


# Whitstable & Seasalter Endowed Church of England (Aided) Junior School



## Dyslexia Policy

LET YOUR LIGHT *Shine*  
Matthew 5:14-16

Love ★ Joy ★ Goodness ★ Resilience ★ Trust

Reviewer	Janine Hewitt (SENCO)
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Headteacher Signature	

## **WHITSTABLE ENDOWED FOLLOWS THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL DYSLEXIA POLICY (LAST REVIEWED 2024)**

Some children have persistent difficulties with their literacy development from the early stages of their education, despite high quality literacy teaching and parents providing the best opportunities for conversation and access to reading material. Some children have neuro-developmental differences and/or special educational needs that make learning to read and write a challenge.

Even if the child has established reading skills, persistent difficulties with spelling and writing can continue to exist. This is likely to be related to difficulties hearing and processing the smallest units of sounds in words.

A number of additional skills, such as fine motor control, hand to eye integration, visual memory, good processing speed and attention and motivation, are also required of the child when learning to read and write. These skills need to be coordinated for spelling and writing development to take place.

When children are assessed as having persistent difficulties in these aspects of their literacy development this can be described as, 'Dyslexia'.

Kent has adopted a widely accepted definition of dyslexia from the British Psychological Society (1999, reprinted in 2005) which focusses on observable learning difficulties:

**"Dyslexia is evident when accurate and 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 of a staged process of assessment through teaching"**

Kent County Council also acknowledges the findings from the update to the Rose Report (2009), which is the current definition adopted by the British Dyslexia Association:

**"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 the range of intellectual abilities.

It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.

Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor coordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia

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

Although these definitions and descriptions are recognised across many local authorities and professionals, research in the field of dyslexia lacks consensus leading to the term being used in various and sometimes contradictory ways. It can be an emotive and often contested issue. Defining dyslexia and laying out criteria for its identification is an ongoing task of critical enquiry.

Kent recognises well established research evidence which demonstrates that:

- **Dyslexia can occur in children of all abilities. The identification of dyslexia does not rely on identifying a discrepancy between a child's overall cognitive (reasoning and problem-solving) skills and his or her levels of attainment in literacy.**
- **Those who struggle to acquire literacy skills typically require more individualised, structured, explicit, systematic and more intense reading inputs. Similar principles apply to spelling skills. This means that struggling readers will not simply catch up without this structured intervention in place. Teaching should be explicit, focussed on the academic skill concerned, comprehensive and differentiated**
- **In terms of providing support for children who struggle to learn to read, there is no meaningful educational difference between the reading difficulties shown by pupils who are considered to have dyslexia and poor readers who do not have this label. Furthermore, effective teaching approaches for those who are determined as having dyslexia are no different from accepted good practice for any other children who struggle with decoding.**
- **It is important to recognise that most children and young people with dyslexia can learn to read but it will take them longer and they may never attain the levels of accuracy and fluency of their peers. Therefore, it is important that reasonable adjustments are made for these pupils to ensure that their literacy difficulties do not present a barrier to learning and achievement (i.e. Neurodiverse Friendly approaches and practice).**

Evidence suggests that as much as one-fifth of children may have continued delays or difficulties in the development of reading and/or spelling skills. These needs are predictable within the education system. They are acknowledged to have significant impact on the educational and life experience of children and young people. The means to remedy these difficulties are educational in nature. This means that severe and persistent literacy difficulties, including dyslexia, are considered to be a mainstream issue.

Following the principles outlined above, a formal diagnostic report identifying dyslexia **is not** required to access additional educational support.

What is most important is that all children's difficulties with literacy are identified and addressed in ways that promote progress, whether or not they are:

- described in terms of dyslexia (Rose Review, 2006),
- in a primary school, secondary school or at college,
- in a mainstream school, a mainstream grammar school or a special school.

Kent schools are expected to:

- Complete training to support understanding of pupils with severe and persistent literacy difficulties, such as dyslexia awareness training.

- Regularly review their training in order to keep up to date in line with national developments.
- Seek out further professional support to further review their interventions for impact.

Here is a link to the British Dyslexia Association, Dyslexia Friendly Schools Good Practice Guide. <https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/shop/books/dyslexiafriendly-schools-good-practice-guide-2nd-edition>

Assistive Technologies Assistive technologies can support children, young people and adults to overcome the barriers presented to them by their literacy difficulties. This area is continually growing and improving. Access to assistive technology can provide pupils with a way to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding which can be difficult without this support. Children and young people are better able to develop independence, feel less reliant on adult support and experience empowerment if they have access to technology.

