

# Dyslexia



## WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

- 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.

## DYSLEXIA FRIENDLY CLASSROOMS

- Using dyslexia friendly strategies in the classroom benefits all pupils, not just those who may have dyslexia.
- *Good practice:*
- **READING:**
- Read all texts aloud to the whole class so that a dyslexic pupil is never left to struggle alone
- Use paired reading (support a dyslexic pupil with a more able reader)
- Try to use different colours on the board for each line of writing to help the child track the words. Colour also helps to break a text up: "Read the blue bit" helps to break up a large text
- Provide a recorded reading of the text that the pupil can listen to, pause and playback
- **VISUAL DIFFICULTIES:**
- Coloured overlays help some pupils when reading
- Use a reading ruler to help track the words
- Coloured paper helps some children (print worksheets on coloured paper or use coloured exercise books)
- **SPELLING:**
- Teach the 'Say, Look, Cover, write, Check' method for learning spellings
- Provide word lists: high frequency words, common exception words, topic words
- Teach the alphabet to help dyslexic pupils use a dictionary/ word bank more easily
- Make up mnemonics together to help remember tricky words
- Teach how to break a word into syllables to spell and colour-code each syllable
- **WRITING:**
- Use mind maps to organise ideas
- Provide writing frames to help structure work
- Allow the pupil to write onto a worksheet rather than asking them to copy into their books
- Provide models of language around the room
- Allow the pupil to record their work on a laptop, but also teach typing skills to make this easier
- Allow them to record their ideas using a dictaphone or video themselves talking
- **MEMORY:**
- Support memory by providing key words or pictorial reminders
- Record instructions so that the pupil can listen independently to them as necessary
- Over-learning will be necessary to help the child retain their skills and knowledge
- Precision teaching is a useful technique for learning

### Things to consider:

- Many pupils with dyslexia may have low self esteem.
- Make sure that you celebrate their strengths and successes.
- Get to know the child- use their interests to motivate them in their learning.
- Older children may benefit from an electronic spellchecker
- Help the child to make links as they may not naturally do this for themselves
- Allow extra time for a dyslexic pupil to complete assessments
- **REMEMBER:** a child with dyslexia usually has to work twice as hard to achieve the same as their peers in some areas of their work. It is hard work for them!

### TOP TIPS:

- Being dyslexic means learning differently.
- Praise the child for their efforts
- Be creative to make learning fun
- Encourage a risk- taking classroom where it's OK to make mistakes
- Use multi-sensory approaches to learning