

Developing Inclusive Classrooms



A Booklet for Staff

By

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What are Specific Learning Difficulties?

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.

- Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed
- Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities
- It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category and there are no clear cut-off points
- Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organization, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia
- A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention
(Rose Report 2009)

Dyscalculia

‘A condition that affects the ability to acquire arithmetical skills. Dyscalculic learners may have difficulty understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers and have problems learning number facts and procedures. Even if they produce a correct answer or use a correct method, they may do so mechanically and without confidence.’ **(DfE)**

Dyspraxia

A form of developmental coordination disorder (DCD), Dyspraxia is a common disorder affecting fine and/or gross motor coordination, in children and adults. Dyspraxia refers to those people who have additional problems planning, organising and carrying out movements in the right order in everyday situations. Dyspraxia can also affect articulation and speech, perception and thought. **(Dyspraxia Foundation)**

The Inclusive Classroom

What would it be like?

- ⇒ Work is appropriately differentiated and achievable targets are set
- ⇒ Teachers present information in different ways to ensure that all children and young people understand
- ⇒ Teachers adjust the pace of the lesson to reflect how children and young people are learning
- ⇒ The effectiveness of specific types of support is understood and the right support is put in place at the right time
- ⇒ Lesson structures are clear and familiar but allow for adaptation and flexibility
- ⇒ All aspects of a lesson are well thought out and any adaptations needed are made without fuss to ensure that everyone in class has access
- ⇒ Assessment is secure, continuous and acted on
- ⇒ Respect for individuals is reflected in high expectations for their achievement
- ⇒ All staff understand clearly the difference between ensuring that children and young people are learning and keeping them occupied
- ⇒ Teachers' subject knowledge is good, as is their understanding of pupils' needs and how to help them

Equipment

Have readily available:

- ⇒ Triangular pens/pencils or pencil 'grips'
- ⇒ Line trackers, bookmarks, coloured overlays as appropriate
- ⇒ Handwriting paper and 'guidelines'
- ⇒ Magnetic/wooden/soft touch letters for multi-sensory teaching
- ⇒ Spelling aids: dictionaries, word cards, personal spelling logs, spellcheckers

On the desk:

Literacy

- ⇒ Alphabet strip, vowels in red (showing upper and lower case)
- ⇒ Cue cards e.g. phonic sounds or spelling rules currently taught
- ⇒ Laminated memo cards e.g. for date, key words, reminders, b/d/p reference, phoneme or syllable frames
- ⇒ Most frequently needed equipment: pencil, pen, ruler, word-book, whiteboard
- ⇒ Topic vocabulary sheet with picture cues

Maths

- ⇒ Most frequently needed equipment: unifix, number line, 100 square, tables square, whiteboard, number fan, Dienes, Cuisenaire, Numicon

SEN – resources may include:

- ⇒ Range of scissors, handwriting slopes, fiddles, wobble cushions, weighted 'snakes', foot rests

Classroom Routines

- ⇒ State clear purpose for each lesson
- ⇒ Consider whether it is best use of time copying the learning objective. Can they read it?
- ⇒ Display visual timetables for pupils to use at school and home
- ⇒ Organise equipment effectively, label with visual/colour cues where possible
- ⇒ Have an agreed location for finished work to be placed
- ⇒ Use common colours for each subject throughout the school e.g. blue for Maths books
- ⇒ Consistent place for homework or message to be displayed
- ⇒ Consider availability of water
- ⇒ Stick out tabs to highlight targets in books
- ⇒ Use multisensory resources e.g. film, photographs, Powerpoint presentations, and concrete materials

Language

- ⇒ Use talking partners frequently
- ⇒ Avoid sarcasm and rhetorical questions (some pupils can take language literally)
- ⇒ Speak slowly and clearly, using short phrases and sentences – repeat key words
- ⇒ Vary voice tone and volume
- ⇒ Minimise background noise
- ⇒ Allow response time
- ⇒ Prepare children for a question

Giving Instructions



- ⇒ Give verbal instructions clearly and give one at a time – ask pupil to repeat back
- ⇒ Stress key words and check understanding of vocabulary
- ⇒ Back up instructions visually – written/visual reminders displayed on class board or own memo card
- ⇒ Check homework instructions are written legibly/clearly – be prepared to scribe sometimes. Give homework instructions in first part of lesson.
- ⇒ Ask ‘What do you think you have to do?’ To check understanding

When seating pupils, consider...

