

# Literacy difficulties / Dyslexia Workshop

14.12.2021

What is dyslexia?

How do we support pupils at Bowes?

What strategies can parents use to support their child's reading and spelling at home?

# What is dyslexia?



British Dyslexia  
Association

## ► British Dyslexia Association:

Dyslexia is a neurological difference and can have significant impact during education, in the workplace and in everyday life.

As each person is unique, so is everyone's experience of dyslexia.

It can range from mild to severe, and it can occur with other learning difficulties.

It usually runs in families, and is a life-long condition.

## ► NHS:

Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty which primarily affects **reading, writing** and **spelling** skills.

It is estimated that **1 in 10 people in the UK** has some degree of dyslexia.

Dyslexia is classified as a **Specific Learning Difficulty** (SpLD) (The term SpLD refers to a difference or a difficulty with a particular aspect of learning)



NHS





# Some common characteristics of Specific Learning Difficulties

- Memory difficulties
- Organisational / time management difficulties
- Visual and auditory processing difficulties
- Reading and writing difficulties
- Sensory distraction – inability to screen out visual or auditory stimuli
- Sensory overload – heightened sensitivity to visual stimuli and sound – inability to cope in busy environments

Here are some of the things someone with dyslexia **might struggle** with...

### **Spatial / Temporal Difficulties:**



- Getting lost easily
- Confusing left from right
- Difficulties telling the time

### **Memory Difficulties:**



- to learn sequences
- to learn timetables
- to learn the alphabet
- to remember how to spell a word

### **Listening:**



- Find background noises difficult – difficulty with concentration
- Note taking difficulties
- Difficulties remembering lots of instructions

### **Processing Difficulties:**

Dyslexia affects how the brain processes information it sees and hears

### **Spelling Difficulties:**



- Confusing the order of letters in words - putting letters & figures the wrong way round
- Difficulty remembering what a word looks like
  - Confusion when hearing similar sounds

# A Learner's Perspective...

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

## Reading difficulties:



- Reading slowly – making mistakes when reading aloud
- May see letters moving around when they are reading or letters may appear blurred – text may overlap
- Poor phonological awareness: May find it difficult to learn the names of sounds and letters and to match sounds to letters - Difficulty to know how many sounds there are in a word - Rhyming can be difficult - Difficulty to make sense of unfamiliar words even if they are made up of words they already know (eg **sun**bathing)
- Need to read several times to make sense



## Motor Control Difficulties

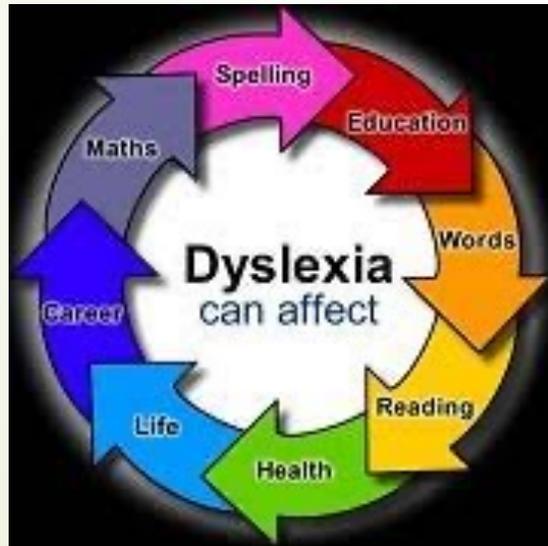
- Handwriting difficulties – slow speed – poor handwriting
  - may have difficulties holding a pencil to write
    - Co-ordination difficulties
  - Difficulties copying from the board
  - Taking longer to complete a task



## Writing Difficulties:

- Difficulties to get ideas on paper
- Organisational difficulties – not knowing where to start
- Answering questions orally but having difficulties in recording their answers

- These difficulties can lead to pupils becoming frustrated because they can't do what other children would find natural, easy.
- Pupils can be very tired.
- This can in turn lead to low self esteem and lack of confidence – give up / behaviour / can become withdrawn.





- Many people who have dyslexia have strong, visual, creative and problem solving skills – they may be very good at seeing patterns.
- Some are good at telling stories, making people laugh
- Understanding how things work and put them back together again
- Making things, drawing, painting, inventing



Being dyslexic can actually help in the outside world. I see some things clearer than other people do because I have to simplify things to help me and that has helped others.

