

# Dyslexia information

## Supporting students with dyslexia in North Yorkshire from 0-25 years

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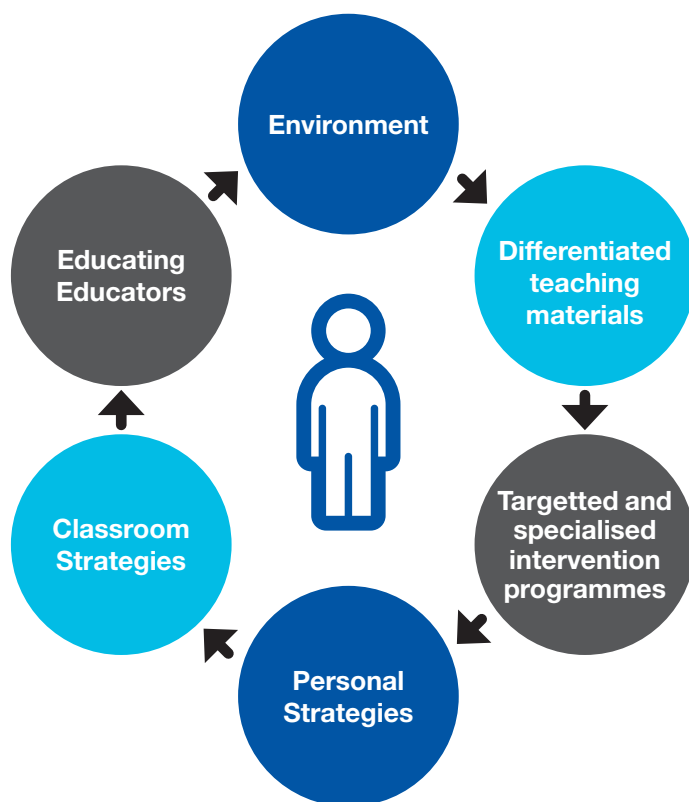
Dyslexia is a term used to describe a difficulty learning to read or interpret words, letters, and other symbols. It is known as a specific learning difference (SpLD); indicating an obvious issue that does not affect general intelligence. There may be accompanying weaknesses in short term memory, visual and auditory perception, sequencing and the speed in processing information.

Dyslexia affects an individual's ability to read, write and spell, and can have a profound effect on an individual's confidence and self-esteem... depending on the way it is perceived!

Viewing dyslexia as a learning **disability** can lead to parents/carers to search for interventions delivered by 'specialists', to improve, normalise or 'cure' the difficulty. Seeing dyslexia as a learning **difference** emphasises the uniqueness of the individual, embracing abilities and coping strategies. This encourages teachers to adopt flexible instructional methods, adapt the learning environment, material presented, and utilise various teaching styles in order to accommodate the unique learner.

In NYCC we consider the **multiple facets** which are impacting on the pupils' ability to learn, and encourage 'scaffolded' teaching, targeted interventions, and successful adaptations rather than attempting to 'correct a problem'.

## Support for pupils with dyslexia



## Identifying dyslexia

Specialist support provided by NYCC does **not** require the pupil to have a 'formal' diagnosis of dyslexia. We focus on the pupils educational profile, approach to learning and attitude to school. However, we are aware that it can be helpful for children/young people and their families to have a 'label' to explain their difficulties and are not adverse to pupils who have a SpLD profile using the term 'dyslexia'.

There is no single, specific assessment which can determine whether an individual has dyslexia. However there are certain factors which can determine its possibility, and profiles based on a range of assessments which can determine its likelihood:

- Children/young people whose parents or grandparents may have struggled to learn how to read or spell despite being otherwise capable.
- Children/young people who have delayed language development are 'at risk' in developing dyslexia.
- Children/young people who have an inconsistent academic profile where there is a mismatch between their understanding (comprehension) and ability to read and write.
- Children/young people who try to avoid activities that involve writing and reading preferring more creative methods of expressing what they know.

After taking these factors into account, we can assess children/young people using a series of standardised assessments to determine those who have who have an inconsistent profile, with particular difficulties emerging in scores of reading and writing.



### Universal

Our specialists in dyslexia are active in promoting whole class practice which involves making adjustments to the curriculum, resources, and the environment. Adopting school policy, which emphasises dyslexia -friendly practice. Altering the learning environment to enhance learning. Schools are encouraged to attain the Dyslexia Quality Mark (DQM) to demonstrate that they have implemented strategies to meet the needs of pupils with dyslexia.

### Targeted

Our education advisors and SpLD specialists can advise schools on booster and targeted interventions which focus on improving spelling, reading, handwriting, and written comprehension. Educators are taught to implement and embed these programmes within the school day. This approach provides the pupil with consistent input.



### Specialist

Our SpLD specialists support pupils by introducing strategies, interventions, and materials into the pupil's school, to ensure the pupil is successful. They may introduce specialised programmes, provide whole school training, and collaborate with staff to create an individualised provision map. They aim to enable school personnel to understand and address those pupils with a complex learning profile.

