

Brooklands Primary School
DYSLEXIA FRIENDLY POLICY

June 2015

Brooklands Primary School is proud to be dyslexia friendly.

POLICY STATEMENT

Being an effective school and being dyslexia friendly are two sides of the same coin. Effective schools enjoy strong leadership, value staff development and pay close attention to the quality of teaching and learning. Being a dyslexia friendly school enables us to not only meet the individual needs of our dyslexic pupils but to also support children who have delayed literacy skills. Essentially more children are successful when taught using dyslexia friendly teaching methods. We fully subscribe to the guiding philosophy of the Dyslexia Institute, who state that:

***'If a pupil can't learn the way we teach,
then we must teach in the way that he can learn***

We also recognise that a child's self-esteem and confidence is central to happiness and success in school. We therefore ensure that all children are aware of dyslexia and positive role models are discussed and displayed around school.

WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

There are many different definitions of dyslexia.
Psychological Societies definition:

'Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent 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.'

Whilst problems with reading and spelling are easy to detect it is essential to remember that dyslexic children will usually have underlying difficulties that affect the way they learn, such as weaknesses with:

- working memory
- Short term memory
- Long term memory
- Processing and retrieving words and information
- Phonological awareness
- Sequencing or rote learning
- Auditory memory
- Spatial awareness
- Direction – left and right

As no two dyslexic pupils will have the same profile of difficulties it is important to assess each child to truly understand how they learn. And of course each dyslexic pupil will also have a range of unique strengths that can be built upon.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

We employ a host of teaching strategies for dyslexic children.

These include:

- Offering a variety of ways to record information: mind maps, talking buttons, writing prompts, learning buddies. This ensures that those with writing difficulties can share ideas in a valued and fun way.
- Instructions are broken down into small steps using visual prompts if possible to make them more memorable and repeated when necessary.
- Explanations will be clear and expressed in different ways.
- Children are active participants in lessons through the use of talk partners and cooperative learning structures;
by talking about their learning they are more likely to remember.
- When marking children's work only a small amount of errors are corrected to maintain morale and comments focus on the positive. That said opportunities will be taken to further children's knowledge of key words and concepts.
- Watch out for signs of tiredness and fatigue.
- Use multi-sensory teaching and learning methods.
- Check that children understand and are keeping up, and not just sitting passively.
- Enable dyslexic children to show their interest, knowledge and skills and be challenged appropriately.
- Always provide positive environment that encourages, praises and builds on strengths.
- Monitor self-esteem and tackle any feelings of frustration or failure as children become more aware that they find certain tasks difficult.

Additionally, we employ the following dyslexia friendly methods to help dyslexic children with reading and writing:

- Use precision teaching to help build a memory bank of high frequency words to improve reading fluency.
- Use flashcards, which are linked, for example opposites, same beginnings or endings.
- Teach correct letter formation and cursive handwriting to help combat letter reversals.
- Use pictures, symbols and actions where possible.
- Use ICT wherever possible.
- Check that children are in the correct reading group and not struggling amongst the peers in their group.
- Look for different books to supplement the reading scheme and build confidence.
- Organise a reading buddy and interesting books at an appropriate reading level.
- Give dyslexic children the skills to understand what they are reading, for example by re-reading, reading on, ask a range of increasingly challenging questions about the text.

**These are only a sample of the strategies and methods we use.*

DYSLEXIA FRIENDLY CLASSROOMS

At Brooklands Primary School we recognise that the working environment can be 'make or break' for a dyslexic child. Our classrooms are:

- ❖ Arranged so that during class lessons, the dyslexic child can sit near the front
- ❖ Adapted so that wherever possible, dyslexic children sit alongside well-motivated children or a 'study buddy' who they can ask to clarify instructions for them
- ❖ Organised so that there is little movement around the room and it as quiet as possible, as some dyslexic children find background noise and visual movement distracting
- ❖ Equipped with clearly marked and neatly arranged resources so that they can be found easily
 - ❖ Water is readily available throughout the day
 - ❖ Interactive whiteboards are colour tinted making them easier to read
 - ❖ Teachers use coloured whiteboard pens and some are also available for children
- ❖ Learning prompts are clearly displayed, e.g. alphabet arcs, b/d/p/q, how to spell tips...

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IDENTIFYING DYSLEXIC TENDENCIES?

All teachers have responsibility for dyslexic children; they have all received training on dyslexia. Further, all teachers use the schools assessment systems to monitor children's progress.

If this shows concerns with reading, spelling, writing or numeracy the class teacher will implement the following procedure:

- Refer to Dyslexia Folder, located in every classroom
- Complete Dyslexia Indicator checklist (IDP/National Strategies)
- Ask parents for their views
- Consult SENCO Teachers also have enhanced knowledge to identify visual and auditory difficulties and adapt their teaching to support and include the child.
- Talk to the child and ask them what helps them to learn – offer coloured overlays and the use of buff coloured paper to assess whether this supports learning.

THE SENCO'S ROLE

The SENCO, Mrs Lyde will carry out various assessments in school to advise parents and the class teacher on how best to support the child. If a child continues to experience significant difficulties Mrs Lyde will help put together a personalised intervention programme.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

As the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs clearly states,

'Professional help can seldom be wholly effective unless it builds upon parents' capacity to be involved'

We strongly believe that maximum participation by parents/carers is essential in engendering positive attitudes in dyslexic learners. Indeed, even the best planned and resourced interventions may have little impact if parents feel confused, anxious or hostile. We will help to allay parents' fears for their child's education by firstly understanding their concerns and clearly sharing strategies to help.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a complaint please come and see us! We will listen politely receive it sympathetically and deal with it speedily. Most complaints are usually the result of misunderstanding. Be assured – we want the best for each child.

When parents are worried or unhappy about any aspect of school life or the curriculum, they should come and speak to the Class Teacher first. This usually resolves the problem, but if parents are still dissatisfied they can speak to the SENCO, the Deputy Head teacher or the Head teacher.