

Special educational needs and disability
training resources for PGCE programmes

Task brief for trainees

Contents

Introduction	25
When to do the task	26
Task overview	27
How to carry out the task	28
Getting started and how to proceed	30
Writing up the task	32
Relevance to the qualified teacher status standards	34

Introduction

This guide explains the personalised learning task – what it involves and how to carry it out. It also explains how the task supports your professional learning, relevant to the qualified teacher status standards.

Framework for personalised learning

You will need to read the framework for personalised learning as this sets out a practical model for the assessment, decision-making, teaching and reviewing involved in meeting pupils' needs. You can download a copy of the framework from the TDA website: www.tda.gov.uk/sen

Other resources

We have also produced video resources explaining the task in more detail which can be downloaded from the SEN section of the TDA website. The video clips show trainees undertaking the task and talking about their experiences, and school staff who have supported trainees speaking about its value and how to manage it. Trainees are shown working one to one with individual pupils for illustrative purposes; the task is designed to be carried out predominantly in whole-class or group settings.

Other sources of information are included on the TDA's SEN 'Additional resources' web pages (see: www.tda.gov.uk/sen). These include the SEN Code of Practice and toolkit and information from the Equality and Human Rights Commission about disability discrimination, definitions of types of SEN, general information about personalised learning and examples of reports about the SEN personalised learning task written by PGCE trainees.

When to do the task

The task should be carried out during your school placement:

- in the spring term for the secondary programme, or
- in the summer term for the primary programme.

If you have a problem carrying out the task in the expected placement, then it can be undertaken at another time on placement by arrangement with your subject leader/tutor.

Task overview

Aims of the task

The aims of this task are for you to:

- find out in detail about the educational needs of a pupil with special educational needs (SEN) in a particular subject area
- learn more about the origins of additional educational needs and the interaction between the pupil's difficulties/disabilities and environmental factors
- learn how to assess the additional educational needs of a pupil in a particular subject area
- develop your skills in planning and teaching to meet the pupil's identified educational needs, monitoring the progress that the pupil makes as a result, and
- form a teaching relationship with a pupil with a special educational need/disability and gain experience of how they learn.

Rationale for the task

"There was a marked improvement in her phonics work; she read her first book as a result of my work."

Primary PGCE trainee on the value of the SEN task

This task provides an intensive learning experience about SEN, as part of your wider learning on special educational provision during the PGCE.

"I think the task focus gives them time to think about the individual, so it gives them that opportunity to start focusing on smaller groups, which perhaps they won't have later on when they're in charge of the whole class. So it's a valuable insight I think into individual learning."

Primary school-based initial teacher training (ITT) tutor

The task will enable you to develop practical knowledge and skills that cannot be learnt from whole-class teaching, or from learning in general terms about the different areas of learning and disabilities. It will enable you to learn about individual educational needs, which is important to helping you promote inclusion in your classroom teaching.

You also need to learn about differentiation relating to whole-class teaching, and the various areas of SEN as they relate to your phase and subject of teaching. There will be opportunities to learn about these from campus sessions, your teaching practice, reading and self-study materials.

Learning resources

This guide and the SEN pages of the TDA website (www.tda.gov.uk/sen) provide information to help you with the task, including:

- a 'strategy for personalised learning' to help you assess individual pupils' needs in a particular subject area
- relevant sections of the SEN Code of Practice
- relevant sections of the SEN Toolkit
- a guide to the task and instructions for writing it up, and
- relevant references.

How to carry out the task

The key to this task is to get started as soon as possible. Undertaking the task involves observing others working with the pupil, consulting those who know the pupil, consulting the pupil (where appropriate), reading, planning and recording – as well as direct teaching. You will also observe teaching and learning, plan ahead and follow up with reading.

