share evidence base on TA deployment and impact, introduce the MITA programmes, and commitment for each school.</p> <p>Delegates understand the seven recommendations in the EEF report. Key points of implementation (i.e. Identifying pinch-points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders and SENDCo’s will have an understanding of the evidence on TA impact introducing the key principles of the MITA approach; schools to conduct a self-evaluation; and set a vision. • Leadership teams to strategically rethink and plan the deployment and preparation of TAs. • Collaboration/sharing good practice - Showcase event where schools share good practice and expertise at the end of Year 1
		Intersession Task		School self-evaluation including staff survey and visioning exercise. (this doubles up as pre-test evaluation.	
		Session 2:	<p>7th December 2022</p> <p>(9.30 - 12.30)</p>	<p>Share outcomes from evaluation and vision setting, Building on the seven recommendations: what they look like in the classroom. Sharable resources to use back at school.</p> <p>Input from a Gosport Headteacher who has undertaken the MITA programme and can speak to its benefits and recommendations in practice.</p>	
		Intersession Task		Schools to implement MITA approach	

		Session 3:	15th March 2023 (9.30 - 12.30)	Review implementation planning addressing implementation pinch points, sharing areas of good practice and lessons learned; planning for the future and next steps	
			TBC July 2023	Summer term, celebration Event	
Delegates	Resources	Session	Date	Focus/Implementation	Intended Impact/Milestones
<p>Teaching Assistants</p> <p><i>The SENDCo should attend one session to understand input and be able to support colleagues at school.</i></p> <p>Cherry Chope (LA) to attend 1 session</p>	<p><i>Schools will receive 3 copies of the MPTA book that supports the training. Further copies can be purchased at a discounted price.</i></p>	<p>7 x 1-day sessions available so all TAs across 15 schools can attend.</p>	<p>MPTA (for TAs in person)</p> <p>10th, 11th, 12th, 23rd, 24th, 26th, 27th Jan 2023 (all day)</p>	<p>Teaching Assistants from participating schools choose to attend 1 of these training sessions to minimise disruption in school with staff all out on one day.</p> <p>It is recommended that a minimum of two staff from each day.</p> <p><i>Whilst it is recognised that there will be disruption, the benefits outweigh the short-term problems.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teaching assistants to understand their role in promoting pupil independence and become highly skilled in a repertoire of strategies to scaffold learning. ● Measurable improvement in the ways in which TAs feel prepared, valued, and confident in their role. ● Measurable improvements to the quality of TAs' interactions with pupils (less correction and completion; more effective scaffolding)
		MPTA (for TAs online)	2nd Feb 2023 online	Any TAs unable to attend face-to-face training (i.e. due to illness) will have the opportunity to attend a one-off online session	
Delegates	Resources	Session	Date	Focus/Implementation	Intended Impact/Milestones
Teachers	Pre-recorded session for teachers regarding working with TAs for a staff meeting	Staff meeting	pre-recorded online session provided to schools	<p>Complemented with an online session for Q&A with the MITA team.</p> <p>This will allow for teachers to respond with questions and any clarification required from the pre-recorded session. Dates to be arranged according to participating school's preference</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers to develop their professional working relationship with TAs in terms of planning and classroom deployment.

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurable improvements in Teachers' confidence regarding TA deployment and preparation
Delegates	Resources	Session	Date	Focus/Implementation	Intended Impact/Milestones
Local Authority Cherry Chope to attend 0.5 days.	Online	0.5-day online session EP, SEN Case workers, S&L therapist, OT etc.	25th April 2023 9.30 – 12.00	Sharing of MITA principles, resources, and details of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA staff will have an increased understanding of the evidence on TA impact introducing the key principles of the MITA approach and be able to support schools to evaluate the progress and impact of implementation
Delegates	Resources	Session	Date	Focus/Implementation	Intended Impact/Milestones
SENDCo/SLT Network SEND team to facilitate. 3 x 0.5 days		Spring 1	20th Feb 2023 1:15 – 3:25	Establishing the project: Using the evaluation tool to inform provision Presentation from: if needed Open discussion: Mapping EHCP section F against provision in school Establishing ideas of provision against expectations. Venn diagrams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of SENDCo / SLT Network: regular network meetings to evaluate the progress and impact of implementation at school. These will be characterised by invited speaker to share journey and experiences, check-ins, and surgeries with the MITA team, followed by professional dialogue.
		Summer 1 1.	25/04/2023 Rescheduled due to industrial action	Establishing the project: following up the TA training and implementation ideas Use Cotters three steps of change. Presentation from: if needed Open discussion: praise and progress	

		Summer 2	19/06/2023 Rescheduled due to industrial actions	Establishing the project Presentation from: Open discussion: praise and progress	
Pre-Test v Post Test Evaluation 1					
Year 2					
Delegates	Resources	Session	Date	Focus/Implementation	Intended Impact/Milestones
<i>Head teacher and SENDCo 1 x 0.5 session.</i> <i>Governor attendance is encouraged.</i>		0.5 day	9th November 2023 Combined with SENDCo network session	Reconnecting with the project in Year 2 in order to maintain momentum and establish local support, checking in on progress and peer-to-peer troubleshooting (“I’m having difficulty with x”. “This is what we did in our school to address x....”) <i>Feedback on the implementation of the TA webinar materials.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peer to peer support - evaluate the progress and impact of implementation at school.
Delegates	Resources	Session	Date	Focus	
SENDCo Network CC to facilitate. 2 x 0.5 days 3 days for prep and delivery due to solo delivery		Autumn 2	9/11/2023	Reconnecting with the project in Year 2 in order to maintain momentum and establish local support, checking in on progress and peer-to-peer troubleshooting (“I’m having difficulty with x”. “This is what we did in our school to address x....”) <i>Feedback on the implementation of the TA webinar materials.</i>	Peer to peer support - evaluate the progress and impact of implementation at school.
		Spring 1	8/02/2024	Embedding the project Presentation from:	

				Open discussion: praise and progress	
		Summer 1	20th May 2024	Embedding the project Presentation from: Open discussion: praise and progress	
<p>Pre – test v Post-test evaluation 2</p> <p>Undertaken by ERIC¹ unit University of Portsmouth</p>					

¹ The Education Research and Innovation Consultancy Unit. This closed after the sessions had been delivered. The final surveys to participants and this report were undertaken by Dr Nikki Fairchild and Anisa Sultana from the School of Education, Languages and Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Pre-training data analysis

These have been split by teaching assistants and teachers and by schools, detailing whether the schools are primary or secondary.

