

Useful Contacts

Leeds City Council, Learning Inclusion Service

SEN Inclusion Team (SENIT) & Educational Psychology Team

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SENIT@Leeds.gov.uk

Leeds SEND Information Advice Support Service (SENDIASS)

Advice line: 0113 3785020

Email: leedssendiass@leeds.gov.uk

Contact us using this form on our website [Get in touch - Get in touch - SENDIASS \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)

Dyslexia Alliance Yorkshire

www.dayonline.org.uk

Phone: [07380633826](tel:07380633826)

British Dyslexia Association

www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

The British Dyslexia Association

Unit 8, Bracknell Beeches, Old Bracknell Lane, Bracknell, Reading RG12 7BW

Tel: 0333 405 4555

Helpline: 0333 405 4567

Leeds and Bradford Dyslexia Association (LABDA)

www.labda.org.uk

See website for contact/ helpline details

See website for details of Parent Support Group

Family Guide to

Dyslexia

Leeds Learning Inclusion Service

Specific Learning Difficulties &
Dyslexia in Context



What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty (or difference) that can cause problems with reading, writing and spelling. It's a specific learning difficulty, which means it causes problems with certain abilities used for learning, such as reading and writing. Many children and adults with dyslexia will have a range of strengths and talents.

In 2009, Sir Jim Rose wrote a review of dyslexia which included a working definition. This has been adopted by schools and settings across the UK.

Here is the definition below:

- 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 coordination, 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.'

It is generally agreed that the earlier dyslexic difficulties are identified, the better are the chances of putting children on the road to success.

In his definition, Rose reminds us that well founded intervention can make a difference. Most learners with a profile of dyslexia will respond well to support.

Effective interventions 'personalise learning' by matching provision to meet children's individual needs and quicken the pace of learning for those with literacy difficulties.

Glossary—some helpful terms

Phonological Awareness is thought to be a key skill in early reading and spelling development. It is the ability to identify how words are made up of smaller units of sound, known as phonemes. Changes in the sounds that make up words can lead to changes in their meaning. For example, a child with a good level of phonological awareness would understand that if you change the letter "p" in the word "pat" to "s", the word becomes "sat".

Verbal Memory is often considered to be a type of short term memory which reflects **the ability to hold information as "active" or available in one's mind for a brief amount of time**. Short term verbal memory (STVM) involves three components: capacity, duration, and encoding.

Verbal processing speed describes the fluency of a verbal response to information – so the ability to verbally recall information from long term memory in response to visual or verbal information. For example, quickly naming a series of known letters, pictures or numbers.

Co-occurring difficulties: Dyslexia and many other learning difficulties do not always occur in isolation. It is quite common for an individual to have co-occurring conditions, such as Developmental Coordination Difficulties (DCD) or Dyscalculia.

Intervention: This is a timed (usually about 20 minutes daily/ three times a week) set of sequential lessons, aimed at enabling a pupil achieve specific targets.

SPLD: The term 'Specific Learning Difficulty' (SpLD) refers to a difference / difficulty people have with particular aspects of learning. The most common SpLDs are Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyscalculia and Dysgraphia.

SENIT; Special Educational Needs Inclusion Team: A group of specialist teachers working for the Local Authority. SENIT visit school, on request to support children and young people who are struggling to make good progress in line with their peer group. They can give a professional opinion as to whether a pupil's difficulties meet the applied definition of dyslexia and advise on inclusive practice and intervention to raise achievement.

EPT are educational Psychologists who work for the Local Authority.... :

FAQs ? ? ? ? ?

Are all children with reading difficulties dyslexic?

There are two distinct forms of reading disorders in children: dyslexia (a difficulty in learning to translate print into speech) and reading comprehension impairment. Some children with reading difficulties may be able to read accurately but struggle to understand what they have written. These children would not be described as having dyslexia. In such cases, provision should focus on developing oral and written comprehension skills.

Why do some children experience dyslexia?

Research into causation is still ongoing. The causes of dyslexia are complex and these may vary between individuals but are likely to include difficulties with phonological processing (including phonological awareness, phonological memory and phonological processing). Sensory processing issues and difficulties in becoming automatic with key literacy skills may also play a part.

Is dyslexia hereditary?

Yes. Understanding the interaction between genes and the environment can be complex. However, long held theories that SpLD (dyslexia) can be inherited have been substantiated. This is why it is important to check whether family members have experienced similar difficulties.

Can dyslexia occur across the full range of abilities?

Yes, whilst it can be useful to explore a pupil's cognitive ability to inform provision, assessors recognize that dyslexia can occur in individuals of all levels of ability. It is therefore no longer acceptable to use a discrepancy model to decide who is and who isn't dyslexic.

My daughter received a diagnosis of dyslexia whilst at university. Why was this not recognised earlier?

Dyslexia exists on a continuum. Not all individuals are severely affected and it is possible for individuals to succeed, with some compensatory strategies, throughout their school life and examinations without causing concerns around progress. As curriculum or subject demands become more challenging and complex, underlying difficulties may become evident. It may only be at this point that it is appropriate to investigate such difficulties further.

Support in School

Who identifies dyslexia?

A formal identification would be made by a specialist teacher with an accredited Level 7 Diploma in Specific Literacy Difficulties or an educational psychologist. However, we encourage all schools to attend training so that they can appropriately identify which CYP have a profile of dyslexia so that the right provision can be in place without the need for a formal identification.

Schools have three tiers of provision:

- **Universal:** available for all pupils in class. This includes reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to learning
- **Targeted:** small group intervention, usually for a set time 3-5 times per week.
- **Personalised:** one to one support, usually for a set time 3-5 times per week.

The arrangements of this will vary from school to school. Your SENCo will be able to discuss these with you.

The Learning Inclusion service has created a Continuum of Support, (seen here) which is available on Leeds for Learning. This is designed to support our schools to plan provision across a continuum of need for CYP with a profile of dyslexia with or without a formal identification.

Our continuum describes provision across the three tiers or provision (Universal, Targeted & Personalised). This includes links to provision and training for staff working with children and young people with a dyslexic profile.

| | Whole School | Universal in the Classroom | Targeted | Personalised |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Whole School | <p>Raise awareness of dyslexia across the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use clip See Dyslexia Differently with pupils to begin a conversation about positive elements of having dyslexia. • Celebrate Dyslexia Awareness week (every October) using materials from the SDA or materials from 1000 Leeds 1000 pages. • Google 'Successful Dyslexics' to begin researching successful adults who all struggled with literacy at school. • Invest in books to support self-esteem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dyslexia: A Survival Guide (available free as an e-book or paper copies can be purchased) • The Successful Guide to Dyslexia and Its Amazing Friends (for pupils) • Creative, Successful, Dyslexic: 21 Inspiring Achievers Share Their Stories (for parents) | | | |
| Universal in the Classroom | <p>Seating arrangements If a pupil's underlying ability is good, pupils are likely to feel more confident in a handwriting middle to high ability group, adjusted to a pupil who is sensitive to need.</p> <p>Support reading of whole class texts by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employing a paired reading approach with a peer • Using assistive tech (e.g. Voiceover PDF reader, PDF reader, Bookshare, ePen Reader) • Sending home passages to read as paired reading with parents or pre-teach before a lesson • Teaching key vocabulary through visualisation <p>Support Writing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing unnecessary writing e.g. Stick the Learning Outcome into books with Velcro before the lesson starts. • Teaching mind-mapping skills • Using colour boxes that include visuals of key topic words • Teaching pupils how to use phonetic word books • Use of assistive technology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech to text software (built into assistive software, Dragon, Read & Write, Voiceover) • Laptop/Chrome books (pupil to type written work with spell check turned on) • Apps to support spelling (e.g. Just Spelt) <p>Support whole class quiet reading time by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding age appropriate library style readers for pupils with lower reading age (e.g. Storyline, Jolly) • Downloading class readers or popular stories as audiobooks <p>Support pupils to develop spelling by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using weekly spellings to structured lists in intervention • Timetable 'a little and often' spelling practice into the school week • Using a Quiet spelling diary to support multisensory spelling practice. • Developing sound practice to support practice | | | |
| Targeted | <p>www.1000pages.com (3 x weekly for 30 minutes, small group)</p> <p>1000 Pages (3 x weekly for 30 minutes, small group)</p> | <p>www.1000pages.com (3-5 x weekly for 30 minutes, small group)</p> <p>1000 Pages (3 x weekly for 30 minutes, small group)</p> | <p>www.1000pages.com (3-5 x weekly for 30 minutes, small group)</p> <p>1000 Pages (3 x weekly for 30 minutes, small group)</p> | <p>www.1000pages.com (3-5 x weekly for 30 minutes, small group)</p> <p>1000 Pages (3 x weekly for 30 minutes, small group)</p> |
| Personalised | <p>www.1000pages.com (1-3 - 5 x weekly for 30 minutes)</p> | <p>www.1000pages.com (1-3 - 5 x weekly for 30 minutes)</p> | <p>www.1000pages.com (1-3 - 5 x weekly for 30 minutes)</p> | <p>www.1000pages.com (1-3 - 5 x weekly for 30 minutes)</p> |
| Specialist | <p>Specialist Teacher* 1-3 hours per week Plus targeted follow up</p> <p>*for pupils in receipt of Level 2 for 2 SpLD funding</p> | | | |

How to support your child

If you are concerned about your child's learning:

- Ensure basic health checks (e.g. eyesight and hearing) are up to date.
- Communicate with school sharing any concerns and successes.
- Ask your child's teacher how the school supports children learning to read and write. Strategies may have changed since you were at school!
- If you continue to have concerns, contact your school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and arrange a meeting to discuss.

Homework:

1. Remember to give your child time to relax when they return from school. They may find school tiring due to the extra energy needed to 'keep up'.
2. Get into clear routines. Set regular times and places. This can encourage concentration (and willingness!).
3. If tasks appear too difficult, or take a long time to complete, discuss this with the teacher who set it. Agree adjustments such as alternative method of recording or a later submission date.
4. At exam time encourage an early start to revision. Use alternative ways to record such as mind maps and visual (picture) supports as prompts.

Self Esteem:

As a parent you will no doubt place a high priority on supporting your child's self esteem. Below are a few resources to help promote a positive self image.

Useful Links

- [Dyslexia the Gift](#) is a website dedicated to promoting a positive view of Dyslexia. It includes examples of people who have dyslexia and achieved.
- The clip [See Dyslexia Differently](#) is a lovely way to begin a conversation about positive elements of having dyslexia.

Books:

- [Tom's special Talent](#) (Kate Gaynor),
- [Dyslexia and my Superpower](#) (Margaret Rooke)
- [Dyslexia Explained](#); (available free as an e-book ,paper copies can be purchased)
- [The Illustrated Guide to Dyslexia and Its Amazing People](#); (for pupils)
- [Creative, Successful, Dyslexic: 23 High Achievers Share Their Stories](#) (for parents)

How we support children

The Learning Inclusion Service supports schools in developing their own capacity in meeting the needs of pupils through consultation and training.

School assessment and provision should enable the majority of pupils to make progress. In some cases pupils benefit from additional assessment and advice. If school feels that your child has not made expected progress, in spite of appropriate teaching and provision, and meets the criteria for the Learning Inclusion Team to be involved, school may make a request for assessment and advice.

Once agreed, we will contact school. We will:

- Meet with staff and yourself to begin to build a picture of your child's strengths as well as perceived barriers to learning.
- Use specific assessments such as reading/ spelling ability, phonic knowledge, processing speed, and memory.
- Discuss how your child responds to the assessments and explore strategies that they use.
- Consider other contributing factors to learning, such as attendance or health issues (for example, hearing or visual impairment), changes of school as well as emotional or motor difficulties.
- If we feel it is appropriate we can give a pupil a label of Dyslexia after thorough assessment and consideration against the 'Rose Definition'.

