

Accessible and Dyslexia friendly classroom

“No matter where they live or what their background, every single child in this country deserves the opportunity to read, to read widely, and to read well - it's a simple matter of social justice.”

Key strategies for creating a dyslexia-friendly classroom are shown below.

SEATING



When seating pupils, try to ensure they are....

- At the front, facing the board.
- Near to the class teacher where possible (so help can be offered readily).
- Seated to minimise disruption and concentration maximised – displays/visual stimuli behind the pupil.
- not ‘crowding out’ (left handers clashing with right handers).
- Sitting with good posture, request footrest/writing slope/seat wedge if posture is poor.
- Seated in well-lit areas.

EQUIPMENT



Have readily available:

- Triangular pens/pencils or pencils ‘grips’.
- Line trackers, bookmarks, overlays as appropriate.
- Handwriting paper and ‘guidelines’.
- Resources to support multi-sensory teaching.
- Spelling aids: dictionaries, word cards, personal spelling logs, electronic spelling checkers, hints cards/booklet.

Desktop baskets/individual packs should include:

Literacy:

- Alphabet strips/arcs, with vowels shown in red (showing both upper and lower case).
- Cue cards re; spelling rules currently taught.
- Laminated memo cards (for date, key words, reminders...).
- Most frequently needed equipment (pencil, pen, ruler, workbook).

Numeracy:

- Most frequently needed equipment (number line, 100 squares...)

CLASSROOM ROUTINES



State clear purpose for each lesson.

Display class timetable – provide visual timetables for pupils to use at school and home.

Organise equipment effectively, label with visual/colour cues where possible.

Have an agreed location for finished work to be placed.



LANGUAGE

- Avoid sarcasm and rhetorical questions (Dyslexic children can take language literally).
- Speak slowly and clearly, using short sentences – repeat key words.
- Vary tone of voice.
- Pre-teach subject specific vocabulary.

Giving Instructions



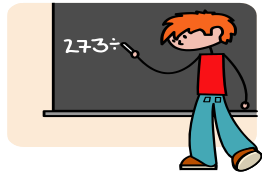
- Give verbal instructions clearly and one at a time – ask pupil to repeat back to check understanding.
- Stress key words.
- Back up instructions visually – written/visual reminders displayed on class board or own memo card.
- Check homework instructions are written legibly/clearly – be prepared to scribe sometimes.
- Give homework instructions in the first part of the lesson if possible.

Display Boards



- Display most needed information:
- Key word lists: high frequency words, word 'families', topic vocabulary.
- Times table charts.
- Number/hundred square.
- Useful lists: days of the week, months of the year.

Writing on and copying from the board



- Read aloud as you write.
- Use coloured pens, vary colours used for lines/sections (to ease tracking difficulties).
- Do not stand where obstructing the view.
- Try to avoid pupils copying from the board where possible - Think about the purpose of the copying, does it link to the lesson objective?!
- Allow plenty of time to complete.
- Give pupils a copy of what is on the board – copying/reading close work is easier.
- Give typed photocopies – pupils can highlight keywords/facts rather than copying.

Worksheets



- Use bold headings and clear print – well-spaced, not too small!
- Make sure they are at an appropriate reading level (differentiate!!)
- Use less writing and more diagrams and/or pictures.
- Cut out unnecessary detail.
- Consider the use of coloured paper to ease visual stress (i.e., pale blue, cream etc)

Useful References and Links

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LITERACY DIFFICULTIES/DYSLEXIA GUIDANCE
(updated 2019)

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/local-offer-education-and-training-5-18>

Rose, J. (2009) Identifying and Teaching Children and Young People with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties: