

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: Effective teaching practices by teaching assistants to support the education of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities

Researcher: Dr Lorenzo Ciletti

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

I am Lorenzo, a research fellow at the University of Southampton. I am conducting research funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) exploring effective teaching practices used by Teaching Assistants (TA) to support the education of children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). During the course of this research, you, seven other teaching assistants (3 of your school), and I will work together to update an influential teaching framework cataloguing effective teaching practices in support of children with and without SEND as updated by my doctoral research (Henceforth The Teaching Framework) – see the attachment to this form for more information. Your expertise in teaching practices will notably allow us to add nuanced teaching solutions to the framework, contributing to the development process of the framework. The research output, a short report providing examples of effective practices, can be shared across your school as well as others to help enhance the teaching practices of TAs (and teachers) around the country.

Why have I been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate because you play a crucial role in educating children with SEND within your school. Three other TAs in your school and four others in another primary school have also been asked to participate.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will complete or take part in:

1. **Paper- or digital-format questionnaire (Estimated duration 5 minutes)** providing information about your demographics and the classroom you are currently and predominately working in.
2. **Audio-recorded focus group No. 1. (Estimated duration 1 hour and 25 minutes)** with three other TAs at your school. The focus group can take place in person in your school or online using video conference platforms (e.g., Teams). The focus group will start with my presentation of The Teaching Framework. Next, I will illustrate to you and your colleagues a few videos involving the teaching practices of another TA. Next, you will be invited to think about nuanced teaching solutions, perhaps using the settings illustrated in the videos, in an effort to update The Teaching Framework.
3. **Optional activities:**
 - You will have the option to take part in another audio-recorded focus group or individual interviews in person in your school or online (e.g., Teams), wherein I will present and discuss with you and your colleagues the research findings (Estimated duration of 30 minutes)
 - You and your colleagues could also have a sight of a short research report coming out of this research for comments and requests of revisions (Estimated duration of 45 minutes).

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

This will allow you to reflect on effectively educating children with SEND. As a result, you might enhance your daily practice in support of children with and without SEND. Also, your research participation will be financially compensated for £80 even if you decide to withdraw from the research. Your compensation will be transferred to your bank account.

Are there any risks involved?

A critical risk of this research is that you will spend a good amount of hours working on the project, which might negatively impact your job workload and stress. To minimise this, I will ensure that the research activities, such as the focus groups, will be planned conveniently and in a less stressful working period and hours for you (e.g., break time). If you and your colleagues prefer otherwise, research work could be planned during non-working hours or days (e.g., Saturdays). If your study will be conducted in your school, your school headteacher will be informed of this eventuality and will be required to provide a school room to run the focus group activities or interviews.

What data will be collected?

I will collect audio recordings from our focus group discussions and your written or digital questionnaire. Any paper-format document collected during this research including your personal information (such as consent forms and questionnaires) will be converted into electronic ones for safety concerns. The paper documents will be destroyed. Finally, consent forms and research data, namely, the questionnaire data, audio recordings of focus group interviews and their verbatim transcription, will be saved password-protected in the data storage service system of the University of Southampton.

Will my participation be confidential?

Your participation and the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Whilst I will anonymise your personal information when the research is publicised or deposited and thus protect your privacy with the wider public, I cannot guarantee to protect your confidentiality and anonymity with the other research participants and your headteacher, who helped me identify you as a research participant. To minimise the risk of compromising your confidentiality and anonymity with individuals other than the research participants and their teachers, I will inform you, the other participants and the headteacher of the importance of keeping each other's personal information confidential. Your and your participating colleagues' research consent forms will also require you and the other participants to keep the information discussed during the focus groups strictly confidential.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected. Please inform me about this decision by email at l.ciletti@soton.ac.uk or contact the research supervisor, Dr Vasilis Strogilos, at v.strogilos@soton.ac.uk. Be also aware that you can request the disposal of your questionnaire data and possibly individual interviews up to 15 days after being collected. Your recorded talk during the focus groups nonetheless cannot be disposed of due to its interconnectedness with the rest of the data.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent. Thus, your research participation will remain anonymous to any external audience.

The anonymised research data will also be deposited in a public research repository: UK Data Service (see <https://ukdataservice.ac.uk/> for more information). To render the data unidentifiable, your name and identifying information (such as schools' names) in the transcript will be pseudonymised. Similarly, your name and identifying information will be pseudonymised from the recording (e.g., adding external audio with the pseudonyms). Moreover, your and my recorded voices will be changed using software from the University of Southampton. Before depositing the data in the repository, I will also share with you this fully anonymised research dataset. In the public repository, data will be of potential reuse by researchers with identified users (i.e., safeguarded data). This may multiply the potential benefits of this research work for TA practice and the education of children with SEND in England as well as internationally.

Where can I get more information?

For more information about this research project, please email me at l.ciletti@soton.ac.uk or contact the research supervisor, Dr Vasilis Strogilos, at v.strogilos@soton.ac.uk

What happens if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please email me at l.ciletti@soton.ac.uk or contact the research supervisor, Dr Vasilis Strogilos, at v.strogilos@soton.ac.uk.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Head of Research Ethics and Clinical Governance (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website

(<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legal/services/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at

<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/Is/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason ('lawful basis') to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it

properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet and considering taking part in the research.

CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Effective teaching practices by teaching assistants to support the education of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities

Thank you for your interest in this study. It is very important to us to conduct our studies in line with ethics principles, and this Consent Form asks you to confirm if you agree to take part in the above study. Please carefully consider the statements below and add your initials and signature only if you agree to participate in this research and understand what this will mean for you.

Please add your initials to the boxes below if you agree with the statements:

General Mandatory Consent Statements	Participant Initials
I confirm that I read the Participant Information Sheet explaining the study above and I understand what is expected of me.	
I was given the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions about the study, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.	
I agree to take part in this study and understand that data collected during this research project will be used for the purpose of this study.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason.	
I understand that my participation is financially compensated for £80 even if I decide to withdraw from the study.	

Additional Statements - please add your initials in the boxes below you to agree to:

Section: Questionnaire and Audio Recordings	Participant Initials
I understand that taking part in this study involves a written or digital questionnaire, an audio recording of a focus group, and an audio recording of a second focus group discussion or individual interviews.	
I understand that the lead researcher (Lorenzo Ciletti) will keep all personal information collected about me (e.g., my name and contact details) confidential (i.e., will not be shared beyond the study team) unless required by law or relevant regulations (e.g., for the purpose of monitoring the safety of this study).	
I understand that I must keep the information discussed during the focus groups and the personal information of other participants confidential.	
Section: Withdrawal of data	
I understand that I can request the disposal of only my questionnaire data and individual audio recorded interview data from the use in this study within 15 days following data collection.	
I understand that if I withdraw from the study, my personal data (e.g., talk) included in the focus group discussions will not be disposed of due to their interconnectedness with the rest of the data.	
Section: Sharing of data and future use	
I understand that my anonymised data collected during this study will be archived in a data repository so that it can be used for future research and learning.	
Section: Data management	
I understand that identifiable information about me for 10 years after the study has finished, after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.	

Name of participant (print name)

Signature

Date

Name of the lead researcher (print name)

Signature

Date