### **EFFECTIVE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS TO DELIVER LITERACY INTERVENTIONS**

Teachers have responsibility for children's learning, reviewing progress and working to generalise intervention work into the classroom. Teaching assistants working in mainstream schools and supporting the needs of learners with literacy difficulties make the most difference when they:

- Are deployed to deliver high quality one-to-one and small group support using structured evidence-based interventions;
- Are trained to deliver these interventions;
- Are used to add value to what teachers do and not replace them;
- Help pupils to develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning.
- Make explicit connections between the structured interventions they deliver and the learning in everyday classroom teaching.

### **ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS**

Access arrangements for public examinations are based on evidence of need and normal ways of working.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND taking the Kent Test also require evidence of need and of pupils' normal ways of working. Schools must not rely on private reports / assessments as evidence. It is the responsibility of the school to request special arrangements from KCC where they are appropriate – requests are not made by parents. Guidance and a link to an application form will be provided to schools by the School Admissions Team (part of Fair Access) in late May / early June, as prospective candidates come to the end of Year 5. Applications must be made and school evidence uploaded by the given deadline (normally in early July). Late applications cannot be accepted. If you need more advice, email [kent.admissions@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kent.admissions@kent.gov.uk)

### **OTHER PRACTITIONER REPORTS AND DYSLEXIA SCREENERS**

All appropriate assessment information can be useful to build a better understanding of the child. Schools should make use of any appropriate assessment information made available to them, including assessments from private practitioners, such as a dyslexia or occupational therapy report, screening tools etc., to increase their understanding of pupils' needs.

An assessment or screening tool is of little value in itself unless it is used to make informed judgements about appropriate interventions which are monitored for impact. The final decision about appropriate interventions is the responsibility of the school.

Sometimes, private assessments are completed without input from the school. In these cases the advice does not always take into account the resources, training and expertise that already exists within the school and the wider local offer. Kent schools are invited to use the Local Inclusion Forum Team Meetings to discuss assessment reports and availability or suitability of suggested interventions and strategies for their setting.

## **EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENTS (EHCNA) AND PROVISION**

Difficulties with literacy development are considered to be a mainstream issue to be addressed by all schools, primary and secondary, using the resources they have available to them. Occasionally, concerns about a pupil's literacy level and progress continue despite a rigorous Graduated Response and the provision of SEN Support using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review framework that incorporates advice and recommendations from Locality Resource services. These pupils typically have multiple co-occurring difficulties and other complex presentations.

In such cases, if there is evidence that a child's needs cannot be met from within the resources already available, further assessment may be requested from the Local Authority through an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA), in line with the SEND Code of Practice. This may identify the need for additional resources that can only be delivered via an EHC plan.

Health services, and applications for Disabled Students Allowance may require an assessment diagnosing dyslexia. Should this apply to a student known to you, you or a member of your family for more information, please contact PATOSS; British Dyslexia Association (BDA) or Dyslexia Action.

<https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/>

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/>

<https://dyslexiaaction.org.uk/>

## **ASSESSING DYSLEXIA**

- We follow a stepped process of assessment for dyslexia:

At Whitstable Endowed, the Mainstream Core Standards are in place, which details Quality First Teaching including systemic phonics teaching in the class room. This ensures all pupils have appropriate learning opportunities in all subjects, including literacy. Through our assessment systems, we will identify children who are experiencing difficulties in phonological processing and early reading and/or spelling.

Through the Graduated Approach of Assess, Plan, Do and Review we will support these children with targeted support.

For children whose difficulties persist after these cycles of targeted support, we will provide more intensive, personalised support, also in cycles of Assess, Plan, Do and Review. Assessment for dyslexia may be considered at this point.

If difficulties persist beyond these programmes, specialist advice will be sought eg through LIFT (Local Inclusion Forum Team).

- Teachers can identify children who have persistent difficulties with reading and spelling, this does not have to be carried out by an external specialist.

So parents/carers do not need to seek a private assessment, if a private assessment is carried out for a child, the school has a duty to consider the report and consider any needs identified that are not already being met.

As part of the mainstream core standards there is an expectation that school management teams identify staff that have had additional training to support children with long term literacy difficulties.

- **The four subtests commonly used to determine dyslexia are as follows:**

- i) Phonological awareness
- ii) Auditory short-term memory
- iii) Single Word spelling
- iv) Single Word reading

- We are aware that research is ongoing into the causes of dyslexia, but brain scans show there is a part of the left hemisphere of people with dyslexia that does not work in the same way as for people who do not have dyslexia. We are also aware that dyslexia runs in families (for about 50% people who have dyslexia). Dyslexia does not present a life-long barrier to learning. "Recent research indicates that any inherited biological contribution to a child's difficulties in an area such as reading and spelling is very unlikely to be fixed but may be epigenetic (inherited but can be altered by the environment)"

- "Schools will work in partnership with parents/carers and families and take careful account of the views of the child and their parents/carers. Schools are expected to ensure parents/carers are given appropriate information in order for them to understand how their child's needs are being met and how they can support their child at home."

- Dyslexia is the learning difference, a combination of strengths and difficulties- "Schools should help parents/carers understand their child's strengths and difficulties, as well as supporting the child and ensuring that all staff who work with them are aware of the child's strengths and difficulties."

- Dyslexia is the best thought of as a continuum and not as a distinct category. About 20% of all children have some delay in their literacy skills, only about 14% of all children will have difficulties that fit the BPS definition of dyslexia.

## **EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND PROVISION**

It is the teacher's responsibility to recognise the early signs of dyslexia and arrange for preliminary assessments, in liaison with the SENCO. Parents and carers also need to be informed 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 referenced and criterion referenced assessments.

Action taken is guided by the school's SEN Policy, the SEN Code of Practice 2015, and the available school resources. It may include all or some of the following:

- Appropriate differentiated planning by the class teacher.
- Specific targeted interventions – these will be detailed in the Provision Map.
- Support from a Teaching Assistant, under the guidance of the class teacher. The SENCO will offer support where appropriate.
- Regular reviews to determine progress and evaluate effectiveness of support.
- Consultation with or referral to the Advisory Teacher for SLCN/Dyslexia (in complex cases).

- Educational Psychologists are always involved with children who have an Education & Health Care Plan, as well as with those who are undergoing Statutory Assessment for an Education & Health Care Plan (to replace Statements from 2014 onwards).
- With parental consent schools can refer pupils to the Educational Psychologist.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS & CARERS**

We encourage parents and carers to share their concerns and recognise that any anxieties are very often justified. We welcome information parents have regarding their child. We share information with parents about the measures that are being taken to address the child's difficulties and ensure that parents understand the system (the 2015 Code of Practice, role of staff, support services and funding system). We ensure that parents are involved in the target-setting process and the review of the targets set.

## **PROVISION following Mainstream Core Standards (2021)**

### ***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 understand implications this has on the subject they co-ordinate.
- Staff use multi-sensory techniques to facilitate learning. Pupils access the curriculum through differentiated tasks, outcomes and resources. Staff produce learning materials that are dyslexia friendly.
- Staff support pupils in some, or all, of the following ways on a day-to-day basis.

### ***General:***

- Raise pupils' self-esteem. Reward what can be achieved. This is the single most important factor in achievement according to pupils themselves. Encourage the learner to celebrate their strengths and achievements in all areas of life
- Make simple adaptations e.g. font, line spacing, coloured paper, lighting etc.
- Use the information in the current Provision Map. The SENCO will have assessed the pupil and prioritised what needs to be learned.
- Give limited instructions at a time. Ask pupils to repeat instructions to you. Repeat instructions until s/he can repeat them back.
- Allow more time for tasks such as getting out books, getting started, completing work. This includes practical tasks.
- Use of routine and structure in an organised classroom.
- Use of visual timetables.
- Visual support.
- Provide checklists and task boards.
- Ask what helps them and what works well at home

### ***Reading:***

- Do not ask pupils to read aloud without preparation.
- Teach unfamiliar subject words.
- Help with study skills such as skimming, scanning, selecting key words.
- Teachers' handwriting is legible and worksheets are typed in dyslexia friendly fonts.
- Allow extra time to read and absorb information.
- Avoid asking the child to read in front of others unless they want to.
- Teach strategies to help track words on the page.

- Teaching of sound fluency and accuracy.
- Teaching of word identification accuracy and word identification fluency.
- Alternative approaches to Word identification.
- Support reading comprehension, reasoning and inference skills.
- Teaching of Phonological skills.
- Vocabulary development.

