



Making your classroom dyslexia- friendly



Waves of support

The term 'waves of support' is used to denote:

- **Wave 1** - what can every teacher do in every classroom
- **Wave 2** - effective small group interventions e.g. ALS
- **Wave 3** - intensive, structured support for pupils needing longer-term intervention.

Note of caution:

We have divided the sections as we think best to make it manageable. Some of the advice and strategies for Waves 2 and 3 may apply in your school at Wave 1.

How to use the CDROM

This CD-Rom is a Power Point presentation with word documents attached. The documents alone offer 200 pages of practical suggestions and support. The presentation is organised to enable you to deliver INSET with differing audiences.

Part 1 Making classrooms dyslexia-friendly **WAVE 1**

This section will provide all staff with knowledge and understanding of dyslexic learners, and a range of strategies to use every day to support them.

(slides 3-29)



Part 2 Effective small group / individual interventions **WAVES 2 and 3**

These slides will provide deeper knowledge and understanding for teachers and support staff who are planning and delivering additional support for dyslexic learners. (slides 30-53)



Part 3 Support for SENCOs and Senior Management. These slides will be of most interest to the SENCO or senior managers as they deal with policy issues and queries from parents. (slides 54-63)



Using the links

It is possible to go through the entire presentation using the computer's arrow keys, or to access specific areas using hyperlinks where shown:



indicates a link to another slide in the presentation



will take you back to the Contents page



will take you to a linked word document, which can be printed out



PART ONE

Making your classroom dyslexia-friendly

PART ONE

Making your classroom dyslexia-friendly

1. The inclusive classroom ▶
2. How will I recognise dyslexic learners? ▶
3. How can all teachers support dyslexic learners? ▶
 - Classroom ethos ▶
 - Access to the curriculum ▶
 - Learning styles ▶
 - Grouping ▶
 - Organisational skills ▶
 - Self-esteem ▶
 - Maths ▶
 - Display ▶
 - Marking ▶



The inclusive classroom

- In an inclusive classroom, all students are given the opportunity to access the curriculum and to achieve well.
- All learners need to acquire the skills to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Good practice for students with dyslexia is good practice for all students.



The inclusive classroom

There will be pupils with literacy difficulties in every mixed ability class you teach, so:

- Recognise that you are a teacher of dyslexic learners.
- Find out about and take account of this area of need.
- Provide supportive groupings and a supportive classroom ethos.












How will I recognise dyslexic learners?

Look out for:

- Slow reading
- Weak spelling
- Poor self esteem
- Organisational difficulties
- Sequencing errors
- Slow, inaccurate copying
- Slow recording
- Poor listening skills



How can all teachers support dyslexic learners?

- Have a positive classroom ethos 
- Improve access to the curriculum 
- Take account of different learning styles 
- Use flexible grouping 
- Develop the student's organisational skills 
- Protect and build self-esteem 
- Recognise specific difficulties in Maths 
- Use display effectively 
- Mark positively 



How can a positive classroom ethos help?

- Create a 'no failure, only feedback' ethos, where everyone is prepared to learn from their mistakes.
- Encourage 'risk taking'.
- Encourage learners to play an active role in discussions. They may well impress other students with knowledge and understanding.
- Allow 'thinking time' rather than expecting quick responses.
- Have an agreed signal so that a learner can indicate when s/he wants to contribute, or when s/he does not understand (e.g. green card/red card).



How can I improve access to the curriculum?

Ensure access to the curriculum by providing support with:

- Reading 
- Accessibility of text 
- Writing 
- Other forms of recording 



How can I improve access to the curriculum?

Reading

- Arrange for any lengthy text reading to be supported by a 'buddy' or a support assistant, or tape recorded in advance.
- Ensure that a dyslexic learner can read a text easily before expecting him/her to read aloud.
- Use cream or pastel coloured paper where possible to reduce glare.
- Use blue, brown, red, green or purple board markers in preference to black, as these are easier for some students to read.
- Use colour to separate key information written on the board.

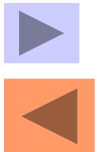


How can I improve access to the curriculum ?