## Focus of Support

Specialist Support advises schools to implement the following:

### Environment

This involves adapting the learning environment so that it benefits the pupil with dyslexia. This may include:

- Placing wall displays behind the pupil to reduce distractions
- Tinting the colour of the white board to reduce visual stress
- Providing clear signage
- Providing a visual timetable
- Using buff coloured paper to reduce visual glare
- Blinds are provided at windows to reduce distraction
- Provision of an alphabet arc in all classrooms
- Use of privacy boards to aid visual focus
- Providing ear defenders for those easily distracted
- Ensuring that the pupil with dyslexia is positioned forward-facing, towards teacher

### Classroom Strategies

We advise teachers to implement the following strategies:

- Highlight high frequency words
- Provision of learning mats
- Availability of coloured overlays to improve reading focus
- phonics teaching
- Multisensory teaching is simultaneously visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic-tactile to enhance memory and learning.
- Use of clear fonts such as comic sans and ariel
- Printed worksheets explaining homework rather than the expectation to copy information from a black or white board
- Expectation of progress and success
- Rules regarding reading out loud in class
- Organisational prompts such as times or clocks

Targeted and Specialist Interventions

We recommend targeted programmes according to the pupils needs such as: the Active Literacy Kit, Units of Sound, AcceleRead AcceleWrite and Paired Reading.

### Personal Strategies

We suggest that children and young people are introduced to the compensatory strategies such as the use of

- Ace Dictionary and other key word dictionaries
- Mobile Phone Apps which help with with organisation, spelling, time schedules etc
- Spell checkers
- Lap top with relevant software i.e. autocorrect
- Dictaphone
- Diaries and personal organisers
- Reading pens
- Note books

### Differentiated teaching materials

We encourage the differentiation (alteration) of teaching materials such as the following:

- Adaption of teaching styles to incorporate more multi-sensory materials
- Use of lined paper/power lines
- Reducing amount of information on the page
- Altering volume of information on worksheets
- Application for examination concessions
- Use of reading window when reading text

### Educating Educators

We provide extensive training in understanding facets of dyslexia, when requested, these include:

- Short term memory
- Dyslexia-friendly strategies
- Paired Reading
- Importance of language
- How to create a dyslexia friendly school
- Link between dyslexia and mathematical difficulty
- Reading Support: Units of Sound
- Word Shark
- Spelling Strategies
- Visual Stress/Irlen Syndrome

## The Model of Support

We seek to empower teachers to understand and address the needs of pupils with dyslexia in the context of their own learning environment. The benefit of this approach is that:

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- The pupil is not stigmatised by his/her peers for being withdrawn from the classroom for 'learning support lessons'
- The child's learning needs are met in the appropriate context by teachers familiar both to the pupil, and the curricular timetable.
- The pupils teachers are empowered to deliver interventions at appropriate and convenient times, lessening the possibility that vital work is missed
- Teachers become more confident in addressing all pupils' learning needs
- Teachers are able to embed strategies throughout the school day.
- Realistic yet high expectations are maintained

This differs from a previous model whereby pupils were referred to external pupil support services. The disadvantage of this was that:

- Teachers relinquished responsibility for individual pupils needs, referring to expertise external to the school
- Pupils were withdrawn at times convenient to the support service and often missed classwork, putting them at a further disadvantage.
- Pupils were often stigmatised by their peers as needing extra help
- Support could be irregular based on the advisors availability
- Support did not always relate to the curricular topic area and therefore added a further learning dimension
- This approach lowered teachers expectations of what the pupil could and couldn't do; using the 'diagnostic label' of SpLD/dyslexia to justify limited pupil potential.

## The Support Team

NY Dyslexia Support is made up of 7 specialised teams which include a teacher in charge, full or part-time specialist teacher, and Advanced Teaching Assistant. These teams are based in 7 Secondary Schools which have an 'enhanced' status. The host school have been selected to 'champion' SpLD. The team are active in enhancing the base school, while offering an extensive outreach service to the cluster Primary and Secondary schools in their area. The teams are experienced in helping children and young people from Key Stage 1 to 4.

The team have qualifications and experience in dyslexia and are managed by the host school. They are supported by a Specialist Lead for SpLD who has qualifications in health, psychology and education, and extensive experience in supporting pupils with SpLD.

## Request for Support

There are 2 levels of support provided by this service

- 1) General advice (not relating to a specific named child/young person)
- 2a) Advice relating a specific problem (with parents/carers full consent)
- 2b) Request for involvement and a programme of intervention

\* Please note that a full assessment and request for involvement is only accepted if the pupil is **NOT** making progress





## Who do I contact?

If you believe that you, or your child, has a specific learning disability you should contact the school or early years setting in the first instance. They will have a designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) or other named individual who will be able to advise you on the support available.

**Lois M Addy**

**Specialist Lead for SpLD**

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## Contact us

**North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD**

Our Customer Service Centre is open Monday to Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm (closed weekends and bank holidays). Tel: **0845 8727374** email: **customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk**

Or visit our website at: **www.northyorks.gov.uk**

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please ask us.

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