



National occupational standards  
for supporting teaching and  
learning in schools

Discover how **standards can  
transform your school**



*developing people, improving young lives*

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School business manager Betty Renshaw MBE describes how the standards have enabled the school's support staff to do their job even better.

Please note that throughout this booklet, staff supporting teaching and learning are referred to as support staff.

# About the national occupational standards

**Workforce reform and other developments in schools have led to support staff carrying out increasingly diverse and responsible roles. Schools have identified that this has an impact on their training and development needs.**

As a result the TDA has worked with school leaders to develop new national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning. Using the standards can save you valuable time, because they provide a foundation to work from when considering the recruitment, development and progression of support staff.

The standards describe what support staff need to do, know and understand in their roles. They support and enhance the day-to-day activities of school leaders and support staff, and align with national expectations and qualifications.

Using the standards will help you to develop the capacity and capability of your whole school team. This not only helps you improve school standards into the long term; it will support you in achieving the vision of the 21st century school set out in the recent Children's Plan.

## Online guidance

The TDA has developed clear and practical online guidance to the standards, which explains how they will help you with a wide range of staff development activities.

The online guidance is not prescriptive. Different schools have different needs and priorities, and the standards provide and point to flexible resources and tools that reflect this. You can select from a range of options to meet the needs of your school, knowing that the standards have the support of your peers.



# Key benefits of using the national occupational standards and online guidance

The standards are based on the roles and responsibilities of support staff in today's schools. Together with the guidance, they enable you to manage the different stages of support staff recruitment, development and progression more effectively.

It is not necessary to use the standards to inform every stage. School leaders and support staff can access the standards most appropriate to their needs depending on the stage they are at.



The standards can help you manage each of the stages in this diagram. The following pages set out in more detail how the standards can be used.



## Skill mix reviews

1

The first stage of this process is likely to be identifying the skills your school needs. The TDA's school improvement planning framework can help you with this – visit [www.tda.gov.uk/sip](http://www.tda.gov.uk/sip)

Once your school's needs have been identified, the standards and accompanying guidance enable you to carry out skill mix reviews to identify the range of skills your support staff already have, and where there are skills gaps. You can then make decisions about addressing these gaps through training and development and/or recruitment.

Decisions about skill mix requirements and how jobs can be designed to meet these requirements are based on the circumstances and needs of individual schools and their staff and pupils. These will change over time, as new priorities emerge and initiatives are implemented.

## Career progression

4

The standards can be used to help you develop career paths for support staff. Alongside training and development, the opportunity to progress in their careers helps to improve further the morale, expertise, professionalism and performance of support staff – which, in turn, helps to improve outcomes in schools.

Many support staff want to expand and specialise in their existing roles, whereas others are keen to take on opportunities that give them greater leadership responsibilities. Using the standards to identify the skills and knowledge of your support staff will help you identify the most suitable career development pathway for your staff. This may include the teaching assistant induction programme, the support work in schools qualifications, NVQ level 2 and 3 qualifications, higher level teaching assistant status or the school business manager programme.

The standards support transfer and progression both between roles in schools, and across the wider children's workforce, and include common units of competence with childcare, playwork and youth work. This means people moving between job roles can have their existing skills and expertise recognised – enabling them to build seamlessly on, rather than duplicate, previous learning and experience. Among other benefits, this saves time and resources, and enables you to see where job applicants have relevant skills and knowledge.

The guidance links you to resources and programmes that may help you develop career paths for your support staff. The career development framework, in particular, helps you to identify easily appropriate training and routes of progression for support staff.

## Recruitment

2

The standards include details of the knowledge and activities required for staff supporting teaching and learning to carry out their roles successfully. They describe the expected levels of performance, and related knowledge and understanding, which apply to the role holder. Therefore, they can help you to design job roles, create job descriptions and adverts, and improve recruitment and selection.

The online guidance provides examples of support staff job descriptions that use the standards. The guidance also links to standards-setting bodies for support staff not directly involved in teaching and learning, such as cleaners and catering staff.

## Training and development

3

The standards can be used as the basis of a training needs analysis which will help you to identify areas for development. This is important, as support staff will be at different stages in their careers, with different needs, skills gaps and areas for development. The standards provide objective measures to judge existing skills and knowledge against development needs.

They also help school leaders develop training tailored to specific needs. Using the standards to define development needs means those who plan and deliver training courses or other development opportunities can link the design and content directly to the needs of the individual.

The TDA online unit selection tool can help you with these processes. It will take you and your support staff through a checklist, describing the wide range of responsibilities they may have. When completed, the tool produces a list of the standards that apply to a particular job role. This can be particularly helpful when working with training providers and identifying the content that needs to be covered for a qualification such as an NVQ.

The online standards guidance also links you to a range of relevant training programmes and resources to help you train and develop your support staff.

Visit [www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos) to view the standards and guidance

# Frequently asked questions



## Who developed the national occupational standards and online guidance for staff supporting teaching and learning?

The new standards and accompanying guidance were developed by the TDA, the sector body for schools in England, as a result of a need identified by schools. The TDA worked closely with employers, local authorities, school leaders, teachers and support staff from across the UK to ensure that the standards reflect the roles of support staff and the way schools operate – and, even more importantly, to ensure that the standards are accessible, practical and fit for purpose.

The new standards were developed following a review of the teaching and classroom assistant national occupational standards. They were approved and launched in 2007. Their name was changed to reflect their greater scope.