- ⇒ At the front, facing the board squarely
- ⇒ Near to teacher where possible (so help can be offered readily)
- ⇒ Where disruption is minimised and concentration maximised e.g. displays behind or to the side of the pupil
- ⇒ Left-handers are not ‘crowding out’ right-handers
- ⇒ Furniture is appropriate size - the use of a foot rest may be necessary to aid posture
- ⇒ Quality lighting
- ⇒ Length of time spent on carpet
- ⇒ Teaching walls are accessible

Display Boards

Display most commonly needed information in a clear, legible font:

- ⇒ Alphabet with picture cues - upper and lower case (cursive)
- ⇒ Current phonic sounds
- ⇒ Key word lists: high frequency words, word 'families', topic vocabulary
- ⇒ Times tables charts
- ⇒ Numbers, hundred square, tables square and number lines
- ⇒ Use colour to aid memory
- ⇒ Useful lists: days of the week, months of the year
- ⇒ Words used in Maths operations e.g. add, makes, equals, plus
- ⇒ Working walls to include worked examples

Worksheets

- ⇒ Use bold headings and clear print - well spaced, not too small
- ⇒ Must be at appropriate reading level, differentiated if necessary
- ⇒ Less writing, more diagrams/picture clues and bullet points
- ⇒ Cut out unnecessary detail
- ⇒ Use capital letters appropriately
- ⇒ Consider font size (12/14) and typeface e.g. Sassoon, Comic Sans, Arial
- ⇒ Consider use of coloured paper to ease visual stress
- ⇒ Keep lines left-justified

Writing on the Board and Copying

- ⇒ Read aloud as you write
- ⇒ Writing should be clear, easy to read and in school's handwriting style
- ⇒ Consider pastel background colour on IWB and computers
- ⇒ Use coloured pens, varying colours used for lines/sections (to ease tracking difficulties)
- ⇒ Do not stand in front of the board
- ⇒ Try to avoid pupils copying from the board. Give plenty of time
- ⇒ Give pupil own copy of what is on the board, copying close work is easier
- ⇒ Give typed photocopies – pupil can spend time highlighting key words/facts rather than copying

Alternative Recording

Try:

- ⇒ Pictures/symbols/diagrams
- ⇒ Mind maps
- ⇒ Flow diagrams
- ⇒ Cloze procedure to provide a framework for writing
- ⇒ Voice recorder – commentator for presentation/broadcast or for someone else to scribe
- ⇒ Oral presentation
- ⇒ Practical presentation e.g. How to make ...
- ⇒ Digital camera for pictures and videos
- ⇒ Group/paired work – collaborative mixed ability using strengths
- ⇒ Text to speech software e.g. Clicker 6 with wordbanks
- ⇒ Keep groups flexible to maintain intellectual challenge



Writing

- ⇒ Provide a framework/scaffold for writing, with headings, sentence beginnings, mind maps, pictures for sequencing
- ⇒ Encourage pupil to record ideas initially, without worrying excessively about spelling
- ⇒ Attach lists of useful words to exercise books
- ⇒ Encourage use of own spelling log/word cards
- ⇒ Develop use of mnemonics for 'tricky' words
- ⇒ Have key words displayed and on the table
- ⇒ Allow more time, and expect less in terms of quantity



Reading

- ⇒ Check suitability of texts
- ⇒ Do not ask pupil to read aloud (unless they want to)
- ⇒ Read instructions to the pupil where appropriate
- ⇒ Encourage paired reading
- ⇒ Preteach key vocabulary and some texts
- ⇒ Check comprehension through summary, prediction and clarification

