



St Ursula's Convent School

A Humanities College and Teaching School

Dyslexia Friendly School Guidance

This should be read in conjunction with the school's SEND Policy.

Principles

As part of the Dyslexia Friendly School status here at St. Ursula's we recognize the strengths of pupils with dyslexia and aim to use them as pathways to learning. We recognize that pupils with dyslexia are likely to experience higher levels of stress than their peers and that this may impact on their learning and emotional well-being.

Governors and senior managers are committed to support pupils with dyslexia across the curriculum. Targets aimed at developing expertise in, and understanding of, dyslexia are reflected in the school Development plan.

What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involve in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are: difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.

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-ordinations, 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'.

Every dyslexic learner is different; dyslexia should be thought of as part of human diversity, as a continuum or spectrum. Therefore every individual with dyslexia will differ in the range of factors that are affected and in the level of severity experienced.

Dyslexia occurs despite normal teaching, and is independent of socio-economic background or intelligence. It is however, more easily detected in those with average or above average intelligence.

Early identification and provision.

The school's policy for assessment and identification of children's special needs is set out in the SEND Policy. It is the teacher's responsibility to recognise the early signs of dyslexia and arrange for preliminary assessment, in liaison with SENCO. Parents and carers also need to be informed of the difficulties their child is encountering. It may be their initial concerns that have alerted the teacher.

Assessment should include: background information, pupil interview, classroom observation and criterion referenced assessments.

Identification:

Learning characteristic associated with dyslexia:

The nature of a students' **dyslexic profile** can vary from individual to individual in the nature of their difficulties and in their severity. Each student will also have developed different strategies to accommodate those difficulties.

Reading:

- Tracking difficulties within reading text
- Loosing place in text
- Poor phonological processing
- Difficulties with blending and segmenting words
- Slow rates of reading
- Poor reading comprehension, student need to re-read text numerous times to grasp and hold meaning.

Writing

- Significant discrepancy between verbal and written performance.
- Persistent of severe problems with spelling, erratic spelling, even with 'easy' or common words.
- Tendency to confuse similar letter shapes: e.g. b/d; p/q; m/w
- Visual-perceptual disturbances (words dance/float/blur/swirl when reading.
- Problems with sentence structure, punctuation and organisation of written work.
- Copying from the board.

General:

- Slower processing of information.
- Remembering instructions.
- Disorganisation – chaotic notes, homework or coursework late, is frequently late for lessons, takes ages to change after PE, loses schoolbag, diary etc.
- Difficulty in sequencing of alphabet, days, months, numbers and of instructions and task activity.
- Tiredness leading to lack of motivation/avoidance tactics.
- Frustration which leads to disaffected behaviour.
- Distinctive patters of strengths and weaknesses across the curriculum – for example, English may often be an area of relative weakness; and 'essay-based- subjects (e.g. History, RE etc.
- Teachers may notice that exam scores don't match with the level of competence displayed in discussion or in orally-based learning.
- Difficulties became exacerbated when under pressure of time.

Provision

Access to the mainstream Curriculum

- Pupils with dyslexia have access to the full, broad and balanced curriculum.
- All staff are responsible for meeting the needs of pupils with dyslexia and have an understanding of implications this has on the subject they co-ordinate.
- Staff use multi-sensory techniques to facilitate learning. Pupils access the curriculum through differentiated tasks, outcomes and resources. Staff produce learning materials that are dyslexia friendly.

Staff support pupils in some, or all, of the following ways on a day-to-day basis.

General:

- Raise pupils' self-esteem. Reward what can be achieved. This is the single most important factor in achievement according to pupils themselves.
- Use the information on the Pupil's Profiles which takes into account pupil's strengths, difficulties and how they want to be helped.

Instructions:

- Give limited instructions at a time. Be aware that the pupil may find it hard to hold questions, information or instructions in their head for long enough to act on them, and:
 - Repeat instructions/questions;
 - Chunk instructions rather than saying in one long string;
 - Jot them down on a sticky note, or encourage the pupil to do so.

Time

- Give student **'thinking time'** to process information and respond appropriately. Give extra time during tests/exams.

Peer support

- Have pupils work in pairs – dyslexic pupil who has good ideas but difficulty with spelling and handwriting with a pupil who is good at writing but not so strong with ideas.

Marking - spelling

- Mark the content rather than presentation.
- When marking praise for two correct spellings, target two incorrect spellings and use these errors as teaching points. Suggest a way of avoiding the mistake in the future – for example, the similarity of the spelling to other known words, or the 'tricky bit, that has to be learnt.
- Teach the spelling of subject specific words. Do not overload pupils.
- Give all pupils a list of subject specific words to be stuck into their exercise books for reference.

- Have list of subject specific words on display in the classroom

Reading

- Match reading resources to an individual **reading ability/reading age** or read to them by a study buddy or TA. Avoid embarrassing pupil by asking them to read aloud in front of others, unless they volunteer.

Recording

- Enable student to record their ideas using alternatives to writing: Power Point presentation, making posters, oral presentation, and mind maps, matching labels to pictures/diagrams/maps, sorting statements or pictures into categories.

Understanding

- Highlight the main points in text to support comprehension, prediction and recall.
- Teach key vocabulary for new topics – use flash cards, word mats, and posters/word walls.

Scaffold writing:

- Provide writing frames and templates (e.g. writing up a science experiment) to help structure thinking.
- Support prompt sheets: questions to answer, key words to build each section or paragraph around, sentences or paragraphs to put in correct order, paragraphs opening.
- Use close procedures (when pupil fills missing words in text).

Whiteboard - Worksheets

- Use **non-white**/cream/pastel background for all materials – many people with dyslexia find that with a white background and black text it causes the print to blur or move about. Avoid using black colour font.
- Use the following **fonts**: Arial, Tahoma, Verdana, Comic Sans M
- Use 14 font minimum when possible
- Space information clearly – **1.5 line spacing** is better than single.

Homework

- If homework is not on 'Show my homework',
- Time - give student sufficient time to record h/w in journal/planner.
- Help - write down homework for the pupil, or give it on a pre-print sticky label or sheet that they can stick into their book.
- Phone a friend - allocate a homework buddy they can ring if they have forgotten what to do (phone a friend).

Avoid:

- Underlining as it tends to make the text appear to run together.
- WRITING ALL IN CAPITALS – lower case words are easier to read.

- Do not ask a student with dyslexia to read in front of the class, unless previously agreed with the student
- *Italics* slow you down.
- Double-sided worksheet with text on one side and questions on the other: This load on working memory,
- Asking pupil to copy from the board – have them work with a study buddy, or quickly jot things down for them, or use a photocopied transcript.

Teaching styles

- Use multi-sensory teaching approached to ensure that information is absorbed and stored – visual, auditory, kinaesthetic. Many people with dyslexia are kinaesthetic learners so use movement, rhythm, and visual activities to stimulate memory and trigger recall.

Most people have a dominant learning style:

<u>Auditory learners</u>	<u>Kinaesthetic learners</u>	<u>Visual learners</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Talk to themselves ✓ Likes speeches/singing ✓ Prefer verbal instructions ✓ Easily distracted by noise ✓ Listen well ✓ Like lectures ✓ Enjoy rhythm and rhyme ✓ Remember by listening ✓ Recall conversations ✓ Spell out loud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like physical activity • Move a lot • Make and/or alter things • Remember by doing • Like action words • Use gestures • Fidget • Like close proximity • Need to visit a place to remember it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need and tidy workplace ▪ Like tidy work ▪ Plan ahead ▪ Like detail ▪ Like to look good ▪ Like similes and metaphors ▪ Like pictorial lessons ▪ Don't listen well ▪ Day dream often ▪ Like an overall view ▪ Draw, scribble, doddle ▪ Prefer images to words
Auditory learners say: "That rings a bell". "Sounds great to me".	Kinaesthetic learners say: "Let's tackle the issue" "Run that by me" "I'll handle that"	Visual learners say: "That looks right to me" "I can see what you mean" "I can picture the scene"

Addressing different learning styles in lessons:

<u>Auditory learners</u>	<u>Kinaesthetic learners</u>	<u>Visual learners</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Explain ✓ Repeat ✓ Discuss ✓ Use tapes ✓ Use poems ✓ Tell stories ✓ Use dialogue ✓ Use drama ✓ Read aloud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be practical • Use three dimensional models • Make things • Use tactile experience • Move about • Write 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use pictures ▪ Use diagrams ▪ Use colour coding ▪ Use highlighting ▪ Use handouts ▪ Do practical demonstrations

Exams arrangements:

- Special arrangements are made for pupils with dyslexia taking school exams – these are called ‘Access Arrangements’.

Dyslexia resources:

- The school is building a resource bank of materials suited to teaching pupils with dyslexia:
 - Alpha and Omega, The A-Z of teaching reading, writing and spelling.
 - Online touch typing (TTRS)
 - Barrington Stoke books – dyslexia friendly
 - Word Shark 5
 - Reading rulers
 - Literacy games
 - Maths games
 - Catch-Up literacy and Numeracy Programmes
 - Dyslexia friendly Classroom resources such as: ‘Goody boxes’ in Maths and English classrooms.
 - ‘Mobile Library’.

Partnership with parents and carers

We encourage parents and careers to share their concerns and recognise that any anxieties are very often justified. We welcome information parents have regarding their child. We share information with parents about the measures that are being taken to address the child’s difficulties and ensure that parents understand the system, (the 2015 Code of Practice, role of staff, support services and funding system). We ensure that parents are involved in the planning additional support and the review of progress their child makes.