



Supporting Specific Learning Difference (Dyslexia): Guidance for Parents.

Background

Every pupil has a unique profile of strengths, skills and areas for development. This can be described as 'learning differences'. Learning differences are a normal part of development. In a small number of pupils, a learning difference presents a barrier to one aspect of learning. This is known as a Specific Learning Difference. Dyslexia is one type of Specific Learning Difference.

The Scottish Government in 2009 defined Dyslexia as follows. "Dyslexia can be described as a continuum of difficulties in learning to read, write and / or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities and may not be typical of performance in other areas.

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning and teaching environment, as there are often associated difficulties such as:

- auditory and/or visual processing of language-based information;
- phonological awareness;
- oral language skills and reading fluency;
- short-term and working memory;
- sequencing and directionality difficulties;
- number skills;
- organisational ability;

Motor skill and co-ordination may also be affected".

The St Ninian's Cluster is committed to raising attainment and ensuring equity for all pupils. It aims to ensure that strengths and individual approaches to learning are recognised and nurtured, and that any barriers to learning are identified and addressed.

The Key Aims of this Guidance on Specific Learning Difference (Dyslexia) is to:

- provide information on the assessment process
- provide strategies on how we can work together to support your child
- signpost you to where you can find further information and resources

Most pupils acquire and develop literacy skills easily if they attend school regularly, have access to appropriate learning opportunities and receive support at home. However, for some

pupils, literacy skills develop more slowly or with greater difficulty than would be expected. Dyslexia is a Specific Learning Difference which can cause significant difficulty in learning to read, write and / or spell. The impact of Dyslexia is on a continuum, varying from mild to moderate to severe. Dyslexia affects between 3% and 10% of the population and occurs across all cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. Both boys and girls can be identified as having Dyslexia (Peterson & Pennington, 2012).

The Process for identifying Specific Learning Difference (Dyslexia)

This process will include gathering information and evidence in the following key areas:

- **Development of literacy skills**
- **Learning Environment / School Experience**
- **Support Over Time**
- **Wellbeing**
- **Parent / Carer and Pupil Views**

It is important that assessment for a Specific Learning Difference (Dyslexia) is completed over a period of time to provide greater certainty that an identification of Specific Learning Difference (Dyslexia) is accurate and appropriate.

The Process

Parents and carers will be kept up to date throughout the process (as appropriate).

Step 1: Class Based Strategies (almost all pupils' needs will be met using these strategies).

Step 2: If expected progress has not been made, the Additional Support Needs (ASN) Coordinator and the Class Teacher review these strategies. Further strategies may be implemented at this stage.

Step 3: If expected progress has not been made, a school review meeting will be arranged with parents / carers, the pupil (where appropriate) and school staff. This is to review the strategies and intervention. It will also provide opportunity for parents / carers to share their knowledge and views of the pupil's literacy progress within the home context.

Step 4: Where there are concerns regarding Specific Learning Difference (Dyslexia), all evidence will be considered at the school's Pupil Support Group in order to reach a conclusion to the assessment process. The Educational Psychologist is part of the school team who review the evidence collected and determine if there is a Learning Difference of Dyslexia.

At each step there will be one of up to three outcomes.

Outcome 1: Child is making expected progress.

Outcome 2: Further evidence gathering and a period of intervention required.

Outcome 3: Child is not making expected progress and will move onto the next step.

In cases where a private assessment has identified a Specific Learning Difference (Dyslexia), the parent / carer should provide a copy of the report to the school's ASN Co-ordinator. Schools should give regard to private reports and take their contents into account when planning for the pupil's learning and support. However, contextual assessment of the pupils' literacy skills will continue in school.

Support and Interventions

Specific Learning Differences such as Dyslexia do not reflect upon an individual's general cognitive ability, and pupils are likely to have strengths and skills in other aspects of the curriculum. With effective support strategies, pupils with Dyslexia should achieve their full potential in school. Some useful websites are shown below.

Websites	
Parents	<p>General Information.</p> <p>Dyslexia Scotland: http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk</p> <p>Understanding Dyslexia: http://www.parentchampions.org.uk/resources/understanding-dyslexia-booklet/</p>
Pupils	<p>Dyslexia Unwrapped: https://unwrapped.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/</p>
Access to Reading Books and Typing	<p>http://www.seeingear.org/ Enables you to down load audio books. You will need to register, but the books are free to use if you have a definition of a Learning Difference of Dyslexia.</p> <p>https://www.gutenberg.org Enables you to download books which are out of copyright. You can use iPad / tablet speech feature to read them.</p> <p>Amazon.co.uk for Kindle Look for free books here.</p> <p>www.doorwayonline.org.uk Reinforcement spelling patterns and rules. Typing skills.</p> <p>https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/articles/z3c6tfr Typing skills.</p>
Setting up an iPad or iPhone	<p>To add speech to your iPhone or iPad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to settings • General

- Accessibility
- Speech
- Speak selection (switch on)
- Speak Screen (switch on)
- You can set the reading speed – tortoise slower, hare faster

You can also use display accommodations to show colour filters which may help with reading.

Some websites when requested on an iPhone or iPad have some lines next to the web address. This when tapped take out all adverts and enable speech function to be used to support reading of the content. All you do is swipe two fingers from the top to bottom of the screen and the text can be read.

All mobile phones have similar functions.

Transition Support

Transitions are effectively managed from one academic session to the next. A profile of strengths and any strategies and intervention(s) in place will be passed to key members of school staff to support a seamless transition for pupils.

Where there is a transition from Primary to Secondary school the child will be discussed at a transition PSG where important information will be shared to enable a seamless transition to be made.

Prior to leaving Secondary School, each child will have an updated profile which can be used by the individual post education.