



## Rush Common School's School Professional Practice Documents ("PPD") for Dyslexia

### 1. Introduction

This document is produced with reference to Oxfordshire Literacy Difficulties policy and Advice which is designed to give schools clear guidance on supporting pupils with literacy difficulties.

### 2. Principles

2.1 "Dyslexia" comes from the Greek meaning "difficulty with words" and is used to describe a learning difficulty that hinders the acquisition of literacy skills. The school recognises the following definitions of Dyslexia:

'Dyslexia is evident when accurate or 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 the basis for a staged process of assessment through teaching.'

Adopted by Oxfordshire Local Education Authority from the British Psychological Report (BPS, 1999)

'Dyslexia is a learning difference, a combination of strengths and weaknesses which affects the learning process in Reading, Spelling, Writing and sometimes Maths. Dyslexic learners may also have accompanying weaknesses in short-term memory, sequencing and the speed at which they process information.' The British Dyslexia Association 2006

2.2 Combining these two definitions focuses on pupils' word level skills but accepts that other difficulties may occur in conjunction with or as a consequence of dyslexic difficulties.

2.3 This policy recognises that research evidence continues to present fresh or conflicting ideas in relation to literacy difficulties and dyslexia; it has attempted to reflect the most recent evidence and debates.

2.4 The school recognises the need for culture-fair identification of dyslexic type learning difficulties, which takes into account language, culture, socio-economic status, race and gender.

2.5 Dyslexia occurs in pupils of all intellectual abilities and research has shown that it is not valid to identify dyslexia on the basis of a discrepancy between cognitive ability and attainment in English.

2.6 Dyslexia is essentially a difficulty with word level literacy skills, however it may occur with other difficulties as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

2.7 There are many common indicators between dyspraxia and dyslexia and many pupils present with elements of both.

### **3. Aims**

- 3.1 To view dyslexia as a 'specific learning difference', which incorporates a range of strengths and weaknesses, as well as different learning styles and preferences.
- 3.2 To recognise that learning problems will arise if dyslexia is not recognised and teaching is not appropriate.
- 3.3 To meet the diversity of the needs of dyslexic pupils through appropriate provision within a classroom setting; dyslexic pupils spend the majority of their time in classrooms and are the responsibility of all Teachers and Teaching Assistants; individual differences in learning style will be noticed and teaching adjusted accordingly.
- 3.4 To provide high quality support for dyslexic pupils by:
  - raising awareness and understanding of dyslexia within school
  - establishing clear assessment and intervention procedures which enable early intervention and ongoing monitoring
  - providing a needs-based combination of teaching adjustments, in-class support and withdrawal programmes
  - ensuring that parental concerns are acknowledged and addressed
  - encouraging teachers to develop their teaching style to include strategies to support children with specific difficulties as they have been proven to raise attainment of all children whilst simultaneously diminishing the difference in progress and attainment
  - Increasing training opportunities for teaching and non-teaching staff, and governors

### **4. Practice**

#### **4.1 Promoting parent partnership**

- Parents' concerns regarding their child's progress will be acknowledged and investigated; appropriate evidence will be collected to inform subsequent discussion, and further assessment may be carried out within school.
- Parents will be invited to regular reviews of progress in relation to their child's targets / Pupil Profiles as needed, when learning programmes will be discussed.
- Parents will be supported and advised on the nature of their child's difficulties, and may be directed to appropriate voluntary organisations or external agencies.
- Staff will respond positively to any; frustration, distress or anxieties which parents may have.
- If there is disagreement between the school and parents on the level of concern, the pupil will be monitored over an agreed period of time and another meeting convened.
- The first point of contact within the school may be the child's teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team; it may not necessarily be the SENCo; however, it is likely the SENCo will be involved at a later date.

## **4.2 Noticing diversity and early intervention**

- Teachers and Teaching Assistants will be trained and encouraged to notice learning differences within their classes and to adjust their teaching and support strategies accordingly.
- The criteria 'Cognition and Learning (SpLD)' in Identifying and Supporting Special Educational Needs in Oxfordshire Schools and settings will be used for identification of dyslexic difficulties and traits. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (2014) sets out guidance and expectations in relation to identifying, assessing and providing for children and young people with SEN.

