

## Books

Books that parents, children and young people have found helpful.

*Dyslexia: Talking it Through* by Althea Braithwaite (good to read together)

*Dyslexia Explained* by Mike Jones (good to read together)

*Dyslexia: A Parent's Survival Guide* by Christine Ostler

*Practical Strategies for Living with Dyslexia* by Maria Chivers

*Overcoming Dyslexia* by Beve Hornsby

For more book suggestions, see the Dyslexia Scotland book list at the link below. See the sections for children and young people, teenagers and parents.

[www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/our-leaflets](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/our-leaflets) and click on the links under 'Further Reading' at the bottom of the page.

# Dyslexia: Information for parents/carers of Primary school children



## What is dyslexia?

Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen. A literacy difficulty can refer to difficulties in any of these areas.

When children, young people and adults have difficulty developing fluent reading and spelling, they are sometimes described as having dyslexia.

Dyslexia can occur among people of all levels of ability, of all linguistic backgrounds and in all social groups. It is a hereditary, life-long, neurodevelopmental condition. The consequences vary from learner to learner and may range from mild to severe.

Edinburgh has adopted the operational definition of dyslexia developed by the British Psychological Society:

*Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the 'word level' and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities.*

British Psychological Society 2005

## Where can I find out more?

Talk to your child's class teacher and Support for Learning staff.

If you have concerns, contact the school first to share and discuss ways to support your child, focusing on how he or she succeeds and learns best.

### Useful websites

These are websites where you can find support and up-to-date information and resources for parents.

**[www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/parent](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/parent)**

**[www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/our-leaflets](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/our-leaflets)**

Dyslexia Scotland: 0344 800 8484

**[www.unwrapped.dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://www.unwrapped.dyslexiascotland.org.uk)**

Dyslexia Unwrapped – Dyslexia Scotland website for young people with dyslexia (ages 8+)

**[www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk)**

The Scottish advice service for additional support for learning. Information about your rights as a parent. 0345 123 2303

**[www.callscotland.org.uk](http://www.callscotland.org.uk)**

A dyslexia search on this site will give a list of the latest apps and software to support your child.

**[www.nessy.com/uk/parents](http://www.nessy.com/uk/parents)**

Information and games. You can sign up to use them with your child. Search for Nessy on YouTube to find useful videos too.

**[www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/parent](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/parent)**

The British Dyslexia Association, a UK wide charity providing information and support, and online videos about dyslexia.

Please note that the education authority is not responsible for the content of external websites and may not share the opinions expressed there.

## Support with homework

Homework is often a challenge. Try to be supportive and light-hearted. Your child should not be spending far longer than others on homework. Liaise with the school and put a time limit on homework. Ensure homework does not obstruct after-school activities.



- \* Establish a homework routine that works for your child and incorporates rest periods.
- \* Create a quiet, clutter free homework area to aid focus and concentration.
- \* Go over the homework to ensure your child understands what to do. Read instructions aloud and, if necessary, practice the first example or two with them.
- \* Divide homework into manageable chunks and give breaks between tasks.
- \* Help your child to generate ideas for writing tasks and projects before they start work.
- \* Help your child to learn to check their work, developing independence as they get older.
- \* Do not get worried about the number of spelling errors – the content is more important.

Keep up communication with your son or daughter's school. Continue to share any concerns you have and to ask questions.

## Associated difficulties

We also recognise the following difficulties that can be associated with literacy difficulties/ dyslexia:



- \* **Reading comprehension** eg difficulty understanding what is read
- \* **Phonological awareness** eg difficulty identifying and processing sounds within words, for example mixing up letters within words
- \* **Processing: auditory and/or visual processing of language** eg difficulty answering a question fully as has forgotten what was asked, slow speed of reading
- \* **Short-term and working memory** eg difficulty holding sufficient information in mind to complete a task, remembers only part of a set of instructions
- \* **Organisational skills** eg forgetting to bring homework or PE kit
- \* **Emotional/behavioural** eg easily tires, finds homework frustrating
- \* **Maths** eg confusion with number order, difficulty learning tables



## Strengths associated with dyslexia

Learners with dyslexia can be:

- \* creative, enjoying practical tasks and active learning
- \* strong visual thinkers, eg seeing and thinking in 3D
- \* good verbally, in social interaction and group work



- \* good at problem-solving and seeing the whole picture

As dyslexia affects every learner differently, schools are encouraged to identify and take account of the particular strengths and areas for development for each child. This approach enables school staff to tailor support to each individual learner's needs.

## How can I help at home?

If you have concerns about your son or daughter's learning and literacy, the first thing to do is arrange a vision test and a hearing test, available for free on the NHS.

Your child may have to work harder in school than other children and can be very tired by the end of the day. Be understanding and encouraging. Tell your child what he or she is good at. If self-esteem is low, some children can find it hard to identify their strengths and may need support with this.

### Support with reading

- \* Daily reading is best, for 10 to 15 minutes at a time. Talk about the book before starting.
- \* Read the most commonly used words together, eg words from your child's environment, or a list of common words from school – make it fun!
- \* If your child makes a mistake or gets stuck, give the correct word quickly, and read it again together before reading on.
- \* Children who are reluctant to read could be encouraged to choose picture books, comic books, graphic novels, the sports page – whatever they feel comfortable with and are interested in.
- \* Read a bedtime story to your child. This is a time to enjoy books your child has chosen and can also help them learn new vocabulary and generate ideas.
- \* Your child can also listen to or read along with audiobooks.



### Support with spelling and writing

- \* Help your child to learn their spelling words, encouraging the use of as many senses as possible: look, say (sound out) and write.
- \* Little and often is best.
- \* Make it fun! Try ICT games, colour, rap or singing.
- \* Encourage as many opportunities to write or type as possible, following your child's interests.
- \* As they get older, encourage them to learn touch typing skills using a typing program.



# How will the school help my child?

## Identification of dyslexia

If you have concerns about your son or daughter's learning and literacy, discuss them with school staff. **Request the *Parent/carer information form* to enable you to fully share your concerns.**

Class teachers are in a good position to recognise that a learner may have dyslexia/have literacy difficulties.

An assessment by someone external to the school is not necessary for learners to be identified as having dyslexia.

## Gathering evidence

Assessing for and identifying dyslexia is a planned, staged process that does not rely on using a single test. Evidence is gathered over time through staff discussion and reflection, observation, looking at the child's work, class assessments and obtaining views from the child and his/her parents.

Gathered evidence is discussed and appropriate supports are put in place. How the child responds to this support is monitored and reviewed.

The Support for Learning teacher will undertake more formal standardised assessments and gather further information, if required.

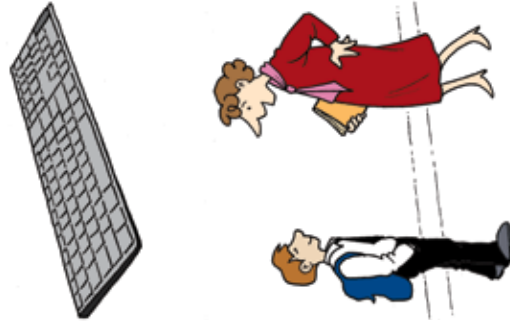
All evidence can then be collated in the CEC document 'Summary and Conclusions Framework for the identification of literacy difficulties/dyslexia'.

### \* Learning

Ask the school for a glossary of terms in new subjects, and help your child to learn or look up new vocabulary in preparation. Discuss the use of appropriate ICT to support your child, eg iPad apps or predictive software.

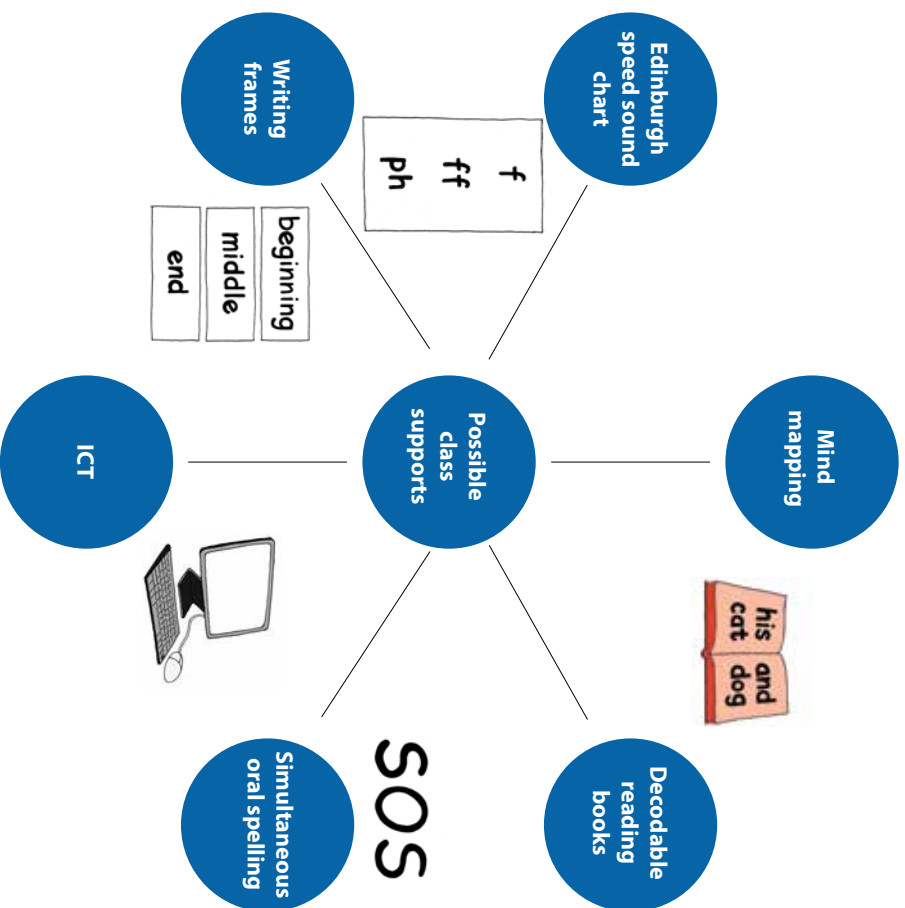
### \* Understanding

Before parents' evening, discuss with your child the strategies that work for them and any support they might still require. At parents' evening remind each subject teacher that your child has dyslexia and discuss how these strategies can be used in their subject area.



## Support in school

Class teachers use a large variety of teaching approaches, supports and strategies to meet the needs of learners with literacy difficulties/dyslexia within their class. These strategies are often sufficient to support most learners. They may be used with the whole class or a group of learners, or be specific to an individual learner.



Class teachers can also ask the school's Support for Learning teacher for advice and support. This may involve some additional assessment, and other strategies may be suggested. Sharing knowledge and understanding of your child can help ensure that strategies and supports best meet their needs.

## Transition to high school

Primary and secondary school staff work closely together to ensure a smooth transition. Transition arrangements ensure high school staff are made aware of the additional support needs of each child.

You can help with:

### \* Timetables

Help your child to read and fill in timetables. Keep timetables displayed where they can be easily seen. Colour code books and materials and match them to subjects on the timetable.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mon						
Tue						
Wed						
Thu						
Fri						

### \* Preparation

Support your child to make sure that everything needed for the next school day is in their bag the night before and the bag is placed by the front door. Get them in the habit of checking their bag for homework and school communications.