Primary Teaching Assistants (TAs)

Table 1 Participants Pre-training survey primary school TAs

Schools	Participants
Fernhurst Junior School	11
Milton Park Primary	9
Cottage Grove Primary School	0
Cottage Grove Primary School	4
Meon Infant School	5
Meon Junior School	4
Langstone Junior Academy	0
Langstone Infant Academy	0
Copnor Primary School	0
King's Academy Northern Parade (Infant)	0
King's Academy Northern Parade (Junior)	0
Mayfield School (Primary Phase)	14

Table 2 Pre-training survey data primary school TAs

Key Question/Aspect	Primary Findings
Opportunities to meet/plan with teachers	Brief/ad hoc communication: 45.8%, Scheduled time weekly: 4.2%
Awareness of pupils' educational needs	Always: 43.8%, Often: 39.6%, Sometimes: 16.7%
Knowledge of lesson topics	Always: 37.5%, Often: 29.2%, Sometimes: 29.2%, Rarely: 4.2%
Confidence in role	Very confident: 25%, Confident: 50%, Somewhat confident: 25%
Written policy on TA deployment	Yes: 20.8%, No written policy: 79.2%
Regularity of training	Delivered regularly: 45.8%, Delivered rarely: 16.7%
Training quality	Generally high quality: 31.3%, Adequate/variable: 66.7%, Low quality: 2.1%
Training suitability	Suited to needs: 27.1%, Variable: 70.8%, Not suited: 2.1%
Availability of training	Readily available: 16.7%, Limited: 62.5%, Scarce: 20.8%
Interactions with pupils (e.g., modelling, correcting, prompting)	Modelling: Always 45.8%, Prompting: Often 41.7%, Observing: Sometimes 45.8%
Delivery of curriculum interventions	Yes: 83.3%, No: 16.7%
Intervention planning and alignment with lessons	Well-aligned interventions: Often 25%, Sometimes 42.5%, Rarely 7.5%
Confidence in delivering interventions	Very confident in delivering: 47.5%, Often confident: 37.5%, Sometimes: 15%
Sufficient time to prepare for interventions	Sufficient time: Always 10%, Rarely 40%
Appropriate training for interventions	Received training: Often 40%, Rarely 15%, Never 10%

Impact of interventions on pupil progress	Progress from interventions: Often 45%, Sometimes 27.5%
Time to deliver interventions	Enough time for delivery: Sometimes 45%, Rarely 17.5%
Intervention targeting to pupils' needs	Intervention well-targeted: Often 37.5%, Sometimes 27.5%
Connecting interventions to classroom learning	Connecting interventions to lessons: Often 50%, Sometimes 15%
Key comments from participants	Participants requested more planning time, better TA deployment strategies, and role stability.

The pre-training survey for primary school Teaching Assistants (TAs) received responses from 48 participants across various schools. The analysis highlights the following key insights:

1. Confidence and Policy:

- Half of the participants feel confident in their role, but only 25% feel very confident.
- A significant gap exists in formal policies, with 79.2% indicating the absence of a written TA deployment policy.

2. Training Availability and Quality:

- Training is delivered regularly for 45.8%, but only 31.3% rate it as high quality, with 66.7% describing it as adequate or variable.
- Most TAs (70.8%) find the training variable in terms of suitability to their needs.

3. Interactions with Pupils:

- TAs frequently engage in modelling (45.8%) and prompting (41.7%), while observing pupils working independently is less common (25%).

4. Intervention Delivery:

- 83.3% of TAs are involved in delivering curriculum interventions, but only 10% feel they always have sufficient preparation time.
- While 45% observe progress among pupils, interventions are sometimes out of step with classroom topics (47.5%).

5. Key Challenges and Suggestions:

- Participants emphasized the need for more planning time with teachers, improved training quality, and clearer deployment policies.
- Stability in TA roles and alignment between interventions and classwork were highlighted as critical areas for improvement.

Secondary Teaching Assistants (TAs)

Table 3 Participants Pre-training Survey Secondary school TAs

School Name	Participants
The Portsmouth Academy	5
Trafalgar School	14
Mayfield School (Secondary Phase)	8

Table 4 Pre-training survey data for secondary school TAs

Key Question/Aspect	Primary Findings
Opportunities to meet/plan with teachers	Brief/ad hoc communication: 70.4%, Scheduled time weekly: 3.7%
Awareness of pupils' educational needs	Always: 59.3%, Often: 37%, Sometimes: 3.7%
Knowledge of lesson topics	Always: 11.1%, Often: 18.5%, Sometimes: 40.7%
Confidence in role	Very confident: 33.3%, Confident: 55.6%, Somewhat confident: 11.1%
Written policy on TA deployment	Yes: 37%, Not sure: 63%
Regularity of training	Delivered regularly: 51.9%, Delivered rarely: 11.1%
Training quality	High quality: 40.7%, Adequate/variable: 55.6%
Training suitability	Suited to needs: 40.7%, Variable: 55.6%, Not suited: 3.7%

Availability of training	Readily available: 44.4%, Scarce: 14.8%
Interactions with pupils (e.g., modelling, prompting)	Modelling: Often 63%, Prompting: Always 33.3%
Delivery of curriculum interventions	Yes: 59.3%, No: 40.7%
Confidence in delivering interventions	Confident in delivery: Always 43.8%, Often 43.8%
Alignment of interventions with lessons	Aligned with lessons: Often 37.5%, Sometimes 25%
Sufficient time to prepare for interventions	Sufficient time: Always 12.5%, Sometimes 50%
Impact of interventions on pupil progress	Pupils progress: Often 50%, Sometimes 18.8%
Interventions well targeted to pupils' needs	Well targeted: Often 31.3%, Sometimes 25%
Making connections between interventions and class learning	Connecting interventions: Often 43.8%, Sometimes 12.5%
Suggestions for improving TA deployment and preparation	Participants suggested subject-specific TAs, better planning time, and alignment of roles.

