

Definition:

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skill 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 a 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 co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these themselves are not markers of dyslexia. A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention/support (**Rose Review 2009**).

Characteristics seen in the classroom:

- Mainly affects literacy and language skills.
- Difficulties in processing word sounds causes problems with phonics and spelling.
- Word finding difficulties.
- Inability to rhyme.
- Problems with short term memory.
- Difficulties with remembering things in sequence e.g. days of week, tables
- Often have difficulty with rapid recall and processing speed
- Organisational skills can be poor
- There is often a significant difference between their attainment in written tasks and their oral ability

Where to go for help:

- Educational Psychology Service
- LAB 21 – LSAT Service
- Woodlands Outreach Service
- Severndale Outreach Service

**Cognition and Learning Difficulties
Specific Learning Difficulties
Dyslexia****Assessment and Diagnosis:**

A professional making a diagnosis of dyslexia should either be an Educational Psychologist or a specialist teacher holding AMBDA Status. An assessment would normally look at a range of areas of learning, for example reading, phonics, spelling, working memory, processing speed, level of cognitive functioning and understanding and use of language. Standardised tests which may be used include: Wide Range Intelligence Test (WRIT), Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), British Picture Vocabulary Scales (BPVS), Ravens Matrices, Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP), Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH), Test of Word Reading Efficiency 2 (TOWRE 2). There are also Dyslexia Screeners e.g. Lucid suite of screeners, which are commonly used in schools, but care should be taken with the interpretation of results, if not used by a qualified specialist.

Frequently used Interventions:

- Toe by Toe – 1:1, 10 minutes daily
- Units of Sound – small group, 20 minutes, 3x per week
- Study Skills (secondary) – small group, 20 minutes, 2x per week
- Beat Dyslexia – small group, 2x per week
- Word Wasp/ Little Hornets – 1:1, 10 minutes, daily
- Wordshark – individual, 10 minutes, daily
- Precision Teaching – 1:1, daily
- Nessy – individual, 20 minutes, 3x weekly
- Active Literacy Kit