### ***Spelling:***

- Mark written work on content and encourage the use of a wide vocabulary.
- Correct only a few errors. Do not cover work in green ink.
- Teach the spelling of subject specific words. Do not overload pupils
- Give all pupils a list of subject specific words to be stuck into their exercise books for reference.
- Have lists of subject specific words on display in teaching rooms.
- Allow the pupils to read work back to you if you cannot read it.
- Mark written work on content rather than spelling.
- Highlight/tick the correct parts of the word rather than errors.
- Provide high frequency word / topic word lists.
- Use inbuilt accessibility features of tablets, phones or laptops e.g. speech to text functions.
- Use dyslexia friendly software e.g. CLICKER.
- Use colour to highlight spelling patterns.
- Skills in application of phonic knowledge.
- Teaching spelling accuracy and fluency.
- Support application of phonic knowledge to spelling.
- Teaching alternative approaches to spelling.
- Teaching skills in planning ideas for writing.

### ***Written work:***

- Encourage legible handwriting but do not expect it to change.
- Do not ask for work to be written out again unless it is much worse than usual.
- Either give more time, or photocopy notes from another pupil or a 'parallel' book kept by a TA.
- Accept less written work.
- Consider typing work.

### ***Working memory***

- Chunk instructions one step at a time and check understanding throughout task.
- Allow extra time for the pupil to write down written instructions or give assistance.
- Provide and teach how to use working walls, word maps, lists, checklists, task boards templates and story boards as appropriate.
- Provide opportunities for repetition and over-learning.
- Support pupils to copy from the board allowing extra time or provide a personal copy to have on their desk.
- Aim to provide "check-in" support rather than constant individual attention.
- Give homework tasks and important instructions in pictorial or written form.
- Encourage use of different coloured pens to highlight work and provide markers.
- Memory activities and games to support the development of strategies to support memory.

### ***Assessment:***

- Assess through oral responses.
- When setting long responses, use writing frames and mind maps. Ways of assessing understanding without too much writing:
- Matching questions to answers
- True/false statements
- Sentence matching
- Multiple choice
- Labelling diagrams
- Categorising
- Table/grid completion
- Title – paragraph match
- Sentence completion
- Sequencing

A range of teaching styles are used to engage different learning styles. Pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own learning style preferences.

<b>Auditory learners</b> 20-30% of school age children remember what is heard	<b>Kinaesthetic learners</b> 30-40% of school age children remember when they use their hands or whole body to learn	<b>Visual learners</b> 40% of school age children remember what is seen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to themselves</li> <li>• Mouth words</li> <li>• Like speeches/singing</li> <li>• Tell jokes</li> <li>• Prefer verbal instructions</li> <li>• Easily distracted by noise</li> <li>• Listen well</li> <li>• Like lectures</li> <li>• Enjoy rhythm and rhyme</li> <li>• Remember by listening</li> <li>• Recall conversations</li> <li>• Use talk well</li> <li>• Spell out loud</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like physical activity</li> <li>• Move a lot</li> <li>• Make and/or alter things</li> <li>• Remember by doing</li> <li>• Like action words</li> <li>• Use gestures</li> <li>• Fidget</li> <li>• Like close proximity</li> <li>• Need to visit a place to remember it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neat and tidy workplace</li> <li>• Like tidy work</li> <li>• Plan ahead</li> <li>• Like detail</li> <li>• Like to look good</li> <li>• Like similes and metaphors</li> <li>• Like pictorial lessons</li> <li>• Don't listen well</li> <li>• Day dream often</li> <li>• Like an overall view</li> <li>• Draw, scribble, doodle</li> <li>• Prefer images to words</li> </ul>
Auditory learners say: 'That rings a bell' 'Sounds great to me'	Kinaesthetic learners say: 'Let's tackle the issue' 'Run that by me' 'I'll handle that'	Visual learners say: 'That looks right to me' 'I can see what you mean' 'I can picture the scene'

Addressing different learning styles in lessons:

<b>Auditory learners</b>	<b>Kinaesthetic learners</b>	<b>Visual Learners</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain</li> <li>• Repeat</li> <li>• Discuss</li> <li>• Use tapes</li> <li>• Use poems</li> <li>• Tell stories</li> <li>• Use dialogue</li> <li>• Use drama</li> <li>• Read aloud</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be practical</li> <li>• Use three dimensional models</li> <li>• Make things</li> <li>• Use tactile experience</li> <li>• Move about</li> <li>• Write</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use pictures</li> <li>• Use diagrams</li> <li>• Use colour coding</li> <li>• Use highlighting</li> <li>• Use handouts</li> <li>• Do practical demonstrations</li> </ul>

The SENCO has attended a 3-day Dyslexia Awareness Training (2018). The school is building a resource bank of materials suited to teaching pupils with dyslexia.

These 'wave3' materials include:

- Nesy spelling programme
- Precision teaching
- Reading comprehension skills
- Phonics
- Touch-typing
- Reading rulers and coloured overlays
- Memory skills