The pre-training survey for secondary school Teaching Assistants (TAs) received responses from 27 participants across various schools. The analysis highlights the following key insights:

1. Communication and Collaboration:

- The majority of teaching assistants (TAs) report only brief or ad-hoc communication with teachers (70.4%), with very few having scheduled planning time (3.7% weekly). As with the teachers data later, a lack of structured opportunities for collaboration and planning could hinder the effective integration of TAs into lesson planning.

2. Preparedness and Knowledge:

- TAs generally felt prepared, with 59.3% always aware of the pupils they support. However, only 11.1% were always aware of lesson topics and subject-specific expertise, but with 88.9 % often feeling confident or very confident in their role. A

greater awareness of lesson topics could improve the chance to maximise support from TAs in lessons.

3. Training and Deployment:

- For some confidence in their role was low at with 33.3%. Even with 37% of respondents highlighting the presence of a written policy for TA deployment, many highlighted the need for better training and structured alignment with curriculum objectives (training suitability %,6% variable and 3.7% not suitable).

4. Impact on Pupils:

- TAs feel they have a positive impact on pupils’ engagement, with 50.0% noting pupils often progress and 63% modelling with pupils. However, with 31.3% feeling interventions were well-targeted and 25% noting interventions were sometimes targeted, more work could be done to improve this.

5. Interventions:

- Interventions are seen as aligned with lesson objectives, with 50.0% often aligning them effectively. However, insufficient preparation time (37.5% rarely having time) and variability in delivery, highlight areas for improvement and more time could be give for TAs to prepare for these interventions. This is important as 12.5% noted they have sufficient time with 50% highlighting the sometimes have sufficient time to prepare.

6. Suggestions for Improvement:

- TA felt that having subject-specific TAs with better planning time and a closer alignment of their roles might improve TA deployment and preparation.

Primary Teachers

Table 5 Participants Pre-training Survey Primary school Teachers

School Name	Participants
Cumberland Infant School	1
Fernhurst Junior School	16
The Flying Bull Academy	2
Milton Park Primary	0

Cottage Grove Primary School	4
Moorings Way Infant School	0
Meon Infant School	2
Meon Junior School	1
Langstone Junior Academy	6
Langstone Infant Academy	0
Copnor Primary School	0
King's Academy Northern Parade (Infant)	3
King's Academy Northern Parade (Junior)	8
Mayfield School (Primary Phase)	10

Table 6 Pre-training survey data for primary school Teachers

Key Question/Aspect	Primary Findings
Key stage group worked with	Reception (11.3%), Key stage 1 (18.9%), Lower Key stage 2 (34%), Upper Key stage 2 (43.4%)
Opportunities to meet/plan with TAs	Brief/ad hoc communication: 45.3%, Scheduled time weekly: 15.1%
Preparedness of TAs regarding pupils they support	Always aware: 45.3%, Often aware: 45.3%, Sometimes: 9.4%
Awareness of pupils' educational needs	Always aware: 49.1%, Often aware: 41.5%, Sometimes: 9.4%
Knowledge of lesson topics	Always aware: 30.2%, Often aware: 39.6%, Sometimes: 22.6%
Confidence in TAs' role	Confident: 52.8%, Very confident: 24.5%
Written policy on TA deployment	Yes: 17%, Not sure: 75.5%

Impact of TAs on pupils' confidence	Significant positive impact: 52.8%, Somewhat positive: 47.2%
Impact of TAs on pupils' motivation	Significant positive impact: 41.5%, Somewhat positive: 54.7%
Impact of TAs on pupils' attention	Significant positive impact: 41.5%, Somewhat positive: 54.7%
Impact of TAs on pupils' engagement	Significant positive impact: 41.5%, Somewhat positive: 54.7%
Impact of TAs on pupils' independence	Significant positive impact: 30.2%, Somewhat positive: 41.5%
Impact of TAs on pupils' numeracy	Significant positive impact: 41.5%, Somewhat positive: 56.6%
Impact of TAs on pupils' reading	Significant positive impact: 49.1%, Somewhat positive: 47.2%
Impact of TAs on pupils' writing	Significant positive impact: 34%, Somewhat positive: 60.4%
Impact of TAs on pupils' spelling	Significant positive impact: 28.3%, Somewhat positive: 56.6%
Confidence in delivering interventions	Confident: Often 45.3%, Sometimes 47.2%
Time to prepare for interventions	Sufficient time: Rarely 39.6%, Sometimes 22.6%
Interventions aligned with lessons	Aligned: Often 47.2%, Sometimes 35.8%
Suggestions for improving TA deployment	Suggestions include more planning time, consistent expectations, and regular training for TAs.

Key findings are summarized as follows:

1. Collaboration and Communication:

- A significant proportion of TAs have only brief or ad-hoc communication opportunities with teachers (45.3%), with just 15.1% having scheduled weekly meetings. This indicates a need for structured collaboration to enhance planning and effectiveness.

2. Preparedness and Confidence:

- TAs are generally well-prepared, with 45.3% always aware of the pupils they support and 49.1% always aware of their educational needs. However, knowledge of lesson topics (30.2% always aware) and subject knowledge (9.4% always) remain areas for improvement.

3. Training and Deployment:

- While 52.8% of teachers expressed confidence in TAs' ability to perform effectively, only 17% reported the existence of a written policy on TA deployment. Training availability and alignment with lesson objectives also need attention.

4. Impact on Pupils:

- TAs have a positive impact on pupils' confidence, motivation, and engagement, with 41.5%–52.8% of respondents reporting significant positive outcomes in these areas. However, the impact on independence (30.2%) and academic skills like writing (34%) and spelling (28.3%) is relatively lower.

5. Interventions:

- While 47.2% of respondents believe interventions are often aligned with lessons, only 3.8% feel TAs always have sufficient preparation time, and 39.6% report that preparation time is rarely sufficient. Confidence in delivering interventions is high, but structured alignment remains inconsistent.

6. Suggestions for Improvement:

- Teachers emphasized the need for regular training, consistent expectations, and more dedicated planning time for TAs to maximize their effectiveness. Clear policies and role definitions were also highlighted as critical areas for improvement.

Secondary Teachers

Table 7 Participants Pre-training Survey secondary school Teachers

School Name	Participants
The Portsmouth Academy	0
Trafalgar School	0
Mayfield School (Secondary Phase)	22

Table 8 Pre-training survey data for Secondary school teachers

Key Question/Aspect	Primary Findings
Opportunities to meet/plan with TAs	Brief/ad hoc communication: 63.6%, Scheduled time weekly: 4.5%
Preparedness of TAs regarding pupils they support	Always aware: 81.8%, Often aware: 18.2%
Awareness of pupils' educational needs	Always aware: 72.7%, Often aware: 22.7%
Knowledge of lesson topics	Often aware: 4.5%, Sometimes: 72.7%
TAs' subject knowledge for effective support	Often sufficient: 18.2%, Sometimes: 50%, Rarely: 31.8%
TAs' pedagogical/instructional knowledge	Often sufficient: 40.9%, Sometimes: 36.4%, Rarely: 13.6%
Awareness of expected outcomes for pupils	Always aware: 13.6%, Often aware: 40.9%, Sometimes: 36.4%
TAs' understanding of feedback required by teachers	Always aware: 13.6%, Often aware: 13.6%, Sometimes: 45.5%
Confidence in TAs' role	Confident: 59.1%, Very confident: 9.1%
Written policy on TA deployment	Yes: 18.2%, Not sure: 72.7%
Impact of TAs on pupils' confidence	Significant positive impact: 31.8%, Somewhat positive: 59.1%
Impact of TAs on pupils' motivation	Significant positive impact: 18.2%, Somewhat positive: 77.3%
Impact of TAs on pupils' attention	Significant positive impact: 36.4%, Somewhat positive: 63.6%
Impact of TAs on pupils' engagement	Significant positive impact: 36.4%, Somewhat positive: 63.6%

Impact of TAs on pupils' independence	Significant positive impact: 9.1%, Somewhat positive: 72.7%
Impact of TAs on pupils' numeracy	Significant positive impact: 27.3%, Somewhat positive: 54.5%
Impact of TAs on pupils' reading	Significant positive impact: 36.4%, Somewhat positive: 59.1%
Impact of TAs on pupils' writing	Significant positive impact: 40.9%, Somewhat positive: 50%
Impact of TAs on pupils' spelling	Significant positive impact: 36.4%, Somewhat positive: 54.5%
Confidence in delivering interventions	Often confident: 45.3%, Sometimes confident: 47.2%
Time to prepare for interventions	Sufficient time: Rarely 39.6%, Sometimes 22.6%
Alignment of interventions with lessons	Aligned with lessons: Often 47.2%, Sometimes 35.8%
TAs' interactions with pupils (e.g., modelling, prompting)	TAs model: Often 59.1%, Sometimes 31.8%; Prompt pupils: Often 72.7%, Sometimes 13.6%
Suggestions for improving TA deployment	Key suggestions include viewable timetables, planning opportunities, and consistent approaches.

The survey data highlights key insights regarding the role and impact of Teaching Assistants (TAs) in secondary schools. The findings suggest the following:

7. Communication and Collaboration:

- The majority of teachers report only brief or ad-hoc communication with TAs (63.6%), with very few having scheduled planning time (4.5%). This suggests a lack of structured opportunities for collaboration, which could hinder the effective integration of TAs into lesson planning.

8. Preparedness and Knowledge:

- TAs are generally well-prepared, with 81.8% always aware of the pupils they support and 72.7% always aware of their educational needs. However, their knowledge of lesson topics and subject-specific expertise is less robust, with 50% only sometimes having sufficient subject knowledge and 31.8% rarely confident.

9. Training and Deployment:

- Confidence in TAs' abilities is moderate, with 59.1% of teachers expressing confidence. However, only 18.2% of respondents indicated the presence of a written policy for TA deployment, and many highlighted the need for better training and structured alignment with curriculum objectives.

10. Impact on Pupils:

- TAs have a positive impact on pupils' confidence, motivation, and engagement, with significant positive outcomes reported across these areas (e.g., 31.8–36.4% significant positive impact). However, their impact on independence and academic skills like numeracy and writing is less pronounced.

11. Interventions:

- Interventions are seen as somewhat aligned with lesson objectives, with 47.2% often aligning them effectively. However, insufficient preparation time (39.6% rarely having time) and variability in delivery highlight areas for improvement.

12. Suggestions for Improvement:

- Teachers emphasized the need for better planning opportunities, clearer communication, and consistency in TA deployment. Suggestions also included creating viewable timetables and fostering stronger collaboration between teachers and TAs.

Post-training data analysis

Primary Teaching Assistants (TAs)

Table 8 Participants Post Survey TA

School Name	Participants
Cornerstone Primary School	2
Elson and Gomer Fed. Infant School	0
Newtown CofE Primary School	0
Ranville's Infant School	0
Ranville's Junior School	0

Rowner Infants School	0
St John's CofE Primary School	0
St Jude's Primary School and Pre-school	0
Uplands Primary School	0
Whiteley Primary School	0
Woodcot Primary School	0

Table 9 Post survey data TA

Key Question/Aspect	Primary Findings
Participation in pre-test survey	Yes: 100%
Understanding of survey and voluntary participation	Yes: 100%
Preparedness to meet/plan with teachers	Brief/ad hoc communication: 50%, Scheduled time: 50%
Preparedness for lessons (pupils to support, topics, outcomes)	Always aware of pupils and outcomes: 100%, Topics sometimes covered: 50%
Training quality and availability	Training generally high quality: 50%, Adequate/variable: 50%
Interactions with pupils (e.g., modelling, prompting)	Modelling: Often 50%, Prompting: Sometimes 50%
Confidence in delivering interventions	Confident in delivery: Often 50%, Sometimes 50%
Alignment of interventions with lessons	Interventions often aligned: 50%, Rarely aligned: 50%
Role clarity and effectiveness	Much clearer: 50%, Somewhat clearer: 50%
Time efficiency and reward in the role	Much more rewarding: 50%, Somewhat more rewarding: 50%

Suggestions for improvement	Participants suggested clearer timetables and more structured planning sessions.
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With only two Teaching Assistants (TAs) participating in the post-training survey, the data offers limited but insightful observations. Both participants indicated that their roles were clearer and more rewarding post-training, with one expressing confidence in delivering interventions and the other reporting some uncertainty. Preparedness to meet and plan with teachers was split evenly, with one experiencing brief, ad-hoc communication and the other having scheduled planning time.

Training quality was perceived as variable, highlighting the need for consistency. Similarly, the alignment of interventions with lessons showed mixed results, with one participant reporting frequent alignment and the other rarely. These responses highlight the importance of structured communication, consistent training, and better alignment of interventions to maximize the effectiveness of TAs in their roles.

Primary Teachers

Table 10 Schools and Participants Teachers

School Name	Participants
Cornerstone Primary School	1
Elson and Gomer Fed. Infant School	0
Newtown CofE Primary School	0
Ranville's Infant School	0
Ranville's Junior School	0
Rowner Infants School	0
St John's CofE Primary School	0
St Jude's Primary School and Pre-school	0
Uplands Primary School	0
Whiteley Primary School	0
Woodcot Primary School	0

Table 11 Survey Data Analysis

Key Question/Aspect	Primary Findings
Participation in pre-test survey	Yes: 100%
Understanding of survey and voluntary participation	Yes: 100%
Preparedness to meet/plan with TAs	Scheduled time weekly: 100%
Preparedness of TAs regarding pupils they support	Always aware of pupils and outcomes: 100%
Confidence in TAs' role	Confident: 100%
Impact of TAs on pupils (confidence, motivation, engagement)	Significant positive impact: 100%
Alignment of interventions with lessons	Well aligned: 100%
Time for TAs to prepare for interventions	Sufficient time: 100%
Role clarity and effectiveness	Much clearer: 100%
Suggestions for improvement	None provided.

The survey, with participation from only one teacher, suggests a highly positive perception of TAs' roles and contributions post-training. The teacher reported confidence in TAs' preparedness, their ability to support pupils effectively, and the alignment of interventions with lesson objectives. The role clarity and time allocated for interventions were also rated as significantly improved. While these findings are encouraging, the limited participation (one teacher) means the results should be interpreted with caution and supplemented with broader feedback for a more representative view.

Data Limitations

There are limitations with the data collection particularly with the post training data. This was confounded due to a change in the research team and the time between the original training and post training surveys. Where possible the new research team has provided an analysis and commentary of the data findings and split these by school types and participant types.

Conclusion

In conclusion this report draws together the findings before and after MITA training in Portsmouth Schools. The survey responses have been collated and the cumulative data and qualitative comments have been analysed. These outcomes might be useful to help the Local Authority and school when planning their next steps.

Appendix 1 – Pre- training survey questions

MITA: Survey for teachers (Autumn 2022)

Q1. Please select your school from the drop-down menu.

- (This is so we can track responses and chase schools with low response rates)

Q2. Please select the key stage group you teach.

- Reception
- Key stage 1 (Y1/Y2)
- Lower key stage 2 (Y3/Y4)
- Upper key stage 2 (Y5/Y6)

Q3. When did you start working at this school?

- I started working at this school in September 2022
- I started working at this school at the start of, or during, the previous school year
- I have been working at this school since before September 2021

Q4. Please select the statement below which best describes the extent to which you have opportunities to meet, plan and communicate with the TA(s) you work with.

- There is no opportunity or time to communicate with TA(s) outside of lessons
- My communication with TA(s) is brief and ad hoc (e.g. a couple of minutes before the lesson starts)
- TA(s) come into school early and/or stay behind after school. I use this as an opportunity to meet with them
- I have scheduled time to meet with TA(s) each week

Q5: There are a number of things that can help TA(s) to be effective in lessons. For each of the areas listed below, please indicate – on average – how prepared do you feel TA(s) are when they come into your lessons.*

- Likert options: Always / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

- They know which pupil(s) they will support
- They are aware of the educational needs of the pupil(s) they will support
- They know what topic will be covered in the lesson
- They have enough subject knowledge to provide effective support
- They have enough pedagogical/instructional knowledge to provide effective support
- They are aware of the expected outcomes for the pupil(s) they will support
- They know what feedback I (the teacher) require from them

Q6. In general, when a TA(s) is in your classroom, how confident are you that they can carry out their role effectively?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not at all confident

Q7 Does your school have a written policy or guidance on TA deployment? This might be incorporated into another policy, such as the teaching and learning policy.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q8. In general, how would you describe the impact of TAs on the following aspects of development for pupils on SEN Support?

