

TRANSCRIPT: Teaching assistant PMLD

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I'm a teacher assistant at a special needs school and I work with children that have profound and multiple learning difficulties.

I have to make sure that they're fed, that they're changed. If they need any other personal care like brushing their teeth, washing their face, if they need a position change, things like that.

I also work with children that are peg fed, which means that they're fed through their tummy.

I deal with children that have medical needs. So I have to administer medicines. We've all been trained by the school nurse how to give them their meds, how much they're given and we all follow a protocol, which we have in the classroom.

We have one particular child in our classroom that has oxygen. We only give it to her if we feel that she's not coping with her breathing. So we've all been trained by the school nurse on how to deliver oxygen and we also have a protocol for that as well. We put the mask on the child and turn the vial up to how much oxygen she needs and then if her breathing's come back to normal, we'll take it off her, but if we feel that her breathing is decreasing, we'll phone an ambulance.

To make it more comfortable, we talk to the children through the whole process because by telling them what's happening next, it makes them more at ease so the whole transition is smooth.

We all know the children very, very well and we all have special relationships with them, so we know if a child doesn't want to be moved, or the child just wants to be left alone, or the child is in distress, then we know how to de-stress them.

When I first started in the classroom I was very scared because these children rely on you a lot and it's a real big responsibility. But now, I've been working in that classroom for four years. I absolutely love it. It doesn't scare me. It doesn't faze me, whatever happens.