## What are the standards and the accompanying online guidance?

They are nationally agreed standards of effective practice that ease and encourage staff development and school improvement. Together with the accompanying guidance, the standards provide a comprehensive framework that reflects, informs and guides developments in the roles and activities carried out by staff supporting teaching and learning in schools.



## Are support staff expected to meet all the standards?

The 69 units describe the skills and knowledge that learning support staff need to do their jobs effectively. Individual members of support staff are not expected to meet all 69 units, only those related to their role.

However, if a support staff member is undertaking an NVQ, they will need to do a certain number of mandatory and optional units. This is five mandatory and two optional units for level two, and six mandatory and four optional units for level three.



### Who do the standards apply to?

The standards apply to anyone who provides direct support for teaching and learning in any type of school – primary, secondary or special.

The 69 units cover a very broad range of support staff roles, including teaching assistants, cover supervisors, pastoral support, bilingual support, subject support, and special educational needs and additional and behavioural support.

When used in combination, the standards offer the flexibility needed to inform and guide best practice even for the more bespoke of new support staff roles. The standards make the highly complex job of running a school that much easier.



### What are the benefits of using the standards and accompanying online guidance?

The standards were designed with school leaders for school leaders, and so are highly practical and accessible. They cover the range of roles and responsibilities that support staff carry out. This includes new and emerging roles arising from workforce reform.

Accompanied by clear guidance on how to use them most effectively, the standards help to define and develop support staff roles. For example, the standards support a range of training and development activities and enable schools to develop bespoke training and development programmes (which can be delivered in-house with the minimum of disruption) for their support staff.

The standards can also be used for a range of other purposes, including skill mix reviews, developing job descriptions, recruitment and selection, training needs analysis, and providing benchmarks of effective practice. A key tool in the guidance is the unit selection tool, which produces a list of the standards that apply to a particular job role. This list can be used to agree the responsibilities of a role, as well as providing information on units to complete to achieve an NVQ.

In addition, the standards make it easier for schools to extend the curriculum, increase collaboration, become the hub of their communities and deliver national initiatives such as extended services, Every Child Matters, the 14–19 agenda and the Children’s Plan.

Helping support staff to become even more professional and work even more as part of a fully integrated school workforce enables schools – and, most importantly, their pupils – to perform better and achieve better results.



### **How do the standards help me to implement government initiatives?**

The standards support and complement a broad range of educational policy and initiatives, including Every Child Matters, the National Healthy Schools Programme, the common core of skills and knowledge for the children's workforce, extended schools and the 14–19 agenda. Certain standards directly reflect each of these initiatives, meaning that as support staff work towards these standards, they are also contributing to implementing the initiative.

While the standards are linked to government policy, it's important to be aware that education policy and practice varies across the four countries of the United Kingdom.



### **What about standards for school support staff who are not supporting teaching and learning?**

To ensure comprehensive support for schools, the TDA also works closely with the sector bodies responsible for standards for support staff not directly involved in teaching and learning – such as technicians, catering staff, premises staff and administrative staff. This helps to ensure that the work of all school support staff is of a high standard and consistent with the aims of schools and the national agenda. Information about these other standards can be found in the online national occupational standards directory – please visit [www.ukstandards.co.uk](http://www.ukstandards.co.uk)



### **How do the standards relate to the standards for higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) and teachers?**

The national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools form part of a cohesive and holistic TDA package of support for schools. They complement, for example, the TDA's revised professional standards for teachers, support for teachers' continuing professional development, and the revised HLTA professional standards.

The TDA offer provides a comprehensive and coordinated framework that reflects and informs developments in working practice and the range of roles undertaken by staff in schools.



### **I already know what I want my staff to do – why should I bother with these standards?**

The standards make the job of managing and developing support staff easier and more effective. They enable you to fully capitalise on the many abilities of your support staff, and to train, deploy and manage them in an appropriate, consistent and highly effective way – within individual schools and across the education sector as a whole.

Among other benefits, this makes it easier for you to assess the work of your support staff and develop specific strategies and programmes to further increase their professionalism and capabilities, helping to improve standards and make the work of support staff even more effective.

It helps to create an accepted good practice framework around support staff roles, career development, training and development and also a recognised national structure, benchmark and expectation for support staff.



### **Is this going to create more expectations for support staff training?**

The vision of the 21st century school set out in the recent Children's Plan includes schools developing extended services, personalised learning, improved planning and wraparound support for each child, as well as extending the curriculum, working more collaboratively, and becoming the hub of their communities.

To develop these and other operations successfully, and continue to improve their standards of teaching and learning, schools need to develop the capacity, capability and flexibility to change and continue to change into the long term. Key to this is developing the capacity and capability of support staff.

