



## **Dyslexia Policy**

Issue Date: November 2021

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

### **AIMS:**

The staff and school environment within The Windmills Junior School, supports the aim to minimise any barriers to learning that dyslexic pupils may encounter in order to ensure that they meet their full academic potential and enjoy their learning. Through careful tracking the progress of dyslexic pupils will be closely monitored to ensure that any gap in progress narrows year-on-year and support is targeted to match the pupils individual needs.

### **1. WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?**

Sir Jim Rose in his report 'Identifying and Teaching Children and Young People with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties defined Dyslexia as:

*'A learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Its characteristics feature phonological awareness, verbal memory, and verbal processing speed.'*

For Dyslexia Awareness Week 2014 The British Dyslexia Association's (BDA) defined dyslexia as:

*Dyslexia is a learning difference, a combination of strengths and weaknesses which affect the learning process in reading, spelling, writing and sometimes numeracy. People with dyslexia may also have accompanying weaknesses in short term memory, sequencing and the speed at which they process information. These are skills that everyone needs if they are to learn and work effectively.*

The BDA recognizes that:

*Some children have outstanding creative skills; others have strong oral skills.*

*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.*

### **2. PRINCIPLES**

The Windmills Junior School recognises the strengths of pupils with dyslexia and work with them to find techniques that they can use, that work for them, to access the elements of the curriculum that they find more challenging. We will identify and respond to the "unexpected difficulties" that a dyslexic learner may encounter. We recognise that pupils with dyslexia are likely to experience higher levels of frustration with their learning compared to their peers, as they struggle to comprehend or access specific learning that their peers seem to be able to just pick up. This may impact on their perception of themselves as successful learners and their emotional well-being.

Governors, senior leaders and teachers are all committed to supporting pupils with dyslexia so that they can access learning across the curriculum. Teachers are frequently trained in the techniques and resources that help dyslexic children to learn so that they are well supported. We are an inclusive school and have high expectations of all children, irrespective of their starting points and the achievement of pupils is seen as everybody's responsibility.

### **3. 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 assessments, in liaison with the Inclusion Manager. Parents and carers also need to be informed of the difficulties their child is encountering. Indeed, it may be their initial concerns that have alerted the teacher.

## The Dyslexic Profile:

The purpose of this section is not to provide a checklist through which a pupil may be labelled as dyslexic, but rather, to support teachers to be aware of learners who may require more differentiated teaching approaches to support their literacy development.

A primary school pupil with dyslexia may experience difficulties in all or some of the following areas. Many of the following difficulties can be found in younger children. For example, many pupils reverse letters until around the age of 8 years. Concerns regarding dyslexia should only arise if such difficulties continue when additional support has been given, and/or when they are combined with a number of other difficulties:

- a poor sense of direction and confuse left and right
- difficulty tying shoe laces and dressing
- a discrepancy between receptive and expressive language (Receptive language means the ability to understand information. It involves understanding the words, sentences and meaning of what others say or what is read. Expressive language means being able to put thoughts into words and sentences, in a way that makes sense and is grammatically accurate)
- short-term memory limitations, for instance, finding it hard to remember arithmetic tables, the alphabet or classroom instructions
- pronounced reading difficulties (retaining common words and blends / sounds of letters)
- hesitant or laboured reading
- omitted lines or repetition of the same line-loss of place in the text
- muddling words that look alike, e.g. “no” and “on”, “for” and “off” and “was” and “saw”
- difficulties in saying multi-syllabic words
- problems understanding what they have read
- difficulties with writing and spelling
- a disparity between written and spoken language
- messy work, for example, curled pages, crossings out and badly set out
- handwriting that looks heavy and laborious
- find copying from a board difficult (the letters and words become jumbled)

Family history is significant as dyslexia is often inherited. However, it is important to remember that parents may not be aware of their own dyslexia. There are other general “tell-tale” signs so a dyslexic child may:

- Appear bright and able, but cannot get their thoughts down on paper
- Have areas in which they excel, particularly in drama, art and debating
- Be clumsy
- Act as the “class clown” to mask what they see as their academic failure
- Become withdrawn and isolated, sitting at the back and not participating
- Be able to do one thing at a time very well but can’t remember an entire list
- Look “glazed” when language is spoken too quickly
- Go home exhausted at the end of a normal day because they have had to put so much effort into learning

## 4. ASSESSMENT

Assessment should include: background information, pupil interview, classroom observation, review of progress, standardised tests such as reading and spelling tests, and at The Windmills Junior School we use the Lucid Dyslexia screener which gives an indication of dyslexic tendencies. Only an Educational Psychologist or an appropriately qualified specialist dyslexia teacher with a post graduate Diploma in Specific Learning Difficulties and an assessment Practising Certificate can diagnose someone with Dyslexia. Parents can apply privately for a diagnosis but The Windmills Junior School does not have the budget, or access to an Educational Psychologist to have a formal diagnosis carried out. Any child who is assessed as having an indication of dyslexia will be supported through the use of the know techniques and resources.

Action taken is guided by the school's SEND Policy, the SEN Code of Practice 2015, and the available school resources. It may include all or some of the following:

- Appropriate differentiated planning by the class teacher
- Supportive resources and different equipment (different children find different resources useful)
- Specific targeted interventions
- Additional time and over learning to try and secure learning from the short term to long term memory
- Support from a Teaching Assistant, under the guidance of the class teacher
- Regular reviews to determine progress and evaluate effectiveness of support
- Consultation with or referral to the West Sussex Learning and Inclusion Advisory Team
- Educational Psychologists are always involved with children who have a Statement or Education & Health Care Plan (EHCP), as well as with those who are undergoing Statutory Assessment for an Education & Health Care Plan. Please see West Sussex Local Offer website for guidance on the criteria in order to apply for an EHCP.

## 5. 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
- Staff use multi-sensory techniques to facilitate learning
- Pupils access the curriculum through differentiated tasks, support, scaffolds, specific instructions 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 (using a growth mindset about effort and success)
- Give limited instructions at a time, ask pupils to repeat instructions to you, repeat instructions until s/he can repeat them back
- Allow more time for tasks such as getting out books, getting started, completing work
- Supported to structure ideas and get work started using scaffolds
- Use of routine and structure in an organised classroom
- Use of visual timetables

*Environment:*

- Make sure everyone can see your face and vice versa
- There may be a child who would benefit from sitting at the front of class (as reward not punishment) – especially if easily distracted
- Consider using a buddy system
- Try to minimise distractions, e.g. shut doors
- Make sure all the children have enough room where seated, to maximise their ability to focus

*Presenting and / or giving instructions:*

- Learning cursive script helps with hand writing and spelling.
- Use multi-sensory methods to reinforce letter writing e.g. interactive whiteboard/ ipads
- Teaching terms such as vowels, consonants, syllables, suffixes, prefixes can aid learning.
- Mnemonics can aid memory for spelling tricky words.
- Encourage spelling out loud using letter names and always allow time for repetition/over-learning.
- Touch typing skills/ rubber pen grips can help those with hand writing difficulties.

### Spelling and Handwriting:

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- Encourage spelling out loud using letter names and always allow time for repetition/over-learning.
- Touch typing skills/ rubber pen grips can help those with hand writing difficulties.
- Teach the spelling of subject specific words, do not overload pupils
- Daily spelling sessions using Read, Write, Inc spelling scheme
- Spellings are supported by Look, Cover, Write, Check and /or common word flash cards
- Word banks of common high frequency words
- Have lists of subject specific words on display in teaching rooms
- Allow the pupils to read work back to you if you cannot read it and transcribe – reward the content

### Reading:

- Do not ask pupils to read aloud without preparation
- Teach unfamiliar subject words
- Help with study skills such as skimming, scanning, selecting key words
- Teachers' handwriting is legible and worksheets are typed in dyslexia friendly fonts

### Study techniques:

- Encourage various ways of recording information e.g. mind maps, spider diagrams, bullet points.
- Use writing frames to help organise and get thoughts down on paper e.g. Story humps, mind maps, tables, linear plans.
- Provide coloured reading rulers for students who find words "jump around" and encourage the use of highlighters to pin point key information in text.
- Do not demand a complete re-write of work and create a 'checklist' of what to look out for. E.g. spelling errors, commas, full stops, capital letters, and apostrophes.
- Give time to organise equipment before lesson and clear away at the end.
- Allow enough time for participants to process information - whether reading, writing or verbal response task.

### Written work:

- Encourage legible handwriting but do not expect it to change
- Do not ask for work to be written out again unless it is much worse than usual
- Accept less written work. Use writing frames, sentence starters, mind maps, picture prompts etc

### Written material:

- Where possible, print handouts on pastel-coloured paper rather than white.
- Use fonts such as Arial, Verdana, Tahoma, a minimum font size of 12/14.
- Double line spacing and a line between paragraphs makes text easier to read.
- Putting headings and important points in bold or highlight makes them easier to scan.
- Present written information as concisely as possible, using bullet points, images or diagrams when possible.
- 'Chunked' numbers are easier to copy and remember. For example, write 723512 as 72 35 12

### Confidence building:

- Mark on content (not spelling) – tick what is right instead of crossing what is wrong.
- Correct only a few errors, do not cover work in green ink
- Do not minimise difficulties – recognise, understand and tackle.
- Set achievable targets.
- Encourage independent learning.
- Nurture strengths.
- Praise effort.

## 6. MULTI-SENSORY LEARNING

Most people have a dominant learning style:

At The Windmills Junior school a range of teaching styles are used to engage different learners. Pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own learning style preferences.

Auditory Learners (20-30% of school age children remember what is heard)	Kinaesthetic Learners (30-40% of school age children remember when they use their hands or whole body to learn)	Visual Learners (40% of school age children remember what is seen)
Talk to themselves Mouth words Like speeches/singing Tell jokes Prefer verbal instructions Easily distracted by noise Listen well Enjoy rhythm and rhyme Remember by listening Recall conversations Use talk well Spell out loud	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	Neat 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, doodle Prefer images to words
Auditory learners say "That rings a bell", "Sounds great to me".	Kinaesthetic learners say "Let's tackle the issues", "Run that by me" or "I'll handle that".	Visual learners say "That looks right to me", "I can see what you mean" or "I can picture the scene".

Addressing different learning styles in lessons:

Auditory Learners	Kinaesthetic Learners	Visual Learners
Explain Repeat Discuss Use tapes Use poems Tell stories Use dialogue Use drama Read aloud	Be practical Use three dimensional models Make things Use tactile experience Move about Write	Use pictures Use diagrams Use colour coding Use highlighting Use handouts Do practical demonstrations

The school is building a resource bank of materials suited to teaching pupils with dyslexia. These 'Wave 3' materials include:

- Spelling interventions such as Accelerad /Accelewrite, Direct Phonics, Stareway to Spelling
- WESFORD (Wiltshire Early Screening For Dyslexia) precision teaching scheme
- Reading comprehension skills
- Dyslexia Quest
- Clicker
- Online touch-typing tutors eg BBC Dancemat
- Dragon Speaking
- Toe by Toe
- Barrington Stoke reading books – dyslexia friendly page colour and font used.
- Reading rulers and coloured overlays

## 7. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS & CARERS

We encourage parents and carers to share their concerns with us as soon as possible. They know their child well and may spot signs that would indicate dyslexia that we might not see in a busy classroom (left/ right confusion or only being able to follow one instruction at a time). We welcome information parents have regarding their child so that we can build up a complete picture of them as a learner and what areas they need specific support with.

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). Children with dyslexia are not automatically placed on the SEND register, each case is individual and will depend on the severity of the dyslexia and if it is impact on their progress. Where pupils make less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances, despite responding with high quality teaching aimed at their areas of weakness, the class teacher, working with the Inclusion Manager, should assess whether the pupil has special educational needs.