**Teaching Assistant value-based recruitment questions**

We have put together some value based recruitment questions to support you in your recruitment of Teaching Assistants (TAs).

You can use some or all of the below questions as part of your interview process. They also include some competency based questions. The combination of both will help to understand the character of the person you are interviewing, how they behave in certain situations, as well as their experience and knowledge.

This is not an exhaustive list and can be added to or selected from to reflect the values of your school/trust and what you require from your TAs.

If you need to probe a candidate during an interview, STAR method responses are helpful to really understand the individual’s role in a situation, showcasing their skills and behaviours effectively.

**What STAR stands for:**

* Situation - the situation they had to deal with
* task - the task they were given to do
* action - the action they took
* result - what happened as a result of their action and what they learned from the experience

**Questions**

**Compassion and empathy:**

**Can you give me an example of a time when you helped a child/pupil in need?**(If no previous experience with children replace ‘child’ with ‘someone’)

What to look for: Did they show empathy and compassion? What behaviours did they display? Make sure they are clear about their individual role. Did they understand their audience? On reflection, could anything have been done differently/better?

**Tell me about a time when you had to deal with challenging behaviour from a child/pupil, how did you manage the situation?**

What to look for: Influencing skills and patience. How they deal with setbacks and pressure. Problem solving skills. Did they seek help if it was beyond their capabilities? Did they demonstrate active listening, empathy and remain calm? Did they refer to any training/support they had received? Did they demonstrate the type of approach they adopted (i.e. therapeutic, inclusive, strict etc)

**What makes a good teaching assistant?**

What to look for: Ability to understand individual needs, mention of any of the values highlighted on this page. Understanding that TAs need to be flexible, dedicated, effective communicators to all involved e.g. children, school staff, parents. Good at planning and preparation, including being organised. The desire to continuously learn to better their offering to the children and the school. Good level of emotional intelligence and a team player. Committed to the role and the children’s outcomes. Able to take direction/instruction ‘in the moment’, Able to understand their place (and its vital importance) within the class/team/school structure.

**Resilience, patience and adaptability**

**Tell us about a time when you were with a group of children/pupils and something did not go to plan, how did you handle it?**

What to look for: focusing on the positives as well as addressing any negatives. Being able to adapt to a changing situation and using good communication skills. Having the resilience and patience to remain calm in a potentially stressful environment. Ability to deal with setbacks. Seeking help (do they have an awareness of the need to follow behaviour management /child protection/safeguarding policies?)

Being able to articulate what when wrong. Why did it go wrong/not to plan? Could it be avoided?

**Describe a situation where you adjusted your approach to support a child’s/pupil’s development?**

What to look for: Demonstrates observational skills, active listening and shows knowledge of various learning options/styles/approaches. Willingness to adapt and not be deterred if something does not work first time. Demonstrates positive behaviours towards the pupil to encourage them and develop a growth mindset.

**How would you manage a situation where a parent/carer is rude or cross? Or where you disagreed with the views of a parent/carer?**

What to look for: Strong communication skills – TAs should be able to effectively communicate with students, teachers, and parents. This includes being able to clearly explain concepts, provide feedback, and listen actively. Showing active listening, ability to validate their concerns, along with empathy. Problem solving skills, solution orientated, proactive approach and ability to know at what point to seek help. Not entering into a battle of morals/rules, being able to take what is being said, step away and take action instead of confronting in the first instance. Knowing when to challenge/correct and when to pass on/call for help.

**Curiosity**

**When was the last time you felt inspired to learning something new?**

What to look for: Indicates appetite for CPD and continuous personal improvement. Establishes if the individual has a growth mindset. Demonstrates enthusiasm for learning which can be role modelled. Are they reflective of their experiences? Do they want to improve their skills, approaches to develop themselves? What inspires them? What drives them?

**Teamwork and organisation**

**Tell me about a time when you contributed to a team’s success in the workplace**

What to look for: Are they a team player? Can they collaborate? Did they play a pivotal role. Do they see how it positively impacts learning? Do they understand that you need a mix of skills/attitudes to make an effective team

**How do you stay organised when you are having to multi-task?**

What to look for: Ability to continuously prioritise. Flexibility and adaptability. Able to avoid unimportant distractions. Use of technology to automate tasks or group information together. Do they group similar tasks together for efficiency?

**Individuality, respect and inclusivity**

**How do you ensure you recognise and appreciate the individuality of each pupil?**

What to look for: Candidates who appreciate diversity, adapt/personalise their approach and communication style depending on the situation/pupil and recognise the strengths of each pupil. Have knowledge of and use of a mixture of multi-sensory learning methods if appropriate. Acknowledge efforts via verbal praise and/or awards in a fair and consistent manner. Demonstrate an understanding that no two children are the same

**What steps would you take to ensure an inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents?**

What to look for: How might they personalise learning and promote positive relationships? Do they lead by example by being kind, respectful, treat everyone as an individual, without pre-judgement? How and why do they think their answers create an inclusive environment? Do they demonstrate a good working knowledge of inclusivity?