— Richard Branson —

AZ QUOTES

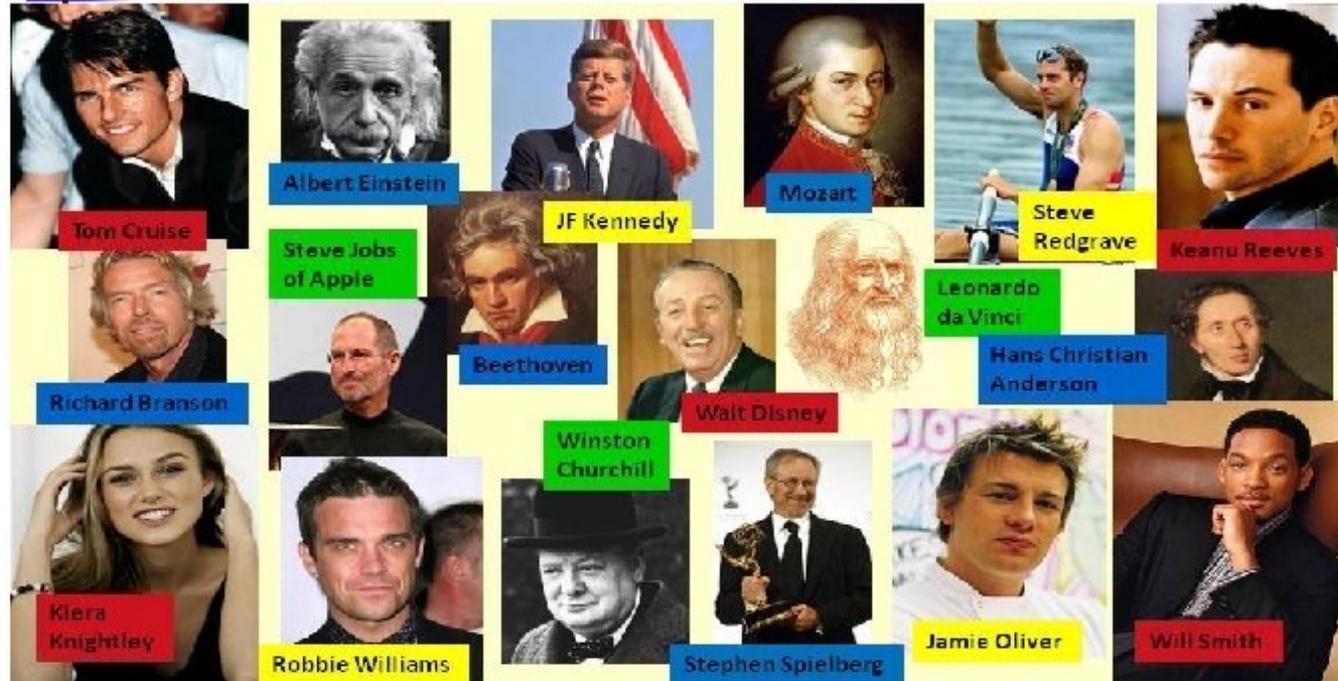
"Being dyslexic is not an excuse or reason for you not to prosper."

- Jamie Oliver



"The advantage is that my brain sees and puts information in my head differently, more interestingly than if I saw like everyone else."

- Whoopi Goldberg on her Dyslexia





# How do we support pupils who have difficulties with reading/spelling at Bowes?

- ▶ Reading – Spelling Assessments – producing a Reading and Spelling Age
- ▶ Screening for dyslexia difficulties.

## **HELP WITH READING & SPELLING**

- ▶ IDL programme – IDL uses sight, sound, touch and voice to improve literacy skills. Programme initially designed for children with dyslexia, it can be used for all children who have some difficulties with reading.

From learning to read, spell isolated words to sentences and short story sequences – spelling and grammar rules but also some comprehension questions

Children work through the programme independently – the aim is to use the programme between 1 and 2 hours/week.

Children are reassessed regularly.

### Identification of pupils on the dyslexic continuum – Primary

Name of pupil \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a family history of dyslexia?	
Does the child have a history of ear infections or hearing loss?	
Was the child late to start talking?	

