

“Thank You, TA!” – What Teachers Really Think About Their Classroom Colleagues

When we asked teachers to tell us about their teaching assistants, thousands replied – and the results were full of warmth, humour, and admiration. From calming classroom chaos to transforming children’s lives, TAs came across as the glue that holds schools together.

■ Support: The Word on Everyone’s Lips

It’s no surprise that support was the single most common word in the responses – appearing in over 60% of all comments. Teachers repeatedly described their TAs as supportive, lifesaving, reliable, and indispensable.

“My TA is the calm in every storm. She’s already helping a child before I’ve even realised there’s an issue.”

“She supports the children, me, and the whole class. When she’s not there, you can feel the gap.”

Many teachers said their classroom would “fall apart” without their TA. Several even joked (or did they?!) that they’d nominate theirs for a knighthood if they could.

■ Partnership and Teamwork

Around one in three teachers explicitly mentioned teamwork – using words like partner, team, together, and co-teach. These teachers saw their TAs as true collaborators, not just helpers.

“I used to see my TA as a helper. Now I see her as a teaching partner. She co-plans, team-teaches, and leads small groups with the same energy as I do.”

Others noted that when their TA was absent, the impact was huge: “When she’s off, it’s like losing half the team.”

■ The Emotional Glue of the Classroom

Dozens of responses highlighted how TAs pick up on the emotional temperature of a classroom before anyone else. Words like kind, calm, caring, and understanding appeared again and again.

"Our TAs are often the ones who spot the tear at the back of the line or the child who's suddenly gone quiet."

"They're the steady heartbeat of the classroom – calm, patient, and endlessly caring."

Many teachers said their TA had become a trusted adult for pupils struggling emotionally or socially. "Some children," one teacher wrote, "will only talk to their TA – they're their safe space."

■ Champions of Inclusion and Expertise

About 20% of responses mentioned special educational needs or additional support. These teachers praised TAs for their expertise and dedication to inclusion.

"Our TA completely changed how we support pupils with additional needs. She trained others, designed interventions, and made inclusion real, not just paperwork."

"My TA knows every detail of each child's plan. She spots progress before anyone else."

Many noted that their TAs' insight often exceeded that of external specialists because they worked so closely, day in and day out, with the pupils who needed help most.

■ The Unsung Heroes of Everyday School Life

TAs also received praise for the hundreds of little things they do that keep classrooms running. The words organised and amazing cropped up repeatedly, with one teacher saying their TA "could run NASA" given how smoothly they juggle tasks.

"TAs are the ones who walk a crying child around the playground, comfort a parent at the gate, sort the glue sticks, fix displays, and keep us all sane."

One comment simply said:

"I didn't realise how much my TA did until she wasn't there. It turns out...everything."

Reading through hundreds of comments, one thing was clear: teachers deeply value their TAs. Words like support, patience, and teamwork appeared far more than anything else – and not a single comment took them for granted.

So, to every TA who's laminated, listened, lifted, and laughed through the school day – thank you. Teachers see you, appreciate you, and (judging by our data) couldn't imagine the classroom without you.