## **4.3 Identifying barriers to learning**

Dyslexia is a continuum with no clear cut off point. The characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in:

- Identifying and manipulating the sounds in words (phonological awareness)
- Retaining an ordered sequence of verbal material (verbal memory)
- Processing familiar verbal information such as letters and digits (verbal processing speed)
- Visual memory, tracking and processing

Dyslexia occurs in pupils of all intellectual abilities

- Assessment will focus on establishing a student's strengths and weaknesses in order to inform future teaching and support; it will not be completed purely for the purpose of a diagnosis of dyslexia.
- A range of assessment procedures will be used to gain information about a pupil's strengths and difficulties.
- It is recognised that pupils of all abilities may experience learning difficulties of a dyslexic nature; however, in some cases a pupil's cognitive skills will exceed literacy skills. Teachers will ensure that curriculum content is appropriate to the pupil's level of understanding and interest.
- It is accepted that phonological skills have a central role in the development of reading and spelling; research evidence suggests that approximately 80% of dyslexic students have problems with phonological processing. However, phonological difficulties will not be used as the defining feature of dyslexia as some dyslexic students have secure phonological skills.
- Assessment of word level skills will be central to an assessment of dyslexic difficulties; however, other skills often associated with dyslexia that can affect learning outcomes will be investigated; these will include organisational ability, motor difficulties, sequencing, retention and emotional and behavioural difficulties

## **4.4 Assessing students with EAL and students from ethnic and cultural minorities**

- In relation to pupils with English as an Additional Language, the SENCo will ensure vigilance in identifying learning difficulties and responding to them; interpretation of data will take full account of learning opportunities which have been available.

#### **4.5 Adjusting teaching**

- The school regards dyslexia as primarily a mainstream issue; teaching will need to be adjusted throughout a student's school career and needs may change as a pupil matures.
- Pupils with dyslexic difficulties will be provided with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which is differentiated by presentation, pace, level and outcome to meet their individual needs; this will include differentiated materials and tasks to suit their particular learning profile.
- The teacher's responsibility will focus mainly on facilitating access to the curriculum, with advice from the SENCo, and in ensuring that pupils are provided with structured, systematic teaching as appropriate to help develop their reading, writing and spelling skills.
- Some pupils with dyslexic difficulties will require special arrangements for Statutory Assessment at the end of their Key Stage.
- The SENCo will play a role alongside the teacher in identifying pupils' learning needs and ensuring that all staff are aware of the nature of their difficulties, so that they can adjust their teaching and support accordingly.
- It is recognised that good progress in literacy skills for all pupils is often linked to structured, systematic teaching programmes that occur regularly and frequently, and often involve a multi-sensory approach; these may be delivered individually or within small groups; or during whole class teaching.

#### **4.6 Provision and resources**

- The school recognises that there is a continuum of learning difficulty; this will be met by a corresponding continuum of resources and support. Pupils on the SEN register will be supported through a needs led combination of differentiated resources and tasks.
- Within lessons, additional support from Teaching Assistants will be provided where possible and appropriate, and withdrawal programmes may be put in place.
- A range of intervention programmes will be delivered, including published material, Intervention programmes will be used selectively and appropriately; they will be monitored and evaluated, and teaching adjusted as necessary to meet the continuing needs of the pupil.
- The school will draw on advice (when necessary) from the range of support services available. Responsibility for planning and coordinating intervention programmes will rest with the SENCo, class teacher and Head of Phases.
- Teaching Assistants will offer direct pupil support, and may also assist by preparing curriculum materials and by monitoring and reviewing progress.

#### **4.7 Promoting pupil participation**

Pupils will be regarded as active participants in the learning process, They will be involved in:

- setting and reviewing targets and progress
- identifying helpful support strategies
- receiving prompt feedback on their progress
- investigating their own learning style

#### **4.8 Monitoring arrangements**

- Monitoring procedures for pupils with dyslexic difficulties will occur at three levels, as with all pupils with special educational needs:
- monitoring pupils' progress
- monitoring the effectiveness of interventions
- monitoring curriculum access and the effectiveness of whole school approaches
- All pupils with SEN (including pupils with dyslexic difficulties) are monitored through regular reviews of their targets, following guidelines laid down by the Code of Practice; these procedures will contribute towards planning and implementing support programmes.
- The school's tracking system will allow teachers to monitor pupil progress closely. Pupil profiles are used to share information about a pupil's learning with all staff.
- Early intervention is a key factor in improving outcomes for children.

### **5. Abbreviations**

BPS British Psychological Society  
Ofsted Office for Standards in Education  
SEN Special Educational Needs  
SENCo Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator  
SpLD Specific Learning Difficulty  
EAL English as an Additional Language  
TA Teaching Assistant

### **6. Review of this PPD**

The Leadership Team reviews the PPD every 3 years. It may however review the PPD earlier, if required.

Approved by the Leadership Team November 2018

Signed: *Jacquie Stevenson*

Headteacher

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