Focus	Some of the typical signs or behaviours in pupils at risk of dyslexia	Observed in named pupil?
General	Slow to process instructions	
	Problems with sequencing, e.g. getting dressed	
	Poor concentration	
	Does not retain concepts from one lesson to the next	
Writing	Problems with fine or gross motor skills	
	<b>Content does not reflect ability:</b>	
	▪ Good at thinking of ideas, but cannot get them down on paper	
	▪ Uses simple ideas and vocabulary that do not reflect verbal ability	
	▪ Written work often not completed	
	▪ Reluctant to write	
	<b>Difficulties in structuring written work:</b>	
	▪ Problems with grammar, e.g. tenses or words muddled	
	▪ Problems sequencing ideas, e.g. when writing a story	
	▪ Ideas not logically linked together – rambling style	
	▪ Inaccurate punctuation	
	<b>Poor handwriting:</b>	
	▪ Reverses some letters when writing, e.g. b/d, p/q, m/w	
	▪ Older child does not write cursively	
	▪ Writing badly arranged on the page	
	▪ No spaces between words	
▪ Slow writing speed		
▪ Problems copying from the board		
<b>Inaccurate spelling:</b>		
▪ Omits letters within words		
▪ Errors in discriminating individual sounds, e.g. middle sound		
▪ Letters in words in the wrong order		
▪ Bizarre spelling		

Focus	Some of the typical signs or behaviours in pupils at risk of dyslexia	Observed in named pupil?
Reading	Problems choosing a book at a suitable reading level	
	Does not read for pleasure	
	Reluctant to read out loud	
	<b>Inaccurate reading:</b>	
	▪ Unable to read high frequency words as well as peers	
	▪ Confuses words that are visually similar (e.g. was/saw)	
	▪ Omits words when reading	
	▪ Poor tracking along words and lines when reading	
	<b>Lack of reading fluency:</b>	
	▪ Sounding out each word	
	▪ Needs time to process visual information	
	▪ Lack of expression	
Mathematics	Problems remembering times tables	
	Difficulty with mental maths	
	Confusion of visually similar numbers (e.g. 6/9)	
	Forgets maths concepts if not practised regularly	
	Misreads signs	
	Misreads written instructions	
Concept of time	Confusion about timetable for the day	
	Problems adapting to changes in routine	
Organisation	May not be able to say what day it is	
	Problems finding what they need to start a task	
	Difficulties executing tasks in the right order	
Behaviour and motivation	Often forgets to bring dinner money/PE kit, etc.	
	Uses bad behaviour to avoid work	
	Often off-task	
	Reluctant to contribute in lessons	
	Copies from other children	

- Use of overlays (acetate covers) and/or rulers for reading on black and white background.
- Ensure that the background used on the interactive white board is not white but of a pastel colour.
- Use of multisensory teaching (eg a child is taught to see a letter – say its name and sound and write it in the air - all at the same time)

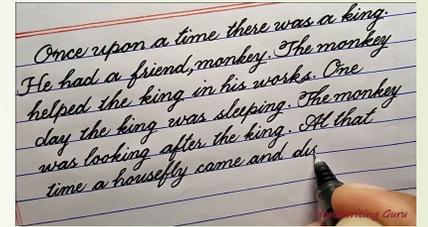


## SOME WAYS WE HELP WITH WRITING

- Talking buttons
- Spelling checker
- Use of organisers, visuals, checklists, writing frames for creative writing (story mountains / story mapping)
- Lined exercise books or worksheets printed on pastel coloured background.
- Use of voice typing on Chromebooks to make notes
- Main teaching PowerPoints uploaded to personal Chromebooks to reduce the need to look at the board.



- Build language skills – discussion, debates – build vocabulary - encourage learners to build on sentences to create effects
- Improve handwriting – but not to the detriment of creative writing (cursive writing is better / more fluent)
- Instructions repeated
- Learning partners
- Memory games when felt necessary
- Help with confidence/self esteem – encourage pupils to say positive things about themselves / reflect on their achievements daily.





# What strategies can you use to support your child at home?

**Support your child with reading in many different ways:**

- ▶ Listen to audio books and encourage your child to read alongside them.
- ▶ Make sure they spend some time reading alone, both quietly and aloud.
- ▶ Take turns reading books aloud.
- ▶ Talk about the stories you read together and ask some questions, such as 'what do you think will happen next?'
- ▶ Read about things that your child is interested in, comics for example – this will be more motivating for them.

