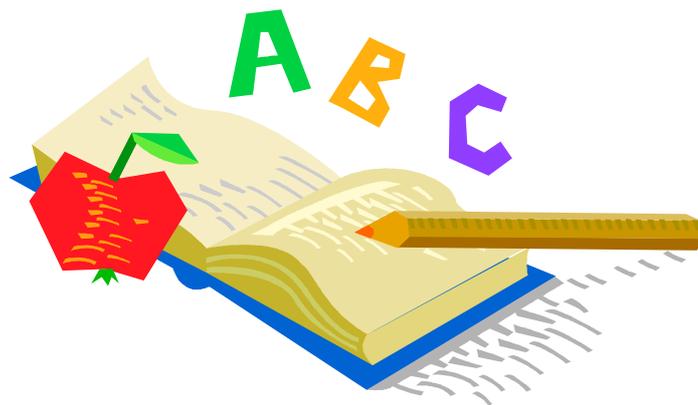


Dyslexia policy



**East Sussex
Children's Services
Department**

1 Introduction

Children and young people with a specific learning difficulty find it harder to learn to read, write and spell than other children. Dyslexia is one type of specific learning difficulty.

Although there has been a lot of research about dyslexia, there are many views about what dyslexia is.

In East Sussex, we use the following definitions for dyslexia.

- “Pupils with dyslexia have a marked and persistent difficulty in learning to read, write and spell, despite progress in other areas. Pupils may have poor reading, comprehension, handwriting and punctuation. They may also have difficulties in concentration and organisation and in remembering sequences of words. They mispronounce common words or reverse letters and sounds in words.” (www.teachernet.gov.uk)
- “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. It provides a basis for a staged process of assessment through teaching.”
(British Psychological Society: Division of Educational and Child Psychology, (1999))

Research shows that dyslexia affects many children and young people. We believe that teachers should be able to identify children and young people with dyslexia, rather than rely on a small number of specialists such as educational psychologists and specialist services.

Dyslexia is not to do with the pupil’s ability or background. Sometimes, children have emotional problems if their dyslexia is not identified and they are not supported as early as possible.

2 Principles

Early and effective support is essential in overcoming the barriers to learning and social and emotional wellbeing for children and young people with dyslexia. To make sure we achieve this, the following must happen.

All schools will aim to achieve Dyslexia Friendly status.

- Schools will identify children who are at risk of having dyslexic difficulties as early as possible.
- Schools will get specialist advice from teachers in their school who have diploma-level training in dyslexia. (Small schools will be able to join together to arrange specialist support.)

- Schools will help parents and carers understand their dyslexic child's strengths and difficulties, and help them to support their learning.
- Schools will provide 'catch up' help in Years 1 and 2 for all children who show early difficulties in reading, writing and spelling. More intensive help will be given to children and young people who still have difficulties in Year 3 onwards.
- The type of support given by schools will be based on methods that have proved to be successful in the past. The schools will regularly monitor and assess the support given, which will be regular and consistent and use multi-sensory teaching methods (teaching that uses the children's senses, for example, sight, sound and touch).
- All teachers and teaching assistants will have dyslexia awareness training. This will mean that they will be able to identify children and young people with dyslexic difficulties. They will also develop an understanding of the potential frustration and emotional responses that children and young people with dyslexia may show and how to make sure these young people learn more effectively.
- All teachers will know about the range of strategies and resources (including computer programmes) that will help children and young people with dyslexia access their lessons, so their difficulties in reading, spelling (or both) do not hold them back in other subjects.

Children and young people with dyslexia will usually go to their local mainstream school, and any extra support will normally be available without the need for a statutory assessment.

3 Roles and responsibilities

Schools will:

- identify children who are at risk of dyslexia as early as possible so appropriate support can be provided;
- provide good-quality teaching in the classroom, and appropriate and effective learning opportunities for children and young people with dyslexia;
- in the case of children with **severe** dyslexic difficulties, provide a teacher with a specialist qualification or a specialist teaching assistant supervised by a specialist teacher (the severity of dyslexia will be defined by the lack of progress and not being able to access a suitably differentiated curriculum (as described in the SEN code of practice));
- have a specialist teacher on their own staff or pay for services to provide this;

- provide a range of programmes, which may involve support from specialist services; and
- provide a written record of progress. It is good practice for schools to keep a written literacy or learning profile.

Schools must record the following information.

- Individual performance
- What they have done to improve performance
- Consultations with pupils, parents and other professionals
- How the pupil has been involved in planning their support and monitoring their own progress

We will:

- provide high-quality training and information for schools to develop best practice;
- provide specialist dyslexia training for teachers and teaching assistants;
- identify and share best practice for children and young people with dyslexia;
- provide access to specialist advice for schools, which could include more detailed assessments and advice to support:
 - appropriate teaching approaches, resources and technology; and
 - the emotional and behavioural difficulties which may happen because a child or young person is dyslexic;
- provide information to parents and carers on how we can meet the needs of children and young people with dyslexic difficulties in East Sussex, and give them details of parent partnership organisations and voluntary agencies.

Please also see our booklet called ‘Supporting children with dyslexia – strategies for schools and parents’.

