



## **Dyslexia Awareness - Information for parents**

### **Introduction**

We recognise that there are many well-known, successful and accomplished people who have experienced difficulties with reading and writing or have been identified as being dyslexic. We are committed to ensuring that children identified as having dyslexic tendencies make the very best progress they possibly can in reading, writing and maths. We identify and remove barriers to their learning by adapting our teaching and resources, and recognising children's learning preferences. We recognise children's strengths, interests and talents as well as identifying areas in which they may need support.

We have adopted the Rose (2009) definition of dyslexia with an additional paragraph from the British Dyslexia Association (BDA):

- '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 organisation, 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.'
- 'In addition to these characteristics, the BDA acknowledges the visual and auditory processing difficulties that some individuals with dyslexia can experience, and points out that dyslexic readers can show a combination of abilities and difficulties that affect the learning process. Some also have strengths in other areas, such as design, problem solving, creative skills, interactive skills and oral skills.'

### **Identification and Assessment**

We have a 'graduated approach' to the identification and assessment of all special educational needs, including dyslexia.

As a school, we do not assess whether a child has dyslexia, but we recognise dyslexic tendencies. Some parents may decide to seek identification of dyslexia through an outside agency.

We intervene quickly to support children experiencing difficulties in literacy while we gather assessment information including test scores, teacher assessment and observations, and the views of parents and of the child. The purpose of this assessment process is to identify strengths and weaknesses, to consider that the child might have dyslexic tendencies, to inform teachers' planning for the child in the classroom and to help us determine whether the child needs additional support. We recognise that dyslexic tendencies can also affect maths, particularly aspects of number and mental calculation.

We act to support all children experiencing literacy difficulties, whether or not it has been recognised that they have dyslexic tendencies.

### Support for children with dyslexic tendencies

We use the 'Waves' model, providing support according to the child's level of need.

**Wave One:** high quality classroom teaching available to all children, with appropriate levels of challenge, differentiation and additional strategies for individual pupils.

Strategies include:

- Phonics teaching through Read Write Inc.
- Immersive and exploratory activities, such as word banks, music, drama and images, to practise using language orally and in writing
- Encouraging exposure to print and reading for pleasure
- Whole school handwriting policy and scheme
- Visual literacy resources e.g. phonics or word lists appropriate to children's stage of learning
- Concrete and visual maths resources appropriate to children's stage of learning
- Merits and 'Learner of the Week' certificates, alongside positive praise, to recognise achievement, motivate and develop self-esteem
- Recognition of a range of talents in 'Good Book' assemblies

Additional strategies for individual pupils may include:

- Increasing word recognition through 'over-learning' of words for reading
- 'Over-learning' of spellings
- Computer programmes to support word recognition, spelling and reading comprehension
- Use of technology to occasionally provide alternative means of recording
- Use of coloured overlays for reading
- Use of coloured paper for writing
- Use of coloured backgrounds to interactive whiteboards
- Additional time to process information

### **Wave Two:**

Additional literacy support e.g. Read Write Inc. groups and 1-1 lessons

Additional maths groups

### **Wave Three:**

Additional support from intervention teachers in literacy or maths

### A note about visual stress and the use of colour

It is thought there is a higher incidence of visual stress in people with dyslexia, although this is not a *cause* of dyslexia. Symptoms of visual stress include words blurring, going out of focus, shimmering or shaking or appearing doubled; headaches after reading; dislike of glare from white pages. The use of colour may relieve symptoms, so we offer coloured overlays to individual children to support reading where there is evidence this may be beneficial. We also use coloured paper and a coloured interactive whiteboard background where needed.

In the first instance, please speak to your child's teacher for ways of supporting your child at home. If you have any further queries, please contact the Inclusion Leader/SENDCo Mrs Towner.

Further information is available on the following website:

[www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk](http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk)