

Dyslexia: How Teachers can help

Although children with dyslexia will need additional targeted support, there are many ways in which teachers can help them – and other children - in their mainstream classroom. Minor adaptations to day-to-day practice can make a huge difference and ensure that they are learning effectively (more details in Primary and Secondary Packs – see book list)

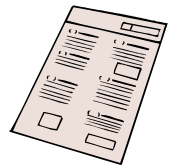


Seating and Grouping

- ◆ Check that each child can hear and see you, the board and visual prompts clearly
- ◆ Seat the pupil where you can make eye contact and provide support quickly
- ◆ Group pupils according to each activity, not by literacy level, unless specifically teaching literacy skills

Information/Instructions/Organisation

- ◆ Give children 'thinking time' to process information and respond appropriately
- ◆ Make instructions short and simple. Break them down into small manageable steps
- ◆ Explain and present information many times in various ways (pictures, flow charts, diagrams)
- ◆ Ask children with dyslexia to repeat instructions so you can check their understanding
- ◆ Display prompts and reminders about what to do, where to find things, useful words
- ◆ Label equipment - always keep this in the same place, indicate items when mentioned
- ◆ Provide desk-top mats/jotter inserts - alphabet, word banks, prompts and personal targets
- ◆ Provide - and demonstrate how to use - practical aids (calculator, number/tables squares)



Memory



- ◆ Use multi-sensory teaching approaches to ensure that information is absorbed and stored.
- ◆ Teach a range of strategies to help children to learn letter-sounds and spelling rules
- ◆ Many children with dyslexia are kinaesthetic learners (they learn by doing). Engage them in purposeful movement, using rhythm and visual activities to stimulate memory and trigger recall

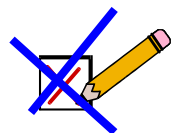
Written Work

- ◆ Encourage alternatives to writing - respond by drawing or dictating/recording answers.
- ◆ Check children's learning by requesting non-written responses - draw, act out, sing, dictate answers
- ◆ Limit writing demands and give plenty of time to complete written work
- ◆ Ensure that keyboard skills are taught - encourage the use of a computer
- ◆ Provide planning formats/writing frames/cloze activities/story skeletons for extended writing
- ◆ Teach children how to use mind maps, spider webs, bullet points, flow charts, ICT software



Marking

- ◆ Mark work in a positive way – mark only words that have been taught
- ◆ Develop a code with your pupils for marking errors. Using a cross or red pen to highlight errors may not be the best way – lightly underline or use a dot
- ◆ Try to explain errors made by pupils with dyslexia – try marking their work with them present



- ◆ Specify what will be marked - content, spelling, technical skills or presentation and mark only that
- ◆ Minimise the number of errors you highlight – perhaps only one of each type. Suggest how to avoid these in the future
- ◆ Use directed praise – say what you are praising – include effort as well as attainment
- ◆ Avoid public humiliation, give individuals constructive feedback privately



Reading

- ◆ Provide tinted filters/overlays or reading markers
- ◆ Use non-white paper for all materials and ask individual preferences for test papers
- ◆ Match reading resources to an individual's reading ability, ensuring it is age appropriate
- ◆ Encourage the use of books in audio/digital format to support individual access to texts
- ◆ Teach the use of keywords, highlighting, colours and images to help remember information
- ◆ Highlight the main points in text to support comprehension, prediction and recall
- ◆ Teach key vocabulary for new topics – use flash cards, word mats, posters/word walls
- ◆ Ensure child is comfortable reading aloud – unless planned/prepared in advance
- ◆ Introduce paired/shared reading activities to improve fluency, aid understanding and build confidence

Board work

- ◆ Limit the amount of reading/copying from the board. Give copies of notes/examples
- ◆ Use coloured markers for board work. Try some of the following strategies:
 - Set the Smart board background on a colour – beige, blue
 - Shade white boards to eliminate glare/reflections
 - Write different items in different colours
 - Number or mark the start and end of each line/topic clearly



Looking for more in-depth information to help in the classroom?

- ◆ **Dyslexia: A Practitioner's Handbook (4th Edition)** by Dr. Gavin Reid
- ◆ **Maths for the Dyslexic: A Practical Guide** by Anne Henderson
- ◆ **Supporting Students with Dyslexia in Secondary Schools** by Moira Thomson
- ◆ **Dyslexia & Us: A Collection of Personal Stories** by Dyslexia Scotland
- ◆ www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk - On the members' section you can get access to:
 - Dyslexia Scotland's Primary School Pack (a pack of 8 booklets)
 - Dyslexia Scotland's Secondary School Pack (a pack of 20 booklets)

The Online Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit can be accessed free in the Educators' section of the website.

◆ www.dyslexic.com

www.assist-it.org.uk

www.callscotland.org.uk

www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk helpline@dyslexiascotland.org.uk 0844 800 84 84

Charity No: SCO 00951 Registered No: SC 153321 Dyslexia Scotland © 11/12