Liaising with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and pupil's class teacher

- You should liaise with the SENCO in your placement school, the SENCO and the class/subject teacher of the pupil
- If the SENCO has not yet been briefed about the task, you can draw her/his attention to the 'Information for school tutors' document on the SEN pages of the TDA website (www.tda.gov.uk/sen)
- The SENCO can brief you about the pupil's strengths, difficulties, educational needs, targets etc and the provision that is already in place to meet his/her needs
- You can also seek support from others (class/subject teacher, initial teacher training (ITT) coordinator)
- Over the period that you are working with the pupil, you should liaise with the class teacher and the SENCO about any issues or concerns that arise

Deciding on the pupil

- Identify a pupil who is at School Action, School Action Plus or has a statement of SEN, preferably someone in one of the classes you will teach
- Choose a pupil who is likely to be there during your placement, who you can learn from, as well as help them to learn

Duration

- You will be expected to undertake the task for between **six and eight hours** during the time you are in the school
- This period covers collecting information about the pupil through reading, observing, focused meetings and direct assessment, planning, providing 'personalised' learning opportunities and recording; of this six to eight hours, you will be providing learning opportunities (tutoring and/or small group work) for **at least three to four hours**
- The tutoring, or small group work, focused on your pupil is best done in short intervals over a longer period of time

Settings for individual or group teaching

- The teaching part of the task can be completed in class (if there are short periods where individuals do differentiated learning), in a withdrawal setting or in some combination of these.
- It is preferable to work as close as possible to typical classroom settings and use withdrawal from class as little as possible. Withdrawal from a class is different from working for short periods, eg 10 minutes, individually with a pupil outside class lesson times; this is where being sensitive to how your pupil might feel about your individual teaching and their visibility to their peers is important – consult your pupil as far as possible and appropriate.
- Though the task focuses on an individual, the teaching might be done when the individual is grouped with other pupils, either in class or in a withdrawal setting.
- The setting or combination of settings should be agreed with the class teacher and the SENCO. The exact pattern of sessions will need to fit with the class and school routines and timetable.

Getting started and how to proceed

Throughout this stage of the process, you'll need to refer to the personalised learning framework which can be downloaded from the SEN section of the TDA website (www.tda.gov.uk/sen).

Assessing and planning phase

- The selected pupil needs to have a record containing their short-term learning targets and approaches (eg individual education plan (IEP)) and be receiving some additional provision either in class, from the class teacher/assistant or withdrawn by eg a specialist teacher
- You can then read the IEP/record and see the concerns/problems, the targets and strategies; discussion with the SENCO, class teacher and teaching assistant is also useful
- Observe the pupil in various teaching-learning contexts depending on the circumstances including when working on target over several occasions (keep records); if possible, find the time to talk with the pupil about learning in general and specifically about the focused learning in their IEP/record
- Relate what you have found to the personalised learning framework; your pupil can be expected to be working in an **additional teaching-learning cycle** (see overall flow chart in the framework) where a personalised target has been selected because s/he has not been making expected progress in the typical teaching-learning cycle

Address these questions about your pupil – ones that arise from applying the framework (record your answers for your write-up):

- 1 To what extent are the recorded targets, strategies etc on the IEP/record the ones being used?
- 2 Is the pupil making progress towards these targets, and what kind of progress is this?
- 3 Are the setting (where, when), grouping (with whom), teaching strategies (how learning promoted), resources (with what) and targets (objectives, goals) relevant to the pupil's progress in learning?

On the basis of answering these questions, decide with the SENCO and/or other school tutors how you will proceed. The options can include:

- Targets are appropriate, so you plan to support learning broadly along the lines of the IEP/record
- Targets need reviewing in some way, so you decide to examine how they might be reviewed by going back to analysing the causes of the difficulties in learning (see 'Analysing causes' in the framework, where you can use the checklist of factors)

Direct work with the pupil

1 Work towards current target/s:

- This is where decisions about setting, grouping, strategies, materials, period of time etc for your teaching are relevant
- Implement your plans after discussion with the tutor supporting this task; record briefly how the teaching-learning went, how the pupil responded, signs of learning and progress, and any changes that you have made to support the learning

2 Setting and working towards a new target:

- Using the checklist of factors you can identify factors relevant to your pupil's difficulties in learning; on the basis of this, and in consultation with your tutor for the task, find a suitable starting point for the pupil and set a relevant personalised target (see 'Setting and achieving personalised learning outcomes/targets' in the framework)
- Proceed as in 'Work towards current target/s' above

Learning from the task and bringing it to an end

- Reflecting on your experiences of undertaking the task and consolidating your learning from it will be supported by consulting with school-based staff including the SENCO; you may also have an opportunity to discuss the process and outcomes of the task with other PGCE trainees doing it in school and during campus-based work
- Towards the end of six to eight hours' work with your selected pupil, you should bring together your notes about doing the task to evaluate what you have done; write a report of approximately 1,000 words, including any recommendations you may have for future interventions

Writing up the task

Your work with an individual pupil for this task should be written up for your portfolio in about 1,000 words. The date set for handing in your portfolio is the date for completing this task.