Information and Communications Technology

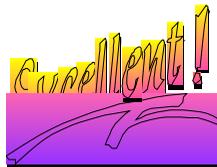


- ⇒ Teach keyboard skills e.g. BBC - Dance Mat Typing
- ⇒ Encourage the use of word-processing, with built-in speech feedback, predictive text and spellchecker to minimize hand-writing and spelling problems e.g. Clicker 6 or Text Help Read and Write
- ⇒ Provide a large mouse or tracker ball for pupils with severe motor difficulties
- ⇒ Dictaphones can have a range of uses: recording own stories, details of homework, things to remember

Marking work



- ⇒ Mark pupil's work with them whenever possible (sit on same side of desk)
- ⇒ Return marked work as soon as possible – ensure pupils can read and respond to comments, discuss feedback
- ⇒ Written comments should be clear and legible in school's handwriting style
- ⇒ Balance positive comments with constructive criticism
- ⇒ Be specific about the focus of marking (judging 'authorial' or 'secretarial' skills?)
- ⇒ Do not correct ALL spelling errors – target specific errors which pupil can reasonably address
- ⇒ Judge content separately from presentation
- ⇒ Try to judge oral responses to some tasks (rather than written ones)



- ⇒ Create an uncritical atmosphere – misunderstandings are learning opportunities
- ⇒ Give opportunities to succeed
- ⇒ Provide qualified praise for success and give rewards frequently
- ⇒ Match tasks to concentration span
- ⇒ Allow breaks/time out to run errands, clean board etc.

Additional Adult Support

- ⇒ Planning should show clear roles and responsibilities with time for feedback and evaluation
- ⇒ Establish clear class procedures for pupils as independent learners e.g. signpost pupils to self-help strategies and structures
- ⇒ Beware of 'learned helplessness' – the pupil who relies too heavily on the TA/teacher
- ⇒ Try to timetable regular slots for additional, targeted support for pre and post teaching to secure new learning
- ⇒ All adults aware of the school behaviour policy

Self-evaluation and Target Setting



- ⇒ Set small achievable targets
- ⇒ Increase targets on a daily/weekly basis as appropriate
- ⇒ Share long term goals with the pupil
- ⇒ Ensure pupil's target card is clearly understood

CELEBRATE!

Multisensory Teaching

**“We hear, we forget.
We see, we remember.
We do, we understand.”
(Chinese proverb)**

“It has long been acknowledged that many dyslexic pupils benefit from a ‘multisensory’ approach to teaching i.e. one that involves simultaneous input from visual, auditory, oral, tactile and kinaesthetic channels.” (Hugh O’Connell)

Key principles:

1. **Cumulative learning**– practising stronger skills whilst strengthening weaker ones (e.g. reading known high frequency words, alongside the introduction of new ones)
2. **Highly structured and systematic** – progress in small steps
3. **Frequent repetition** – to strengthen memory

Teaching Methods/Approaches A Summary

- ⇒ Use a combination of auditory and visual 'channels' for giving information
- ⇒ Ensure that Literacy and Maths planning is differentiated, backtracking to previous year group objectives where appropriate
- ⇒ ALL tasks planned should be achievable
- ⇒ Begin each lesson by stating clear objectives, and end with a summary of what has been taught
- ⇒ Timetable daily time (preferably 1:1) for pupil to practise own current targets and personal programmes
- ⇒ Ensure that all adults involved with the child are aware of strengths, weaknesses and current targets (parents, TAs, other subject teachers)
- ⇒ Use multisensory resources

Useful websites for further reading and professional development

The Literacy and Dyslexia–SpLD Professional Development Framework

<http://framework.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk>

Inclusion Development Programme (IDP)

www.idponline.org.uk

A suite of materials aimed at increasing knowledge and skills in working with learners with a range of special educational needs