Accessibility of text:

When choosing new text books or preparing worksheets, look for or use:

- an uncluttered layout with accessible key words and ideas
- shorter sentences rather than longer ones
- high frequency words in preference to less common ones
- shorter words in preference to poly-syllabic ones because longer words place more demands on auditory memory than shorter ones
- active verbs rather than passive ones
- positive statements rather than negative ones – again, harder to process
- colour to separate key information



How can I improve access to the curriculum ?

Writing:

- Use writing frames, cloze procedure exercises and jumbled text.
- Ensure learners have a model close by to copy from (not OHP or board).
- Allow students with literacy difficulties to write directly onto worksheets.
- Provide key words for independent writing.
- Encourage the use of spellcheckers and word mats.



How can I improve access to the curriculum ?

Other forms of recording:

- Recording onto tape or video camera
- Oral presentation
- Dictation to an adult or peer
- Word processing and the use of support packages. e.g. Clicker, Text Help, Crick.
- Voice recognition software
- Diagrams and charts
- Mind maps and supporting software e.g. Kidspiration
- Storyboards
- Power Point presentations



How can I take account of different learning styles?

Learners have different learning styles and you need to present information through a variety of channels. They may learn more effectively through:

- Kinaesthetic channels
- Visual channels
- Auditory channels
- or through a combination of all three.

Ensure that teaching accommodates learning styles.



How can I help kinaesthetic learners?

Kinaesthetic learners respond well to:

- active involvement
- movement
- hands-on activities
- designing and creating
- role play and drama

Remember to use vocabulary which stresses touch and movement:

- feel, touch, grasp
- solid, impression, get hold of
- make contact, catch on to
- slip through, tap into, throw out



How can I help visual learners?

Visual learners respond well to:

- diagrams
- graphs and charts
- pictures
- mind maps
- extensive use of colour
- wall charts
- posters
- videos
- performances

Remember to use vocabulary with a visual theme:

- see, look, appear, view, show, reveal
- clear, foggy, sharp
- focus, imagine, picture,
- vivid, snap shot, crystal clear



How can I help auditory learners?

Auditory learners respond well to:

- spoken word
- rhythm, rhyme and varied tone of voice
- audio tapes
- discussion
- sound effects
- verbal rehearsal

Remember to use vocabulary which stresses auditory activities:

- listen, hear, sound, silence
- tell, tune in, make music
- be all ears, be heard, ring a bell



How can grouping help?

- Pair the learner with a competent, supportive peer who can help by reading text and providing spellings.
- Seat the dyslexic learner with intellectual peers, rather than others with literacy difficulties, so s/he can participate in discussions.
- Ensure all students are facing you when you are giving instructions.
- Vary seating arrangements.
- Plan for movement during the lesson to help maintain blood flow to the brain and concentration.
- Use 'study buddies' e.g. if a dyslexic pupil has good ideas for writing, put him/her with a child who is strong at transcription but weaker at composition.



How can I help learners to develop independent organisational skills?

- Label resources with pictures as well as writing.
- Provide practical strategies to help learners overcome problems with equipment: e.g. packing their school bag the night before!
- Write down homework in home/school books yourself, or allow time for a study buddy or TA to do this.
- Teach revision and study skills and strategies.



How can I foster the self-esteem of dyslexic students?

By the time a student reaches secondary school, years of failure have often led to serious self-esteem problems.

- Adopt a positive view of dyslexia, as a difference not a disorder.
- Introduce appropriate role models, e.g. Einstein, Edison, Michelangelo, Branson.
- Avoid likely failures such as asking a dyslexic student to read aloud in class.
- Expect inconsistency of performance and have patience.



How can I foster the self-esteem of individual students?

- Be sensitive to individual extraction to minimise the student's feeling of being different.
- Try not to over-emphasise areas where dyslexics struggle.
- Ensure supportive groupings.
- Explicitly teach study and revision skills, so students can overcome anxieties associated with taking exams.
- Be aware of the dyslexic's desire to be the same as everybody else.
- Build in success and use PRAISE. Give praise and encouragement for effort, for asking questions and for completing work.



How can I foster the self-esteem of dyslexic students?