You are also expected to send a copy of this report to the SENCO or school-based tutor who supported you in doing it.

The notes and records you will have kept while doing the task will be integrated and analysed in writing this report. The report can be in the form of numbered paragraphs; it is not an essay or assignment, more like a professional report for school records.

Here are quotes of what some PGCE trainees have said about the write-up:

"This was an excellent task and writing it up made me evaluate my teaching and the child's learning." (primary)

"Very useful, it was good to pull together the work done with the pupil and the wider reading undertaken." (secondary)

Please remember to use pseudonyms when writing about the pupil and any staff involved, so the anonymity of all concerned is preserved.

Suggested structure and content to cover

1 Background information about the pupil

- Age
- Gender
- School history
- Strengths and difficulties in the subject
- Relevant past 'environmental' factors
- Current factors supporting, and barriers to, learning
- Previous and current provision made to support this pupil
- Current IEP/record, progress towards targets etc

You should also comment on the usefulness of the information you collected, in helping you plan your work with this pupil.

2 How you planned and undertook the work with the pupil

- Conclusions, based on the initial assessment, of the extent to which the recorded targets, strategies etc on the pupil's IEP/record were being used, the pupil's progress towards these targets and the relevance of the setting (where, when), grouping (with whom), teaching strategies (how learning promoted), resources (with what) and targets (objectives, goals) to the pupil's progress in learning
- Whether you supported learning broadly along the lines of the targets in the IEP/record or examined how the pupil's targets might be reviewed by going back to analysing the causes of the difficulties in learning
- The settings in which you taught, the teaching strategies you used, how you monitored the pupil's progress and the records you kept on the progress the pupil made
- Information about ideas and practices you used from the materials provided (if any) and any reading you undertook that was related to the task
- Evaluate the impact of the strategies you used on the pupil's progress against the target/s set; discuss any difficulties you encountered in teaching and learning and the reasons for these

3 Conclusions

- Your recommendations with reasons for the next steps in teaching this pupil in your subject in the future
- What you learnt from the task – knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes

Examples of SEN task reports are available from the 'Additional resources' section of the TDA website: www.tda.gov.uk/sen

Relevance to the qualified teacher status standards

This SEN personalised learning task provides valuable experiences that support the national requirements for initial teacher training related to special educational needs and inclusion. It is one key aspect of wider learning on the PGCE about SEN that is relevant to the following standards for the award of qualified teacher status (QTS):

Relationships with children and young people

- Q1** Have high expectations of children and young people including a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full educational potential and to establishing fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with them.

Communicating and working with others

- Q6** Have a commitment to collaboration and cooperative working.

Personal professional development

- Q7** (a) Reflect on and improve their practice, and take responsibility for identifying and meeting their developing professional needs.

Teaching and learning

- Q10** Have a knowledge and understanding of a range of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies and know how to use and adapt them, including how to personalise learning and provide opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential.

Assessment and monitoring

- Q12** Know a range of approaches to assessment, including the importance of formative assessment.

Subjects and curriculum

- Q15** Know and understand the relevant statutory and non-statutory curricula and frameworks, including those provided through the National Strategies, for their subjects/curriculum areas, and other relevant initiatives applicable to the age and ability range for which they are trained.

Achievement and diversity

- Q18** Understand how children and young people develop and that the progress and well-being of learners are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic influences.
- Q19** Know how to make effective personalised provision for those they teach, including those for whom English is an additional language or who have special educational needs or disabilities, and how to take practical account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion in their teaching.
- Q20** Know and understand the roles of colleagues with specific responsibilities, including those with responsibility for learners with special educational needs and disabilities and other individual learning needs.

Teaching

- Q25** Teach lessons and sequences of lessons across the age and ability range for which they are trained in which they:
 - (d) demonstrate the ability to manage the learning of individuals, groups and whole classes, modifying their teaching to suit the stage of the lesson.