Likert options: Significant positive impact / Somewhat positive impact / Negligible or no impact / Negative impact

- Confidence
- Motivation
- Attention
- Engagement

- Independence
- Numeracy
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling

Q9. In general, how would you describe the impact of TAs on the following aspects of development for pupils with an EHCP?

Likert options: Significant positive impact / Somewhat positive impact / Negligible or no impact / Negative impact

- Confidence
- Motivation
- Attention
- Engagement
- Independence
- Numeracy
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling

Q10. Key Stage 1 staff only, please indicate the impact of TAs on pupils' development in phonics.

Likert options: Significant positive impact / Somewhat positive impact / Negligible or no impact / Negative impact

- Pupils on SEN Support
- Pupils with an EHCP

Q11. How confident do you feel about meeting the learning needs of pupils with SEND (including those with an EHCP)?

Likert options: Very confident / Confident / Somewhat confident / Not at all confident

Q12. Please use the boxes below to indicate any areas or topics in which you would like to receive more training relating to SEND. You may list up to three areas or topics (one per box).

- [FREE TEXT BOX 1]
- [FREE TEXT BOX 2]
- [FREE TEXT BOX 3]

Q13. This question is about the support for learning TAs provide to pupils. Thinking about the interactions TAs have with pupils, to what extent do they do the following things.*

Likert options: A lot / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

- Model or demonstrate how to do something
- Give answers or correct wrong answers
- Give clues to help a pupil reach the answer
- Prompt a pupil towards an answer (i.e. broadly nudging them, but not giving them clues)
- Observe a pupil working while letting them get on with the task (i.e. not interacting with them)

Q14. Read the following statements about curriculum intervention sessions delivered by TAs and tick the option that best fits your experience/understanding. By curriculum interventions we mean structured 'off-the-shelf' programmes to help develop basic numeracy and literacy skills (i.e. spelling, reading, phonics) and/or programmes to support speech, language and communication. For the purposes of this question, please disregard pastoral interventions that support pupils' emotional development (such as ELSA or *Thrive*) and things like occupational therapy.

Likert options: Always / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never / Not sure

- Interventions are well chosen, well planned and tightly integrated with lessons and the curriculum
- TAs are confident about delivering intervention sessions away from the class/teacher
- TAs have sufficient time to prepare for intervention sessions during the school day/week
- TAs receive/have received appropriate training on how to deliver interventions

- Interventions sessions are out of step with what is happening in the classroom. For example, sessions focus on a different curriculum topic to what is being covered in the classroom
- Intervention sessions get cancelled at short notice because TAs get asked to do something else instead
- TAs know what feedback I (the teacher) need on pupils' engagement and progress in interventions
- Pupils make progress in their learning as a result of the interventions TAs deliver
- TAs have enough time in the week to deliver the intervention sessions they need to deliver
- Intervention programmes are well targeted to pupils' needs
- I make sure pupils see connections between the learning covered in interventions with TAs and the learning covered in the class led by me, so that they can consolidate and practise new learning/skills from interventions

Q15: Finally, what suggestions do you have for improving the ways your school deploys, prepares and treats TAs. Remember that your ideas will be shared with your school leadership team, so please be mindful how you word your responses to ensure you retain your anonymity.
{Free text box}

MITA: Survey for teaching assistants (Autumn 2022)

Results (expressed as % of respondents) of questions marked with † will be shared with school leaders as part of the school self-evaluation process that forms part of the MITA programme.

Q1. Please select your school from the drop-down menu.

(This is so we can track responses and chase schools with low response rates)

Q2. Please select the key stage group you work with.

- Reception
- Key stage 1 (Y1/Y2)
- Lower key stage 2 (Y3/Y4)
- Upper key stage 2 (Y5/Y6)

Q3. How long have you worked at this school?

- I started working at this school in September 2022
- I started working at this school at the start of, or during, the previous school year
- I have been working at this school since before September 2021

Q4. Firstly, we would like to know about your preparedness and training for the role. Please select the statement below which best describes the extent to which you have opportunities to meet, plan and communicate with the teacher(s) you work with.

- There is no opportunity or time to communicate with teacher(s) outside of lessons
- My communication with teacher(s) is brief and ad hoc (e.g. a couple of minutes before the lesson starts)
- I come into school early and/or stay behind after school. We use this as an opportunity to meet
- The teacher(s) and I have scheduled time to meet each week

Q5: Thinking about your daily work, for each of the areas listed below please indicate – on average – how prepared do you feel when you come into lessons?

Likert options: Always / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

- I know which pupil(s) I will support

- I am aware of the educational needs of the pupil(s) I will support
- I know what topic will be covered in the lessons
- I have enough subject knowledge to provide effective support
- I have enough pedagogical/ instructional knowledge to provide effective support
- I am aware of the expected outcomes for the pupil(s) I will support
- I know what feedback I need to give to the teacher at the end of the lesson

Q6. In general, when you go into the classroom, how confident are you that you are carrying out your role effectively?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not at all confident

Q7. Does your school have a written policy or guidance on TA deployment? This might be incorporated into another policy, such as the teaching and learning policy.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q8. Please tick the option that best fits your experience.

Training for TAs at my school is...

Delivered regularly	Delivered irregularly	Delivered rarely
Generally high quality	Adequate/variable	Generally low quality
Suited to my needs	Variable	Not suited to my needs
Readily available	Available, but limited	Scarce

Q9. Please use the boxes below to indicate any areas or topics in which you would like to receive more training. You may list up to three areas or topics (one per box).

[FREE TEXT BOX 1]

[FREE TEXT BOX 2]

[FREE TEXT BOX 3]

Q10. Next, we would like you to ask you about the support for learning you provide to pupils. Thinking about the interactions you have with pupils, to what extent do you do the following things.