- Facilitate participation in discussion by: allowing 'thinking time', having a pre-arranged signal, encouraging risk-taking.
- Encourage students to participate in extra-curricular activities where they can do well.
- Encourage skate boarding, surfing, cycling, juggling and any other activities that will improve balance and co-ordination.
- Focus on strengths e.g. by separating composition from transcription in writing and mathematical understanding from numerical fluency in Maths.
- Be patient about lost, forgotten or damaged items - help to develop strategies to prevent this.




What specific difficulties might dyslexic learners have with Mathematics?

- Mathematical language
- Symbols
- Memorising e.g.tables
- Poor short-term working memory
- Problems with orientation and direction
- Problems with sequencing



How can I help learners in mathematics?

- Allow much more practice than peers to retain basic facts
- Use a variety of teaching styles 
- Allow much more practice using concrete materials
- Teach new ideas through practical activities rather than language
- Use mnemonics
- Use visual images
- Provide aide-memoires such as table squares



How can display help?

- Display keywords for your subject or for the lesson.
- Display important information clearly e.g. definitions of basic terms, scientific formulae, key figures and key dates in History.
- Display a summary of processes to be used in your subject using pictures to support the text.
- Display mind maps summarising the topic studied.
- Use colour to draw attention to significant or difficult 'bits'.
- Label resources with pictures as well as words.



How can I use 'positive marking'?

- When marking, concentrate on correcting 2 or 3 high frequency words or target a spelling pattern which can be realistically learned.
- Write comments above, below or to the side of the body of the text.
- Mark positively: identify *one success*, provide *one tip* and suggest *one target*.








PART TWO

Planning and delivering effective small group / individual interventions

PART TWO

Planning and delivering effective small group / individual interventions

1. Recommended interventions 
2. Individualised schemes of work 
3. Student survival kits: Primary and secondary 
4. Effective use of ICT 
5. The role of other adults 



Effective individual / small group interventions




Recommended interventions:

- Phono-Graphix 
- Reading Recovery 
- Using Marie Clay approaches at KS3 
- THRASS 

N.B. Primary Strategy Guidance www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy



Individualised schemes of work

- In an inclusive classroom, the teacher will meet the needs of individual learners by using a variety of teaching styles.
- In a 'dyslexia friendly' classroom the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic modes need to be planned into any additional support for pupils' learning
- See links below for support with Individualised schemes of work addressing difficulties with:
 - Reading 
 - Handwriting 
 - Spelling 






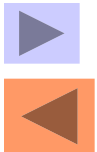
Successful teaching of reading requires:

- Recognition of 2 strands:
 - a) sound symbol
 - b) whole word
- A structured, sequential, cumulative and thorough approach employing multi-sensory techniques
- Daily reinforcement through reading, spelling and writing
- Appropriate and appealing reading materials



Strategies for developing reading skills

- Paired reading 
- Repeated reading 
- Tape of pupil's own voice reading 
- Listening to tape-recorded texts (either cover-to-cover following texts or just listening)
- Reading grids for high-frequency words
- Pelmanism with high-frequency words



Paired reading

- Set aside 10-15 minutes in a quiet space for the learner and a supportive adult or friend.
- The student chooses a book – ideally slightly above current reading age but this is not critical.
- The pair sit side by side and read aloud together.
- A signal is agreed (e.g. a knock on the table). Whenever the learner feels confident, s/he signals that s/he wants to read alone
- Whenever the learner hesitates, the supporter provides the word and continues to read aloud with the student until the student signals again.



Repeated reading

- The student chooses a text which can be read aloud in 10-15 minutes .
- The supporter records the text onto tape, at the student's speed but maintaining fluency and intonation. Don't forget to mark page turns.
- Session outlines:
 1. The student listens to the tape, getting the gist of the text.
 2. The student listens and follows the text closely.
 3. The student listens and reads text aloud.
 4. The student turns tape down so s/he can only just hear it then tries to read the text without prompting.
 5. The student reads the text to the supporter.



Tapes of pupil's own voice reading

- Choose a text to be read aloud in about 5 minutes, which the student would not find easy to read independently.
- The adult reads the passage as the student follows.
- The student reads the passage to the adult with assistance. Try to maintain fluency.
- Recording the tape:
 1. The student reads one sentence at a time until fluent, then records, a sentence at a time, until the passage is completed.
 2. For the first session (soon after recording) the student listens to the tape and follows the text closely. This can be repeated until the student is confident.
 3. Final session: the student reads the text unaided to the teacher or another adult.



Successful teaching of spelling requires:

- Structured, sequential, cumulative approaches employing multi-sensory techniques
- Achievable small steps
- Over-learning – frequent repetition and revision
- Activities to promote skills generalisation
- Recognition of 2 strands:
 - a) basic phonics
 - b) irregularly-spelt, frequently-used words
- Teaching aids to memory e.g. mnemonics, colour, pictures
- Frequent opportunities to write and practise spelling



Strategies for developing spelling skills

General strategies:

- Concrete aids: alphabet letters, sand, clay
- Feely letters: felt, sandpaper
- Cursive script – at least for letter strings
- Emphasis on whole-word shapes
- Colour and highlighters
- Look for small words within larger ones
- Use 'Look, say, cover, visualise, write, check' technique
- Word searches
- Games
- Word wall and other display material






Strategies for developing spelling skills

Strategies for teaching phonically regular words:

- No more than one spelling family to be taught each week.
- Prompt cards

Strategies for teaching irregular high-frequency words:

- Limit to 3-4 words each week
- Simultaneous oral spelling 
- Visualisation techniques 
- Words on card – in a wallet or pot
- High frequency word chart 
- Mnemonics



Simultaneous Oral Spelling

- The word is written on card by the teacher, in a cursive script.
- The teacher pronounces the word slowly and carefully, copied by the student.
- The student examines the word closely, noting tricky areas.
- The student traces the word while simultaneously saying the letter names aloud.
- The student writes the word from memory, then checks it.
- The student uses the word in a sentence.



Visualisation

- The word is written on a card by the teacher in a cursive script.
- The student looks very closely at the letters.
- The student closes his/her eyes, imagines a comfortable setting and visualises a large surface to write on.
- The student visualises writing the word, one letter at a time, on the surface. At the same time, the letters are said aloud and traced in the air.
- The student writes the word, while consulting the visual image and then checks with the card.
- A way to check that the student really is 'seeing' the word is to ask him/her to spell it backwards while the teacher records the answer.




Handwriting

- Handwriting is a taught skill.
- It should be taught in a systematic and structured way, with all letters taught individually.
- Cursive writing is the best style for dyslexic pupils.
- Attention should be paid to:
 - posture
 - writing tools
 - grip.
- Left-handers need particular support.



What is a survival kit ?

- The survival kit is a tool to support the pupil's access across the curriculum.
- The survival kit may reduce anxiety and avoidance strategies.
- It gives the pupil quick access to materials which they may need to carry out a range of classroom tasks.
- Cover and suggested contents 
















A secondary survival kit

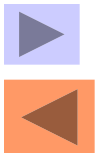
- Personalised timetable
- Means of recording homework: contact book, Dictaphone or lap-top
- A4 Slim tuff box, A4 paper
- Pencil case including: ink pen with correcting pen, pencil, ruler, rubber, pencil sharpener, highlighter, calculator, protractor, compass
- Post-it notes for scratchpad spelling and highlighting areas of text
- Highlighter tags (KS 4 + 5)
- Key Words Chart
- Mini THRASS Chart
- Tables square
- Memory jogging cards (specific to student)
- Reading ruler/overlay/line tracker
- Water bottle



Useful printouts for survival kits -




Literacy

- Checking (1)  Checking (2) 
- New spellings 
- Days and months 
- Multi-sensory spelling 
- Word banks 
- Personal information sheet 
- Weekly diary 
- Action Plan 
- Be a better speller 
- Spelling grid 
- Alphabet arc (small)  (landscape) 



Useful printouts for survival kits -

Numeracy

- blank number lines 
- 100 number square 
- tables square 
- place value chart 
- maths signs 
- numbers in words 



The effective use of ICT

Computers can transform the lives of dyslexic learners in school. However, you should not consider or offer them as 'the solution'. They are a wonderful aid if used appropriately, with adequate support and if introduced at an appropriate time. Introducing voice recognition software - or even simple devices such as hand held Spellmasters - too early, can lead to failure and a complete loss of faith in that particular means of support.



Why can ICT help?