**“The national occupational standards provide links to different national policies and provide information that makes it easier for you to interpret, understand and implement them at a school level.”**

Betty Renshaw MBE, school business manager,  
Woodchurch High School Engineering College

# List of units

\*units appear in both level 2 and level 3

## Level 2

### Core/mandatory units

- STL1 Provide support for learning activities
- STL2 Support children's development (CCLD 203)
- STL3 Help to keep children safe (CCLD 202)\*
- STL4 Contribute to positive relationships (CCLD 201)
- STL5 Provide effective support for your colleagues

### Optional units

- STL6 Support literacy and numeracy activities
- STL7 Support the use of information and communication technology for teaching and learning
- STL8 Use information and communication technology to support pupils' learning\*
- STL9 Observe and report on pupil performance
- STL10 Support children's play and learning (CCLD 206)
- STL11 Contribute to supporting bilingual/multilingual pupils
- STL12 Support a child with disabilities or special educational needs (CCLD 209)
- STL13 Contribute to moving and handling individuals (HSC 223)
- STL14 Support individuals during therapy sessions (HSC 212)
- STL15 Support children and young people's play (PW 2)
- STL16 Provide displays (IL 3/10)\*
- STL17 Invigilate tests and examinations\*

## Level 3

### Core/mandatory units

- STL3 Help to keep children safe (CCLD 202)\*
- STL18 Support pupils' learning activities
- STL19 Promote positive behaviour
- STL20 Develop and promote positive relationships (CCLD 301)
- STL21 Support the development and effectiveness of work teams
- STL22 Reflect on and develop practice (CCLD 304)

### Option group A: Supporting pupils' learning

- STL8 Use information and communication technology to support pupils' learning\*
- STL23 Plan, deliver and evaluate teaching and learning activities under the direction of a teacher
- STL24 Contribute to the planning and evaluation of teaching and learning activities
- STL25 Support literacy development
- STL26 Support numeracy development
- STL27 Support implementation of the early years curriculum
- STL28 Support teaching and learning in a curriculum area
- STL29 Observe and promote pupil performance and development
- STL30 Contribute to assessment for learning
- STL31 Prepare and maintain the learning environment
- STL32 Promote the transfer of learning from outdoor experiences (OP D35)

### Option group B: Meeting additional support needs

- STL33 Provide literacy and numeracy support to enable pupils to access the wider curriculum
- STL34 Support gifted and talented pupils
- STL35 Support bilingual/multilingual pupils
- STL36 Provide bilingual/multilingual support for teaching and learning
- STL37 Contribute to the prevention and management of challenging behaviour in children and young people (HSC 326)
- STL38 Support children with disabilities or special educational needs and their families (CCLD 321)
- STL39 Support pupils with communication and interaction needs
- STL40 Support pupils with cognition and learning needs
- STL41 Support pupils with behaviour, emotional and social development needs
- STL42 Support pupils with sensory and/or physical needs
- STL43 Assist in the administration of medication (CHS 2)
- STL44 Work with children and young people with additional requirements to meet their personal support needs (HSC 315)

### Option group C: Providing pastoral support

- STL45 Promote children's well-being and resilience (CCLD 308)
- STL46 Work with young people to safeguard their welfare (YW D4)
- STL47 Enable young people to be active citizens (YW A3)
- STL48 Support young people in tackling problems and taking action (YW A4)
- STL49 Support children and young people during transitions in their lives
- STL50 Facilitate children and young people's learning and development through mentoring (LDSS 9)
- STL51 Contribute to improving attendance (LDSS 6)
- STL52 Support children and families through home visiting (CCLD 331)

### Option group D: Supporting the wider work of the school

- STL16 Provide displays (IL 3/10)\*
- STL17 Invigilate tests and examinations\*
- STL53 Lead an extra-curricular activity
- STL54 Plan and support self-directed play (PW 9)
- STL55 Contribute to maintaining pupil records
- STL56 Monitor and maintain curriculum resources
- STL57 Organise cover for absent colleagues
- STL58 Organise and supervise travel (PW B228)
- STL59 Escort and supervise pupils on educational visits and out-of-school activities
- STL60 Liaise with parents, carers and families
- STL61 Provide information to aid policy formation and the improvement of practices and provision (YW F1)

### Option group E: Working with colleagues

- STL62 Develop and maintain working relationships with other practitioners
- STL63 Provide leadership for your team (M&L B5)
- STL64 Provide leadership in your area of responsibility (M&L B6)
- STL65 Allocate and check work in your team (M&L D5)
- STL66 Lead and motivate volunteers (MV D2)
- STL67 Provide learning opportunities for colleagues (M&L D7)
- STL68 Support learners by mentoring in the workplace (L&D L14)
- STL69 Support competence achieved in the workplace (L&D L20)

The core/mandatory units only apply when working towards an NVQ. Staff can utilise whichever standards are relevant if they are being used for other purposes.

# Unit descriptions

The following pages provide descriptions of each unit. Some units have been imported from other suites of national occupational standards across the Children's Workforce. The suite of standards that the unit originates from is referenced in brackets in the title and you can find the full name of the suite below:

Abbreviation	Suite of national occupational standards	Organisation responsible for the standards
CCLD	Children's Care, Learning and Development	Skills for Care and Development
HSC	Health and Social Care	Skills for Care and Development
PW	Playwork	SkillsActive
IL	Information and Library Services	Lifelong Learning UK
OP	Outdoor Programmes	SkillsActive
CHS	Clinical Health Skills	Skills for Health
YW	Youth Work	Lifelong Learning UK
LDSS	Learning, Development and Support Services for Children, Young People and those who care for them	Skills for Care and Development
M&L	Management and Leadership	Management Standards Centre
MV	Management of Volunteers	UK Workforce Hub
L&D	Learning and Development	Lifelong Learning UK

## Level 2

Core/mandatory units:  
STL1 – STL5

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

## **STL1**

Provide support for learning activities

This unit is about support provided to the teacher and pupils to ensure effective teaching and learning. It involves agreeing with the teacher the individual's role in supporting planned learning activities, providing the agreed support and giving feedback to the teacher about how well the activity went. The learning activities may be for individual pupils, groups of pupils or the whole class. However the contribution to supporting the learning activities is likely to involve working only with individuals or small groups. The learning activities may be delivered in the classroom or any setting where teaching and learning takes place such as field studies, educational visits, extended hours provision and study support arrangements.

## **STL2**

Support children's development (CCLD 203)

This unit is about routine observation of children and young people's development in everyday work. It is a competence that requires knowledge and understanding of children and young people's development from 0 to 16 years and the ability to demonstrate competence with the children/young people the individual is working with. It covers observing children/young people, sharing observational findings, contributing to the implementation of activities to support development and contributing to planning to meet children and young people's needs.

## **STL3**

Help to keep children safe (CCLD 202)

This unit is about keeping children and young people safe during day-to-day work activities. It covers responding to accidents, emergencies and illness, and requires familiarity with and the ability to set in motion safety, safeguarding and welfare procedures, according to the policies and procedures of the setting.

## **STL4**

Contribute to positive relationships (CCLD 201)

This unit is about interacting with and responding positively to children, young people and adults. It includes verbal and non-verbal communication skills involved when working with children and young people, and when dealing with adults, together with the importance of valuing people equally.

## **STL5**

Provide effective support for your colleagues

This unit is about being an effective member of the school staff. It involves working effectively with colleagues and taking an active role in developing skills and expertise.

## Level 2

Optional units:  
STL6 – STL17

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

## **STL6**

Support literacy and numeracy activities

This unit is about working under the direction of the teacher to help pupils to participate in whole class, group and individual learning activities for literacy/numeracy development. It involves discussing with the teacher how the learning activities are to be organised, and what the support role will be, providing the agreed support and giving feedback to the teacher about how well the activities went and how the pupil(s) responded to them.

## **STL7**

Support the use of information and communication technology for teaching and learning

This unit is about making sure that information and communication technology (ICT) resources are available and ready to use when required and helping the teacher and/or pupils to use the resources safely and effectively.

## **STL8**

Use information and communication technology to support pupils' learning

This unit is about using ICT to promote pupils' learning. It involves preparing for using ICT within the teaching and learning programme, supporting pupils to use ICT resources, and evaluating the effectiveness of ICT in promoting pupils' learning.

## **STL9**

Observe and report on pupil performance

This unit is about carrying out, and reporting on, systematic observations of pupils to gather evidence of their knowledge, understanding and skills upon which the teacher makes judgements about their stage of development.

## **STL10**

Support children's play and learning (CCLD 206)

This unit is about supporting children's learning through play. Although it was developed for work with young children in their pre-school years and in play-based early education, it is also applicable to working with children in the early years of formal education in schools.

## **STL11**

Contribute to supporting bilingual/multilingual pupils

This unit is about support provided to bilingual/multilingual pupils for language development and learning in the appropriate second or additional language. It is applicable for support provided for English as an additional language (EAL), or Welsh or Gaelic as a second language.

## **STL12**

Support a child with disabilities or special educational needs (CCLD 209)

This unit is about providing care and encouragement to the child or young person, supporting them to participate in activities, and supporting the family according to the role and the procedures of the setting.

## **STL13**

Contribute to moving and handling individuals (HSC 223)

This unit is about the need to be able to move, handle and reposition individuals.

## **STL14**

Support individuals during therapy sessions (HSC 212)

This unit is about supporting therapists and individuals before, during and following therapy sessions. It covers preparations for the therapy session, supporting therapy sessions and contributing to the review of therapy sessions.

## **STL15**

Support children and young people's play (PW 2)

This unit is about providing opportunities for children and young people to experience a variety of play environments that stimulate them and provide opportunities for risk, challenge and personal growth.

## **STL16**

Provide displays (IL 3/10)

This unit is about setting up and removing displays. It involves identifying the purpose of the display, designing the display, deciding what it will contain, and gathering together materials for the display. It also covers ensuring the display is safe, keeping it tidy and removing the display when it is no longer required. In schools, the teacher would advise on the purpose, content and nature of displays and pupils will be active participants in providing materials for display.

## **STL17**

Invigilate tests and examinations

This unit is about running tests and examinations in the presence of the candidates. It includes preparing the examination room and resources, bringing candidates into the room, and running the test or examination session according to the centre's procedures. It also covers dealing with specific situations such as access arrangements, emergencies and suspicion of malpractice.

## Level 3

Core/mandatory units:  
STL3, STL18 – STL22

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

## STL3\*

Help to keep children safe  
(CCLD 202)

This unit is about keeping children and young people safe during day-to-day work activities. It covers responding to accidents, emergencies and illness, and requires familiarity with and the ability to set in motion safety, safeguarding and welfare procedures, according to the policies and procedures of the setting.

*\* This unit appears in both level 2 and level 3*

## STL18

Support pupils' learning activities

This unit is about support provided to the teacher and pupils to ensure effective teaching and learning. It involves identifying what needs to be done to support planned learning activities and promote independent learning, providing the agreed support and giving feedback to the teacher about progress made by the pupils. The learning activities may be delivered in the classroom or any setting where teaching and learning takes place such as field studies, educational visits, extended hours provision and study support arrangements. The learning activities may be for individual pupils, groups of pupils, or the whole class and may be delivered in the absence of the teacher, eg when providing cover supervision or working with pupils outside of the classroom.

### Case study



**David McLean-Thorne**

Principal of  
Whitstone  
Head School  
Whitstone, Devon

#### **Principal David McLean-Thorne illustrates how he uses the standards to support the training and development of his staff.**

Whitstone Head School is using the new standards and supporting resources to develop a high-quality induction programme for support staff. As Whitstone is a school for young people with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties it's particularly vital all new staff are fully aware of its protocols and processes from day one.

The standards and accompanying guidance are enabling the school to tailor and integrate the induction programme around the specific needs of individual new support staff, the school and its staff as a whole and, most importantly, its pupils.

The school already uses the standards to support the training and development of its existing support staff and to bring them up to date with new national policies and practice. All staff receive training relevant to their role and all teaching and support staff attend a school training day every half term. The standards provide a common language and best practice quality standard for this training, for instance around whole school approaches to behaviour management.

"The standards units and guidance are holistic and positive in outlook and content. They help raise the profile and status of support staff and provide a common language," says Principal David McLean-Thorne.

David McLean-Thorne reports that he also finds the standards very useful in carrying out support staff performance management and appraisal. He says that the role audit tool is particularly useful in preparing for these assessments.

## STL19

Promote positive behaviour

This unit is about implementing agreed behaviour management strategies to promote positive behaviour and supporting pupils to manage their own behaviour.

## STL20

Develop and promote positive relationships (CCLD 301)

This unit is about developing and promoting positive relationships with children and young people, communicating with children/young people and adults, and fostering positive relationships between children/young people and with other adults. It is appropriate for all settings and services where children and young people are present.

## STL21

Support the development and effectiveness of work teams

This unit is about being an effective member of a work team. It involves taking an active role in supporting and developing team effectiveness.

## STL22

Reflect on and develop practice (CCLD 304)

This unit is about needing to reflect on practice. Self-evaluation and reflection will enable the individual to learn and develop their practice. It also includes taking part in continuing professional development and how this has been used to develop their practice.



## Level 3

Option group A

Supporting pupil's learning:  
STL8, STL23 – STL32

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

## STL8\*

Use information and communication technology to support pupils' learning

This unit is about using ICT to promote pupils' learning. It involves preparing for using ICT within the teaching and learning programme, supporting pupils to use ICT resources, and evaluating the effectiveness of ICT in promoting pupils' learning.

*\*This unit appears in both level 2 and level 3*

## STL23

Plan, deliver and evaluate teaching and learning activities under the direction of a teacher

This unit is about planning and delivering teaching and learning activities to complement, reinforce or extend teaching and learning planned and delivered by the teacher. It also involves monitoring and providing feedback on pupil participation and progress, and the individual evaluating their contribution to the learning activity. The teaching and learning activities will be for individual pupils or small groups of pupils and delivered alongside or close to the teacher who remains in overall charge of the whole class. They may be delivered in the classroom or any setting where teaching and learning takes place such as field studies, educational visits, extended hours provision and study support arrangements. Planning, implementation and evaluation will also cover any partnership working with the teacher as part of the overall lesson plan, for example when working with the whole class in a plenary session. Teaching and learning activities should take place under the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher in accordance with arrangements made by the headteacher of the school.

## STL24

Contribute to the planning and evaluation of teaching and learning activities

This unit is about helping the teacher to plan how teaching and learning activities will be implemented, including the individual's role in supporting the activities, and sharing their views and opinions with the teacher about how well the activities achieved the learning objectives. The teaching and learning activities may be for individual pupils, groups of pupils, or the whole class. The teaching and learning activities may be delivered in the classroom or any setting where teaching and learning takes place such as field studies, educational visits, extended hours provision and study support arrangements.

## STL25

Support literacy development

This unit is about working with the teacher to support pupils during whole-class, group and individual learning activities for literacy development. It involves discussing with the teacher how the learning activities are to be organised, and what the individual's role will be, providing the agreed support and giving feedback to the teacher about pupil progress in developing literacy skills.

## STL26

Support numeracy development

This unit is about working under the direction of the teacher to support pupils during whole-class, group and individual learning activities for numeracy development. It involves discussing with the teacher how the learning activities are to be organised, and what the individual's role will be, providing the agreed support and giving feedback to the teacher about pupil progress in developing mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills.

## STL27

Support implementation of the early years curriculum

This unit is about working with teachers to support young children's early learning and experience of curriculum subjects. Early education frameworks vary between the four home countries and they will need to be related to the individual's own country and workplace.

## STL28

Support teaching and learning in a curriculum area

This unit is about developing and using subject knowledge and skills to support teaching and learning in a curriculum area. It does not, however, cover the specialist technical functions carried out by technicians, librarians and ICT professionals which are covered in separate sets of national occupational standards. Subject or curriculum area refers to all forms of organised learning experienced across the curriculum. For example, area of learning in the foundation stage; broad areas of curricular experience and learning through play in the early years; thematically structured work in the primary phase; single subjects, vocational subjects and cross-curricular work in the 14–19 phase.

## STL29

Observe and promote pupil performance and development

This unit is about carrying out, and reporting on, systematic observations of pupils to gather evidence of their knowledge, understanding and skills, and working with the teacher to plan and improve the support the individual provides to promote pupil performance and development.



### **STL30**

Contribute to assessment  
for learning

This unit is about using assessment for learning strategies, as agreed with the teacher, to promote pupils' learning. This includes supporting pupils to review their own learning and identify their own emerging learning needs.

## Case study



Tineke  
March  
Flying Colours  
Oxford

Tineke March explains how Oxfordshire County Council's training service, Flying Colours, saves time and effort by using the standards as the basis for all its training.

Flying Colours, a training service for school support staff based within Oxfordshire county council, now uses the national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning as the basis for all of its training for learning support staff. Even where training does not directly lead to a qualification, basing it on the standards ensures staff will start to build the skills and knowledge needed to achieve national expectations of good practice and an NVQ in the future.

The company achieves this by basing its training around the mandatory NVQ units for staff supporting teaching and learning, as listed on the TDA website. For example, its induction training includes information from the standards about learning activities, child development, safeguarding, contributing to positive relationships, supporting colleagues, and working as part of an effective team.

"The mandatory units are easily accessible on the TDA website and the information is presented in a very practical way which saves us, and ultimately our students, a great deal of time and effort. The standards tell us exactly what is required in what role and help us to design training to communicate it effectively. The result is that we design our courses better and more quickly – they are more fit for purpose – and our students get exactly what they need to know to do their job. Moreover, they are able to use it towards qualifications if they choose to take them. Apart from anything else this ensures consistency and high standards wherever they are working in the UK. Using the standards gives everyone tangible benefits," says Tineke March, training and development manager, Flying Colours.

### STL31

Prepare and maintain the learning environment

This unit is about ensuring that learning environments, learning resources and materials are available and ready for use when needed. It involves setting out the learning environment and preparing materials for planned learning activities as well as helping to maintain the learning environment and resources during and between lessons.

### STL32

Promote the transfer of learning from outdoor experiences (OP D35)

This unit is about working with pupils to help them reflect on what they have learned outside of the classroom and how they might transfer this learning to other parts of their learning programmes and other aspects of their lives.

## Level 3

Option group B

Meeting additional support needs:

STL33 – STL44

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

### STL33

Provide literacy and numeracy support to enable pupils to access the wider curriculum

This unit is about support given to pupils to help them cope with the literacy and numeracy demands of learning activities designed to develop subject knowledge and skills.

### STL34

Support gifted and talented pupils

This unit is about support the individual provides to gifted and talented pupils. This involves working with a range of people to develop learning programmes and then supporting learning activities for pupils. Involving the pupils in negotiating learning objectives and planning for further learning is a key aspect of this unit. Teaching and learning activities should take place under the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher in accordance with arrangements made by the headteacher of the school.

### STL35

Support bilingual/multilingual pupils

This unit is about support provided to bilingual/multilingual pupils for language development and learning across the curriculum in the appropriate second or additional language. It is to provide support for English as an additional language (EAL), or Welsh or Gaeilge as a second language.

### STL36

Provide bilingual/multilingual support for teaching and learning

This unit is about using the pupils' first language to assist with assessing their educational abilities and linguistic support needs, providing bilingual/multilingual support for teaching and learning, and liaising with families to promote pupils' participation and progress in learning. It is to provide support for English as an additional language (EAL), or Welsh or Gaeilge as a second language.

### STL37

Contribute to the prevention and management of challenging behaviour in children and young people (HSC 326)

This unit is about negotiating boundaries to minimise challenging behaviour in children and young people.



## Case study



**Betty Renshaw MBE**  
Woodchurch  
High School  
Engineering  
College  
Wirral

School business manager Betty Renshaw MBE describes how the standards have enabled the school's support staff to do their job even better.

In her role as school business manager at Woodchurch, Betty Renshaw used national occupational standards to analyse the skills of the college's support staff, and identify what was needed to enable the school to develop and improve – and, in turn, to develop tailored programmes for existing staff and write job descriptions and recruitment advertisements for new staff.

Betty believes the national occupational standards are enabling schools to adapt, change and improve, and develop the specific skills they need to support excellent teaching and learning opportunities for all young people in the 21st century.

She thinks that high-quality training and development for support staff contributes massively to the success of schools. Betty says "We have a large number of children with medical and physical impairments and having an extremely professional support staff team makes a huge difference. The standards enable me to identify and develop the training that our support staff need to do their job even better".

### **STL38**

Support children with disabilities or special educational needs and their families (CCLD 321)

This unit is about supporting disabled children or young people and/or children or young people with special educational needs or additional support needs. It involves working under the direction of a teacher to establish the strengths and needs of children/young people in partnership with their families and in collaboration with other agencies if appropriate. It also includes the identification and use of resources to enable inclusion and participation.

### **STL39**

Support pupils with communication and interaction needs

This unit is about support provided to pupils with severe and/or complex communication and interaction needs to enable them to maximise learning and develop relationships with others. The communication needs of pupils with severe and/or complex special educational or additional support needs may be both diverse and complex. Pupils may need help and support in acquiring literacy skills; using augmentative and alternative means of communication; developing language for a range of purposes; and organising and coordinating spoken and written English.

### **STL40**

Support pupils with cognition and learning needs

This unit is about support provided to pupils with cognition and learning needs to enable them to participate in learning activities and to develop effective learning strategies. While individual needs will differ, most pupils with cognition and learning needs will require help with language, memory and reasoning skills; sequencing and organisational skills; understanding numbers; problem solving and concept development; and the improvement of fine and gross motor competences.

### **STL41**

Support pupils with behaviour, emotional and social development needs

This unit is about support needed by pupils with behaviour, emotional and social development needs to help them develop effective behaviour management strategies, relationships with others, and self-reliance.

### **STL42**

Support pupils with sensory and/or physical needs

This unit is about support provided to pupils with sensory and/or physical needs to enable them to maximise learning in individual, group and class activities, and provide structured programmes relevant to their additional support needs.

## STL43

Assist in the administration of medication  
(CHS 2)

This unit is about assisting in the administration of medication to an individual pupil, or as part of a larger process where a "drug round" may be undertaken. The individual will always work with other staff within this context whose role is to lead the process and must always work within their role and area of delegated responsibility for the administration of medication. The administration may include medication(s) from various drug categories such as: general sales list; pharmacy only and prescription only.

## STL44

Work with children and young people with additional requirements to meet their personal support needs  
(HSC 315)

This unit is about contributing to assessing and developing plans to meet the personal support needs of children and young people with additional requirements, and then implementing and evaluating the plans.



## Level 3

Option group C

Providing pastoral support:

STL45 – STL52

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

## **STL45**

Promote children's well-being and resilience (CCLD 308)

This unit is about helping children or young people to develop self-reliance, self-esteem and emotional resilience. It is concerned with how practitioners provide an emotional environment that supports, affirms and values children and young people and helps them to manage their own feelings and their relationships with others.

## **STL46**

Work with young people to safeguard their welfare (YW D4)

This unit is about understanding and evaluating hazards and risks, and the individual carrying out their work safely and in accordance with organisational procedures. It is about enabling young people to assess risks, helping them to develop their confidence to manage them and offering appropriate support to individuals when they are in crisis.

## **STL47**

Enable young people to be active citizens (YW A3)

This unit is about working with young people to enable them to investigate and understand the issues within their communities and their role within their community. It is about helping them to identify their power for action and enabling them to present their ideas and views to others.

## **STL48**

Support young people in tackling problems and taking action (YW A4)

This unit is about enabling groups of young people to take responsibility for detailed planning, negotiation and prioritising their actions. It is about enabling young people to turn their plans into action, working with them to monitor progress and modify plans as required, and, finally, to identify what they have learned and consider their next steps.

## **STL49**

Support children and young people during transitions in their lives

This unit is about working with children or young people to identify significant transitions that may be occurring or are about to occur in their lives and providing support to enable them to manage them in a positive manner. Transitions are defined as any significant stage or experience in the life of a child or young person that can affect behaviour and/or development. Transitions include those that are common to all children and young people, such as moving school and puberty, and those that are particular only to some, such as bereavement and divorce. Such transitions may be known and planned for or unexpected and unplanned.

## STL50

Facilitate children and young people's learning and development through mentoring (LDSS 9)

This unit is about the role of individuals who facilitate children and young people's learning and development through mentoring. It is about providing support for the learning process rather than the assessment and teaching of pupils.

## STL51

Contribute to improving attendance (LDSS 6)

This unit is about monitoring attendance to identify patterns of absence and lateness and working with families to find ways of helping the pupil to attend school more regularly.

## STL52

Support children and families through home visiting (CCLD 331)

This unit is about visiting families in their homes to provide support for children or young people and their parents and families.



## Level 3

Option group D

Supporting the wider work of the school:  
STL16 – 17, STL53 – STL61

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

## STL16\*

Provide displays  
(IL 3/10)

This unit is about setting up and removing displays. It involves identifying the purpose of the display, designing the display, deciding what it will contain, and gathering together materials for the display. It also covers ensuring the display is safe, keeping it tidy and removing the display when it is no longer required. In schools, the teacher would advise on the purpose, content and nature of displays and pupils will be active participants in providing materials for display.

*\* This unit appears in both level 2 and level 3*

## STL17\*

Invigilate tests  
and examinations

This unit is about running tests and examinations in the presence of the candidates. It includes preparing the examination room and resources, bringing candidates into the room, and running the test or examination session according to the centre's procedures. It also covers dealing with specific situations such as access arrangements, emergencies and suspicion of malpractice.

*\* This unit appears in both level 2 and level 3*

## STL53

Lead an extracurricular  
activity

This unit is about leading an extra-curricular activity, such as a club, recreational activity, sports team or performing arts activity, under the direction of the school but with limited supervision.

## STL54

Plan and support  
self-directed play  
(PW 9)

This unit is about identifying the play needs and preferences of children and young people, developing play spaces that will meet these needs and supporting children and young people during play.

## STL55

Contribute to maintaining  
pupil records

This unit is about contributing to the maintenance of pupil records by updating individual records as agreed with the teacher or other relevant person within the school, and helping to maintain the record-keeping system.

## STL56

Monitor and maintain curriculum resources

This unit is about monitoring and maintaining resources to support curriculum delivery. It involves working with teachers and other relevant people to identify the resources required, maintaining supplies of resources, and carrying out routine maintenance and cleaning of resources. It does not, however, cover the specialist technical functions carried out by technicians, librarians and ICT professionals, which are covered in separate sets of national occupational standards.

## STL57

Organise cover for absent colleagues

This unit is about organising cover when a teacher or support staff colleague normally responsible for teaching or supporting a particular class is absent from the classroom during the time they have been timetabled to teach/support. This includes absence which is known in advance (eg where a colleague has a medical appointment or is undergoing professional development) and unexpected absence (eg absence due to illness).

## STL58

Organise and supervise travel (PW B228)

This unit is about organising and supervising travel for children, young people and adults. Travel may be 'self-powered', eg on foot or by bicycle, in an owned or hired vehicle, or by public transport.

## STL59

Escort and supervise pupils on educational visits and out-of-school activities

This unit is about maintaining the health, safety and well-being of pupils when outside the school setting.

## STL60

Liaise with parents, carers and families

This unit is about establishing and maintaining effective relationships and communication with parents, carers and families about the care and education of their children as directed by the school.

## STL61

Provide information to aid policy formation and the improvement of practices and provision (YW F1)

This unit is about presenting information to aid the formulation of policies, plans and procedures, monitoring the operations of the individual's part of the organisation in relation to objectives, and making suggestions about changes.

## Level 3

Option group E

Working with colleagues:

STL62 – STL69

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

## **STL62**

Develop and maintain working relationships with other practitioners

This unit is about working effectively with other practitioners by doing what can be done to support their work and using their strengths and expertise to support and develop the individual's working practices and procedures.

## **STL63**

Provide leadership for your team  
(M&L B5)

This unit is about providing direction to the members of the team and motivating and supporting them to achieve the objectives of the team and their personal work objectives.

## **STL64**

Provide leadership in your area of responsibility  
(M&L B6)

This unit is about providing direction to colleagues in a clearly and formally defined area or part of an organisation and motivating and supporting them to achieve the vision and objectives for the area.

## **STL65**

Allocate and check work in your team  
(M&L D5)

This unit is about ensuring that the work required of the team is effectively and fairly allocated among team members. It also involves checking on the progress and quality of the work of team members to ensure that the required level or standard of performance is being met.

## **STL66**

Lead and motivate volunteers  
(MV D2)

This unit is about leading and motivating volunteers so that they achieve high standards. It involves briefing them on their responsibilities, helping them to resolve any problems, and giving them feedback on their work. Throughout the process of leading volunteers it is important to show respect for their needs and preferences and the nature of the volunteer role. It covers the 'softer' skills needed to lead volunteers rather than other aspects of planning, organising and monitoring volunteer work which, in a school, would be carried out by the teachers with whom they work.

## STL67

Provide learning opportunities for colleagues (M&L D7)

This unit is about supporting colleagues in identifying their learning needs and helping to provide opportunities to address these needs. Encouraging colleagues to take responsibility for their own learning is an aspect of this unit as is the individual's role in providing an 'environment', for example in the individual's team or area of responsibility, in which learning is valued. For the purposes of this unit, 'colleagues' means those people for whom the individual has line management responsibility.

## STL68

Support learners by mentoring in the workplace (L&D L14)

This unit is about mentoring individuals in the workplace. It involves agreeing the nature of mentoring in the workplace, creating an appropriate environment in which mentoring can take place, mentoring trainees as they put their training plan into practice, giving trainees information, advice and guidance on their work roles and expectations and giving them encouragement and support to stay motivated.

## STL69

Support competence achieved in the workplace (L&D L20)

This unit is about supporting individuals to develop and demonstrate competence in the workplace. It involves agreeing work patterns which give people opportunities to develop and show their competence, agreeing which aspects of competence can be assessed in the workplace, identifying opportunities for assessing competence in the workplace, watching them perform tasks in the workplace and giving guidance and feedback on their performance.



# List of useful websites

## TDA homepage

[www.tda.gov.uk](http://www.tda.gov.uk)

## Support staff development

This webpage brings together a range of resources, programmes and tools to make it easier for you to train and develop your support staff, helping you make the most of their skills and expertise, and achieve better outcomes.

[www.tda.gov.uk/developsupport](http://www.tda.gov.uk/developsupport)

## National occupational standards online guidance

This guidance is designed to help you understand and use the new standards to support a range of training and development activities.

[www.tda.gov.uk/nos](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nos)

## National occupational standards – units

The national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools comprise 69 units, which include core (or mandatory) units and a selection of optional units at both levels two and three. The units can be downloaded individually at the following link.

[www.tda.gov.uk/nosunits](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nosunits)

## Unit selection tool

The unit selection tool will take you through a checklist, describing the wide range of responsibilities covered by learning support staff in schools. When completed, the unit selection tool produces a list of the standards that apply to a particular job role.

[www.tda.gov.uk/nosunitselectiontool](http://www.tda.gov.uk/nosunitselectiontool)

## National vocational qualification in supporting teaching and learning in schools

The national vocational qualification (NVQ) in supporting teaching and learning in schools replaced the NVQ for teaching assistants in March 2008. It is available at levels two and three on the national qualifications framework. The NVQs are based on the national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools.

[www.tda.gov.uk/stlnvq](http://www.tda.gov.uk/stlnvq)

## Apprenticeships for supporting teaching and learning in schools

The apprenticeship framework for supporting teaching and learning in schools replaces the framework for teaching assistants. The apprenticeship is underpinned by national occupational standards and combines on and off the job training at levels two and three.

[www.tda.gov.uk/stlapprenticeship](http://www.tda.gov.uk/stlapprenticeship)

## UK standards website

The Occupational Standards Directory provides access to the full range of national occupational standards.

[www.ukstandards.org.uk](http://www.ukstandards.org.uk)

The TDA is committed to providing accessible information. To request this item in another language or format, contact **TDA corporate communications** at the address below or e-mail: [corporatecomms@tda.gov.uk](mailto:corporatecomms@tda.gov.uk) Please tell us what you require and we will consider with you how to meet your needs.

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