Likert options: A lot / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

- Model or demonstrate how to do something
- Give answers or correct wrong answers
- Give clues to help a pupil reach the answer
- Prompt a pupil towards an answer (i.e. broadly nudging them, but not giving them clues)
- Observe a pupil working while letting them get on with the task (i.e. not interacting with them)

Q11. Do you deliver curriculum interventions? By this we mean structured ‘off-the-shelf’ programmes to help develop basic numeracy and literacy skills (i.e. spelling, reading, phonics) and/or programmes to support speech, language and communication. For the purposes of this question, please disregard pastoral interventions that support pupils’ emotional development (such as ELSA or Thrive) and things like occupational therapy.*

Yes (go to Q12)

No (go to Q13)

Q12. Read the following statements about curriculum intervention sessions and tick the option that best fits your experience/understanding.

Likert options: Always / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never / Not sure

- Interventions are well chosen, well planned and tightly integrated with lessons and the curriculum
- I am confident about delivering intervention sessions away from the class/teacher
- I have sufficient time to prepare for intervention sessions during the school day/week
- I receive/have received appropriate training on how to deliver interventions
- Interventions sessions are out of step with what is happening in the classroom. For example, sessions focus on a different curriculum topic to what is being covered in the classroom
- Intervention sessions get cancelled at short notice because I get asked to do something else instead

- I know what feedback I need to give to the teacher on pupils' engagement and progress in interventions
- Pupils make progress in their learning as a result of the interventions I deliver
- I have enough time in the week to deliver the intervention sessions I need to deliver
- Intervention programmes are well targeted to pupils' needs
- I make sure pupils see connections between the learning covered in interventions with me and the learning covered in the class led by the teacher, so that they can consolidate and practise new learning/skills from interventions

Q13: Finally, what suggestions do you have for improving the ways your school deploy, prepare and treat TAs. Remember that your ideas will be shared with your school leadership team, so please be mindful how you word your responses to ensure you retain your anonymity.

[FREE TEXT BOX]

Appendix 2 – Post-training survey questions

MITA: Survey for teachers (Summer 2024)

Q1. Please select your school from the drop-down menu.

Q2. Please select the key stage group you teach.

- Reception
- Key stage 1 (Y1/Y2)
- Lower key stage 2 (Y3/Y4)
- Upper key stage 2 (Y5/Y6)

Q3. When did you start working at this school?

- I started working at this school in before November 2022
- I started working at this school in after November 2022

Q4. Please select the statement below which best describes the extent to which you have opportunities to meet, plan and communicate with the TA(s) you work with.

- There is no opportunity or time to communicate with TA(s) outside of lessons
- My communication with TA(s) is brief and ad hoc (e.g. a couple of minutes before the lesson starts)
- TA(s) come into school early and/or stay behind after school. I use this as an opportunity to meet with them
- I have scheduled time to meet with TA(s) each week

Q5: There are a number of things that can help TA(s) to be effective in lessons. For each of the areas listed below, please indicate – on average – how prepared do you feel TA(s) are when they come into your lessons.

Likert options: Always / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

- They know which pupil(s) they will support
- They are aware of the educational needs of the pupil(s) they will support
- They know what topic will be covered in the lesson
- They have enough subject knowledge to provide effective support
- They have enough pedagogical/instructional knowledge to provide effective support

- They are aware of the expected outcomes for the pupil(s) they will support
- They know what feedback I (the teacher) require from them

Q6. In general, when a TA(s) is in your classroom, how confident are you that they can carry out their role effectively?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not at all confident

Q7. In general, how would you describe the impact of TAs on the following aspects of development for pupils on SEN Support?

Likert options: Significant positive impact / Somewhat positive impact / Negligible or no impact / Negative impact

- Confidence
- Motivation
- Attention
- Engagement
- Independence
- Numeracy
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling

Q8. In general, how would you describe the impact of TAs on the following aspects of development for pupils with an EHCP?

Likert options: Significant positive impact / Somewhat positive impact / Negligible or no impact / Negative impact

- Confidence
- Motivation
- Attention
- Engagement
- Independence
- Numeracy
- Reading
- Writing

- Spelling

Q9. Key Stage 1 staff only, please indicate the impact of TAs on pupils' development in phonics.

Likert options: Significant positive impact / Somewhat positive impact / Negligible or no impact / Negative impact

- Pupils on SEN Support
- Pupils with an EHCP

Q10. Thinking about your responses to the questions above about TAs' impact, to what extent has the school's participation in the MITA programme been a factor in making a difference to academic and non-academic outcomes for pupils on the SEND register?

Likert options: Significant positive factor / Somewhat positive factor / Made a negligible or no difference / Negative factor

- Non-academic outcomes (confidence, motivation, attention, engagement, independence)
- Academic outcomes (numeracy, reading, writing, spelling, phonics)

†Q11. This question is about the support for learning TAs provide to pupils. Thinking about the interactions TAs have with pupils, to what extent do they do the following things.*

Likert options: A lot / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

- Model or demonstrate how to do something
- Give answers or correct wrong answers
- Give clues to help a pupil reach the answer
- Prompt a pupil towards an answer (i.e. broadly nudging them, but not giving them clues)
- Observe a pupil working while letting them get on with the task (i.e. not interacting with them)

Q12. Read the following statements about curriculum intervention sessions delivered by TAs and tick the option that best fits your experience/understanding. By curriculum interventions we mean structured 'off-the-shelf' programmes to help develop basic numeracy and literacy skills (i.e. spelling, reading, phonics) and/or programmes to support speech, language and communication. For the purposes of this question, please disregard pastoral interventions that support pupils' emotional development (such as ELSA or Thrive) and things like occupational therapy.

Likert options: Always / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never / Not sure

- Interventions are well chosen, well planned and tightly integrated with lessons and the curriculum
- TAs are confident about delivering intervention sessions away from the class/teacher
- TAs have sufficient time to prepare for intervention sessions during the school day/week
- TAs receive/have received appropriate training on how to deliver interventions
- Intervention sessions are out of step with what is happening in the classroom. For example, sessions focus on a different curriculum topic to what is being covered in the classroom
- Intervention sessions get cancelled at short notice because TAs get asked to do something else instead
- TAs know what feedback I (the teacher) need on pupils' engagement and progress in interventions
- Pupils make progress in their learning as a result of the interventions TAs deliver
- TAs have enough time in the week to deliver the intervention sessions they need to deliver
- Intervention programmes are well targeted to pupils' needs
- I make sure pupils see connections between the learning covered in interventions with TAs and the learning covered in the class led by me, so that they can consolidate and practise new learning/skills from interventions

Q14: Finally, we would like to know how your school's participation in MITA has affected TAs.

- The role of TAs is... much clearer / somewhat more clear / less clear / unclear / no change
- TAs are deployed... much more effectively / somewhat more effectively / less effectively / ineffectively / no change
- In their role, TAs are... much more effective / somewhat more effective / less effective / ineffective / no change
- TAs' time is used... much more efficiently / somewhat more efficiently / less efficiently / inefficiently / no change
- The TA role is... much more challenging / somewhat more challenging / less challenging / unchallenging / no change
- The TA role is... much more rewarding / somewhat more rewarding / less rewarding / unrewarding / no change
- I feel my school values TAs, their role, and their contribution... much more / somewhat more / somewhat less / much less / no change

Q15. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience of taking part in the MITA project? This could be about how MITA was handled/managed in school; the training you received; any impact or change you have observed, positive or negative. [FREE TEXT BOX]

MITA: Survey for teaching assistants (Summer 2024)

Q1. Please select your school from the drop-down menu.

(This is so we can track responses and chase schools with low response rates)

Q2. Please select the key stage group you work with.

- Reception
- Key stage 1 (Y1/Y2)
- Lower key stage 2 (Y3/Y4)
- Upper key stage 2 (Y5/Y6)

Q3. When did you start working at this school?

- I started working at this school in before November 2022
- I started working at this school in after November 2022

Q4. Firstly, we would like to know about your preparedness and training for the role. Please select the statement below which best describes the extent to which you have opportunities to meet, plan and communicate with the teacher(s) you work with.

- There is no opportunity or time to communicate with teacher(s) outside of lessons
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- I come into school early and/or stay behind after school. We use this as an opportunity to meet
- The teacher(s) and I have scheduled time to meet each week

Q5: Thinking about your daily work, for each of the areas listed below please indicate – on average – how prepared do you feel when you come into lessons?

Likert options: Always / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

- I know which pupil(s) I will support
- I am aware of the educational needs of the pupil(s) I will support
- I know what topic will be covered in the lessons
- I have enough subject knowledge to provide effective support
- I have enough pedagogical/ instructional knowledge to provide effective support
- I am aware of the expected outcomes for the pupil(s) I will support

- I know what feedback I need to give to the teacher at the end of the lesson

Q6. In general, when you go into the classroom, how confident are you that you are carrying out your role effectively?*

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not at all confident

Q7. Please tick the option that best fits your experience.

Training for TAs at my school is...

Delivered regularly	Delivered irregularly	Delivered rarely
Generally high quality	Adequate/variable	Generally low quality
Suited to my needs	Variable	Not suited to my needs
Readily available	Available, but limited	Scarce

Q8. Next, we would like you to ask you about the support for learning you provide to pupils. Thinking about the interactions you have with pupils, to what extent do you do the following things.

Likert options: A lot / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

- Model or demonstrate how to do something
- Give answers or correct wrong answers
- Give clues to help a pupil reach the answer
- Prompt a pupil towards an answer (i.e. broadly nudging them, but not giving them clues)
- Observe a pupil working while letting them get on with the task (i.e. not interacting with them)

Q9. Do you deliver curriculum interventions? By this we mean structured ‘off-the-shelf’ programmes to help develop basic numeracy and literacy skills (i.e. spelling, reading, phonics) and/or programmes to support speech, language and communication. For the purposes of this question, please disregard pastoral interventions that support pupils’ emotional development (such as ELSA or Thrive) and things like occupational therapy.

Yes (go to Q12)

No (go to Q13)

Q12. Read the following statements about curriculum intervention sessions and tick the option that best fits your experience/understanding.

Likert options: Always / Often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never / Not sure

- Interventions are well chosen, well planned and tightly integrated with lessons and the curriculum
- I am confident about delivering intervention sessions away from the class/teacher
- I have sufficient time to prepare for intervention sessions during the school day/week
- I receive/have received appropriate training on how to deliver interventions
- Intervention sessions are out of step with what is happening in the classroom. For example, sessions focus on a different curriculum topic to what is being covered in the classroom
- Intervention sessions get cancelled at short notice because I get asked to do something else instead
- I know what feedback I need to give to the teacher on pupils' engagement and progress in interventions
- Pupils make progress in their learning as a result of the interventions I deliver
- I have enough time in the week to deliver the intervention sessions I need to deliver
- Intervention programmes are well targeted to pupils' needs
- I make sure pupils see connections between the learning covered in interventions with me and the learning covered in the class led by the teacher, so that they can consolidate and practise new learning/skills from interventions

Q13. Finally, we would like to know how your school's participation in MITA has affected you.

- My role is... much clearer / somewhat more clear / less clear/ unclear / no change
- I am deployed... much more effectively / somewhat more effectively / less effectively / ineffectively / no change
- In my role, I am... much more effective / somewhat more effective / less effective / ineffective / no change
- My time is used... much more efficiently / somewhat more efficiently / less efficiently / inefficiently / no change
- My role is... much more challenging / somewhat more challenging / less challenging / unchallenging / no change
- My role is... much more rewarding / somewhat more rewarding / less rewarding / unrewarding / no change

- I feel my school values me, my role, and my contribution... much more / somewhat more / less / much less / no change

Q14. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the experience of taking part in the MITA project? This could be about how MITA was handled/managed in school; the training you received; any impact or change you have observed, positive or negative. [FREE TEXT BOX]