## Make learning playful / fun

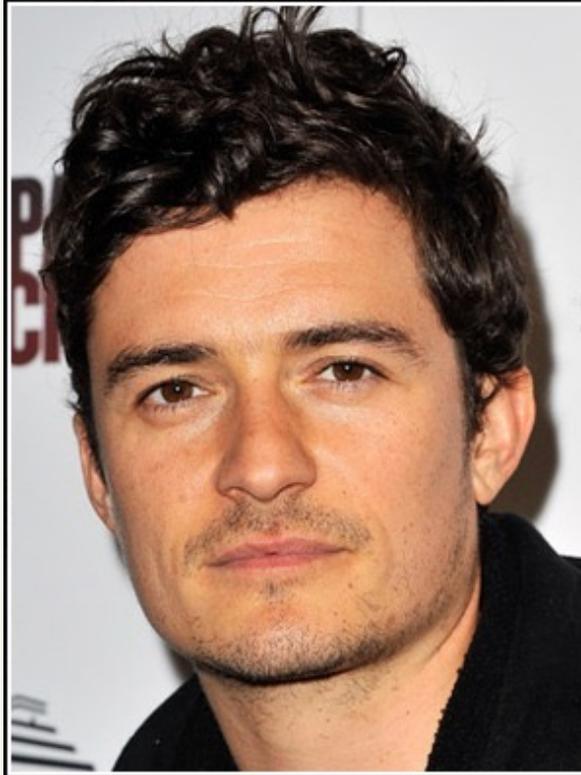
- ▶ Make up songs, poems, dances to remember things
- ▶ Play word games / rhyming games.
- ▶ Home learning: communicate with your child's teacher, share updates of what you have noticed at home – help your child break down a big task into smaller chunks so that they don't feel overwhelmed.
- ▶ Help your child with their organisational skills: reminders / planner (eg days they need to take something to school) / when older, reminders and alarms on phones, tablets, etc.
- ▶ Use of technology such as spellchecker, online dictionaries.



## Emotional Support

- ▶ Celebrate successes
- ▶ Don't expect perfection at all times
- ▶ Let your child do activities they are good at and enjoys – this can help balance the struggle with school work.
- ▶ Praise your child's strengths and skills – Don't let learning struggles be the main focus
- ▶ Help your child understand their difficulty – they should know that it is not their fault and that you are going to work through it together. Tell them that there are lots of talented people who have the same / similar struggle.
- ▶ Remember that you set the tone – Your child's difficulty might be challenging for you, but your own **positive attitude** is very important. You can show that you make mistakes and struggle yourself, but you also push through...





Creativity is the key for any child with dyslexia, or for anyone for that matter. Then you can think outside of the box. Teach them anything is attainable. Let them run with what you see is whatever they need to run with.

— *Orlando Bloom* —

AZ QUOTES

# 10 Things Every Child With Dyslexia Wants You To Know

1. I am not stupid or lazy. I need time to get things done.

2. I may be dyslexic but I can still shine in lots of ways.

3. It might take me a long time to 'get it' but when I 'get it' it sticks!

4. When you break things down into smaller steps I find it really, really helpful.

5. Sometimes I just need to work in a different way to the others in class to get the job done.

6. I try my best but do get frustrated. I need you to be patient with me.

7. My dyslexia does not only affect my literacy skills.

8. I find visual reminders helpful as I sometimes find remembering everything a bit tricky..

9. I often like to work in a quiet room as I can find noises distracting.

10. My dyslexia is just one part of my character. It does not define who I am or want to be.



# Useful websites

- [www.bdadyslexia.co.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.co.uk) - British Dyslexia Association
- [www.dyslexia.uk.net](http://www.dyslexia.uk.net) – The Dyslexia Association
- [www.nhs.uk/conditions/dyslexia](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dyslexia)
- [www.helenarkell.org.uk](http://www.helenarkell.org.uk) – Charity
- [www.twinkl.com](http://www.twinkl.com) – resources



DETERMINATE  
UNYIELDING  
VERSATILE  
INTELLIGENT  
PIONEERING  
EXCEPTIONAL  
BRILLIANT  
CREATIVE

*DISLEXIA ASSOCIATION LEBANON*