Dyslexia Policy

Author: SENDCo

Owner: St Ann's School Committee

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We are a rights respecting school. All our policies and procedures are written and reviewed to ensure that children's rights, as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, are respected and promoted and this policy ensures:

Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children
Article 12: All children have a right to be able to give their opinion when adults are making a decision that will affect them, and adults should take it seriously.
Article 13: Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.
Article 23: A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.
Article 24: Every child has the right to the best possible health.
Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.
Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.
Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

For more information on the convention and the rights of each child visit: http://www.unicef.org.uk/.

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's SEN Policy.

WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

The definition according to the Rose Report (June 2009) states:

- Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.
- Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.
- Dyslexia occurs across a range of intellectual abilities.
- It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no cut-off points.
- Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia.

A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention.

The British Dyslexia Association states that dyslexia is:

A learning difference which primarily affects reading and writing skills. However, it does not only affect these skills. Dyslexia is actually about information processing. Dyslexic people may have difficulty processing and remembering information they see and hear, which can affect learning and the acquisition of literacy skills. Dyslexia can also impact on other areas such as organisational skills.

It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effect can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counselling.

The BDA also initiates the discussion of acknowledging a "specific learning difficulty" (which implies that something is 'wrong' with a child) as a "specific learning difference" which places the focus firmly on how lessons are planned, resourced and taught and also, on the way teachers are supported through school policy, practice and ethos.

In St. Ann's, the focus is on identifying what is right in the classroom rather than establishing what is wrong with children in order to make them "better." The effectiveness of learning is enhanced, and all learners are empowered to be the best that they can be.

Dyslexia occurs despite normal teaching and is independent of socio-economic background or intelligence. It is, however, more easily detected in those with average or above average intelligence.

PRINCIPLES

Here at St. Ann's, we recognise the strengths of pupils with dyslexia and aim to use them as pathways to learn. We recognise that pupils with dyslexia are likely to experience higher levels of stress than their peers and that this may impact on their learning and emotional well-being.

The St Ann's School Committee and Senior Leaders are committed to supporting pupils with dyslexia across the curriculum. Targets aimed at developing expertise in, and understanding of, dyslexia are reflected in the school's SEN development plan.

All staff recognise compounding factors that may co-exist with dyslexia, they are familiar with the individual learning styles of children and adopt a range of multi-sensory teaching approaches.

We have high expectations of all children and the achievement of pupils is seen as everybody's responsibility. We also encourage partnerships with parents.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND PROVISION

The school's policy for assessment and identification of children's special needs is set out in the SEND Policy. It is the teachers' responsibility to recognise the early signs of dyslexia and arrange for preliminary assessments, in liaison with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo). Parents and carers also need to be aware of the difficulties their child is encountering. Indeed, it may be their initial concerns that have alerted the teacher.

Assessment should include: background information, pupil interview, classroom observation, norm and criterion referenced assessments and familial incidence.

Action taken is guided by the school's SEND Policy, the SEN Code of Practice, the BDA, the LA and the available school resources. It may include some or all of the following:

- Appropriate differentiated planning by the class teacher
- An Individual Support Plan

- Support from a Teaching Assistant, under the guidance of the class teacher and/ or SENDCo
- Regular reviews to determine progress and evaluate effectiveness of support
- Additional advice from a member of the LA Support Services
- Consultation with Specialist Teacher
- Educational Psychologists (EP) are often involved with children who require additional funding. School can talk to their EP about any other pupil.

PROVISION

Access to the mainstream curriculum:

- Pupils with dyslexia have access to the full, broad and balanced curriculum.
- All staff are responsible for meeting the needs of pupils with dyslexia and have an understanding of implications this has on the subject they co-ordinate.
- Staff members use multi-sensory techniques to facilitate learning.
- Pupils access the curriculum through differentiated tasks, outcomes and resources.
- Members of staff produce learning materials that are dyslexia friendly.

Staff members support pupils in some, or all, of the following ways on a day-to-day basis.

General: Members of staff

- Raise pupil's self-esteem. Reward what can be achieved – documented by the LA, this is the single most important factor in achievement according to pupil's themselves.
- Use the information supplied on the Pupil Support Plan if an individual has one. A relevant professional will have assessed the pupil and prioritised what needs to be learned.
- Give no more than two instructions at a time. Ask pupils to repeat instructions. Repeat instructions until he/she can repeat them back.
- Allow more time for tasks such as getting out books, getting started, completing work. This includes practical tasks.

Reading:

- Pupils are not asked to read aloud without preparation unless they volunteer.
- Unfamiliar subject words are taught.
- Help is given with study skills such as skimming, scanning, selecting key words.
- Teachers' handwriting is legible – all use the Nelson Handwriting Font (see Handwriting Policy).

Spelling:

- Written work is marked predominantly on content and the use of a wide vocabulary is encouraged.
- Only a few errors are corrected.
- Subject specific words are taught. Pupils are not overloaded.
- All pupils are given a list of subject specific words to be stuck into exercise books for reference.
- Subject specific words are displayed.
- Pupils read work back to an adult (for possible transcription) if teachers/ teaching assistant cannot read it.

Written work:

- Legible writing is encouraged.
- Pupils are not asked to write work out again unless it is much worse than usual.
- More time is given where/ when necessary.
- It is acknowledged that less written work may be accepted, or a task may be time-related.

Assessment:

- Assessment may be through oral responses.
- Long written responses may require more appropriate methods such as a writing frame/ prompt.

A range of teaching styles are used to engage different learning styles. Pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own learning style preference although the model of learning to access through all channels is recommended.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We encourage parents to share their concerns and recognise that parental anxiety is very often justified. We welcome information parents have regarding a child. We share information with parents about the measures being taken to address the child's difficulties and ensure that parents understand the system.

Signatures

Signed…… Headteacher

Date …….

Signed …… Chair of School Committee

Date……..