

### Selecting targeted interventions

High quality teaching should reduce the need for extra support for all pupils. However, it is likely that some pupils will require additional support in the form of high quality, structured interventions to make progress, or to catch up with their peers. Small group and one-to-one interventions provide the opportunity to apply effective teaching strategies with a more intense focus on a smaller number of learning goals. They can be powerful tools, but must be used carefully.

It is important to consider whether an additional intervention will be delivered by the class teacher or a trained teaching assistant (TA). Given the importance of teaching quality, it is optimal for delivery to be by a qualified teacher; however evidence shows that trained TAs can have a valuable impact through delivering high-quality, structured one-to-one and small group interventions when the class teacher is unable to do so. The aim should be to complement the overall teaching and learning objectives and minimise the time pupils spend away from the classroom.

At present there are relatively few programmes in the UK for which there is secure evidence of effectiveness. If your school is using, or considering, programmes that are ‘unproven’, ensure they include the common elements of effective interventions:

<b>T</b> iming	Intervention sessions are often brief (e.g. 15–60 mins) and regular (e.g. 2–5 per week).
<b>A</b> ssessment	Assessments are used to identify pupils, guide areas of focus and to track pupil progress.
<b>R</b> esourcing	The intervention has structured supporting resources and lesson plans, with clear objectives and possibly a delivery script.
<b>G</b> ive it time	Careful timetabling is in place to enable consistent delivery. Sessions are typically maintained over a sustained period (e.g. 8–20 weeks).
<b>E</b> xpert delivery	Interventions are delivered by a qualified teacher, or if they are unavailable, a trained teaching assistant. The intervention programme is followed precisely and suggested delivery protocols are followed.
<b>T</b> eacher links	If not delivered by the classroom teacher, the intervention deliverer and the teacher/s communicate regularly and make appropriate connections between out-of-class learning and classroom teaching.

### What to consider when deciding on an intervention



- *Is there ongoing support for staff from trainers or specialists in the approach?*
- *Will you be able to dedicate the time and resources required to implement the intervention well?*
- *If pupils spend time away from regular classes, what are pupils missing by doing this?*
- *Will other children get less support because the teacher or TA is spending time elsewhere?*
- *Have you identified a tight area for improvement using a robust diagnostic assessment process?*
- *Does the Senior Leadership Team support strategic and effective deployment of TAs?*
- *How is this deployment managed and how is impact monitored?*



## Further resources



The following websites have information about evidence of programmes:

- [EEF Promising Projects](#) lists programmes with rigorous evaluations and high standards of impact and cost effectiveness.
- [Early Intervention Foundation guidebook](#) highlights the strength of evidence for a programme by assessing evaluations conducted in the UK and abroad.
- [Evidence 4 Impact website](#) looks at interventions available in the UK and has details of their effectiveness and cost.
- [Interventions for Literacy](#) is a database that summarises targeted literacy programmes that have UK evaluations.
- The [Communication Trust's What Works](#) database summarises targeted and specialist interventions for pupils with speech, language, and communication needs.

## Suggested reading



The following resources are also available from the EEF:

- The EEF guide to *Making best use of Teaching Assistants*  
[eef.li/teaching-assistants/](https://eef.li/teaching-assistants/)



- One-to-one tuition evidence summary:  
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition/>
- Small group tuition evidence summary:  
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition/>