



St. Mary's Infant School

Dyslexia Policy

Introduction

This document is produced within the framework established by the Oxfordshire Children and Young People Plan and the Oxfordshire Special Educational Needs Policy.

Practical guidance on managing dyslexia issues in schools is available in the Oxfordshire Special Educational Needs handbook and on the website. A list of abbreviations used in this policy is given at the end of the document.

Principles

St Mary's recognises that dyslexia is a potential barrier to learning and achievement. The British Psychological Society Report (BPS, 1999) working definition of dyslexia applies.

This states that:

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 progress of assessment through teaching.

Dyslexia may co-exist with other barriers to learning and the existence of other difficulties should not preclude assessment for dyslexia. Dyslexic learning difficulties are identified irrespective of language, culture, socio-economic status, race and gender.

Aims

To meet the diversity of children's literacy learning needs through appropriate provision in a mainstream setting.

To promote partnership with parents and voluntary organisations such as the Oxfordshire Dyslexia Association.

To provide a range of high quality support for dyslexic pupils by

- Ensuring that parental concerns are acknowledged and addressed
- Assessment and intervention so that children's learning differences are noticed and teaching is adjusted accordingly
- Training opportunities for teachers and governors

Practice

Promoting parent partnership

Parents' concerns will be acknowledged and addressed. If parent and school have differing views about a child's progress, the school will attempt to collect evidence of the pupil's performance for discussion. In addition, parents may be directed to appropriate voluntary organisations such as the Oxfordshire Dyslexia Association.

Early Intervention

Teacher assessments will form the first basis for identifying children with reading difficulties. These assessments will be supported by standardised assessments. At St Mary's we use Salford Reading Test to gain the child's reading age and standardised score.

The SEN Policy at St Mary's is also applicable.

Support is available from the Oxfordshire Advisory Team for Inclusion. Where there are persistent difficulties, advice will be sought from outside agencies, e.g. Educational Psychology Service.

Identifying barriers to learning

The BPS report recommends a staged process of assessment through teaching over time. Assessment of dyslexia includes three strands of evidence and show that:-

- Fluent and accurate word reading and/or spelling has been learnt or is being learnt very incompletely
- Appropriate learning opportunities have been provided
- Progress has been made only as a result of much additional effort or instruction and difficulties, nevertheless, persist.

Pupil of **all abilities** may experience learning difficulties of a dyslexic nature. It is essential to ensure that curriculum content is appropriate to the pupil's levels of understanding and interest.

An assessment of word level skills will be central to assessing dyslexic difficulties. However, other factors may be assessed that could affect learning outcomes and that are often associated with dyslexia, such as organisational ability, motor difficulties, sequencing and retention.

Assessing children with EAL and children from ethnic and cultural minorities

Particular care will be taken when assessing children with English as an additional language and children from ethnic and cultural minorities. The assessment will consider potential linguistic and cultural bias of resources such as books and standardised tests, and will be alert to the risk of identifying dyslexia where none is present, or failing to identify a learning difficulty where it exists.

The SENCo will liaise with the literacy/English co-ordinator to ensure that all literacy advice received by the school is adapted for pupils with special educational needs, including those with dyslexic difficulties. All literacy workers will have an awareness of dyslexic issues and their implications for classroom practice.

Adjusting teaching

For identified dyslexic pupils, teaching will be adjusted though the expression of the difficulties encountered may change as the pupil matures and different adjustments will be made.

A broad, balanced and relevant curriculum is provided, which is differentiated by presentation, pace, level and outcome to meet individual needs. This may include differentiated teaching materials and tasks that make allowances for particular learning styles.

The primary responsibility for teaching pupils with special educational needs rests with the class teacher, with advice from the SENCo. For dyslexic difficulties, two strands of intervention may be necessary: firstly, to provide structured systematic teaching programmes for reading, writing and spelling skills; secondly, to facilitate curriculum access at a level appropriate to the pupil's general ability levels.

The SENCo will play a major role in identifying pupils' learning needs, ensuring that class teachers are aware of the nature of pupils' difficulties and are able to adjust their teaching appropriately. Training programmes provided by the LA will be used for all staff, as appropriate, to support pupils with dyslexic difficulties. Specific advice is available from the LA's Dyslexic Support Service, which has a particular brief to work with dyslexic pupils.

Provision and resources

Provision will vary according to pupils' needs rather than being driven by administrative and/or organisational convenience alone. For example, short but frequent teaching sessions are likely to be more effective than long, infrequent sessions.

Children on the SEN register will have an IEP, with regular monitoring and assessment by the SENCo. Those at the Early Years Action/School Action level will be supported by intervention strategies and resources at a school level. Pupils at Early Years Action Plus/School Action Plus level may, in addition, be supported by external agencies (e.g. Educational Psychologist).

Pupils with statements may receive additional LA funded support at a level dependent on their needs. Short term help for a small number of statemented pupils with exceptionally severe needs is available from the Dyslexia Support Service.

Further information regarding SEN provision can be found in our SEN policy.

In addition to offering direct pupil support, TAs may also assist by preparing curriculum materials and by monitoring and reviewing progress.

Promoting pupil participation

Parents and pupils will be regarded as active participants in the learning process. They will be encouraged to take an active role in learning by helping to set targets with the teacher, identifying helpful and less helpful support strategies, and receiving prompt feedback on their progress.

Monitoring arrangements

Monitoring procedures for pupils with dyslexic difficulties occurs at three levels:

- Monitoring pupils' progress
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the interventions
- Monitoring curriculum access and the effectiveness of whole school approaches

All pupils with dyslexic difficulties are monitored via their Individual Education Plan (IEP), reviewed three times per year. Additionally, pupils with a statement have a statutory annual review. These procedures will contribute to the school's evaluation of their planning for, and implementation of, support programmes for dyslexic pupils.

Abbreviations

BPS British Psychological Society

IEP Individual Education Plan

OfSTED Office for Standards in Education

SEN Special Educational Needs

SENCo Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator

TA Teaching Assistant