- Computers are patient and will repeat instructions endlessly.
- Computers are non-judgemental.
- Students can take risks - mistakes can be removed without a trace.
- Final print out looks good.
- Students are able to take control of the pace of their learning.
- Computers assist all learning styles (visual, auditory and 'hands-on').
- Self esteem can be boosted by independent working and written work which looks no different from the rest.



What can computers do?

For dyslexic learners ICT can:

- overcome barriers to learning
- aid access to the curriculum
- improve achievement

They can:

- read words and texts.
- provide onscreen word banks, predictive lexicons and spellcheckers.
- provide a choice of ways to present text.
- help students plan visually and organise ideas.



The role of other adults

Teaching assistants and other adults can:

- Prepare dyslexic learners for reading texts, answering questions, quizzes and tests.
- Monitor the student's organisation of books and equipment.
- Help with tasks but do not do them for the student.
- Liaise with subject teachers to prepare students ahead of time, and ensure teachers are aware of students' difficulties.
- Ensure that any homework task is fully entered into planner and student understands the task.
- Encourage the student to develop independence.
- Help the student develop a personalised timetable using pictures or colour coding. Have two copies - one for school, one for home.



The role of other adults

- Remind the student to check the timetable and pack the correct books and equipment.
- Negotiate a time and place for homework.
- Help the student to consider the work that needs doing and organise time appropriately.
- Regularly monitor the student's planner or contact book.
- Work with the student to develop strategies to help with organisation and planning.
- Encourage parents to spend time at home doing activities, other than reading and writing, at which the students can be successful and which will make them feel good about themselves












PART THREE

Support for SENCOs and Senior Management

PART THREE

Support for SENCOs and Senior Management

1. Exemplar dyslexia policy and provision mapping 
2. Special arrangements for examinations and SATs 
3. The role of the Educational Psychology Service 
4. Dyslexia and the SEN and Disability Act 2001 
5. Resources 
6. Frequently asked questions 
7. Useful contacts 





Exemplar dyslexia policy and provision mapping

- For a small primary school 
- For a large primary school 
- For a secondary school 
- An example of a school policy on dyslexia 



Special arrangements for examinations

In GCSE/GCE exams there are 2 types of special arrangements:

- **Type A** where application must be made to the awarding body 
- **Type D** where the decision is delegated to the school 

Further information can be obtained directly from:

- the exam boards or
- Caroline Read through www.patoss-dyslexia.org



Special arrangements for SATS

Special arrangements for which application needs to be made. Apply to LEA (maintained schools) or QCA (all other schools) :

- Up to 25% additional time (for non – statemented students)
- More than 25% additional time (for statemented students)
- Early opening of papers

Special arrangements for which no application needs to be made (though information must be kept in school):

- SA for statemented students
- Rest breaks
- Readers for maths or science
- Signers
- Amanuensis
- Transcript
- Prompter



Resources

The following lists contain examples of the variety of resources available to support dyslexic pupils. Those specifically recommended by members of the DCS 'dyslexia' group are marked with an asterisk.

- Reading materials
- Spelling materials
- Computer Software
- Other resources
- Assessment materials ▶
- Suppliers ▶
- Useful publications ▶
- ▶
- ▶
- ▶
- ▶



Reading Materials

- Reading support
- ICT support for Reading
- High interest/low reading age books
- Book Banding



Computer Software

- Spelling programmes
- Support with written work
- Phonics
- Reading Materials
- Handwriting, keyboard and comprehension skills
- Maths support
- ICT Accessories



Frequently asked questions

- Are you saying that any child who has reading difficulties is dyslexic?
- Is dyslexia hereditary?
- Can dyslexia occur across the full range of abilities?
- Does it need an educational psychologist to get dyslexia recognised?
- What can I say to a parent who has had an independent assessment done which states that their child is dyslexic?
- If a child is diagnosed as dyslexic what support should they be receiving?
- How long will it take before the dyslexic pupil catches up?

[Click here for answers](#)



Useful contacts

British Dyslexia Association (BDA)

www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk

Dyslexia Institute

www.dyslexia-inst.org.uk

National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN)

www.nasen.org.uk

Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties

www.patoss-dyslexia.org

Dfes Standards – The National Literacy Strategy www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy

