

Dyslexia Friendly Policy



Approved by: Penny Harris and Jane Cox (Directors) **Date:** 7th May 2026
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All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity in relation to pupils, staff and visitors. All policies are generated and reviewed placing safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of all that we do.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's SEN Policy.

1. What is dyslexia?

The Delphi definition of dyslexia was adopted in March 2025

'Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty which primarily affects reading and writing skills. However, it does not only affect these skills. Dyslexia is actually about information processing. Dyslexic people may have difficulty processing and remembering information they see and hear, which can affect learning and the acquisition of literacy skills. Dyslexia can also impact on other areas such as organisational skills.'

The British Dyslexia Association also identifies that:

Dyslexia is a set of processing difficulties that affect the acquisition of reading and spelling.

In dyslexia, some or all aspects of literacy attainment are weak in relation to age, standard teaching and instruction, and level of other attainments.

Across all languages, difficulties in reading fluency and spelling are key markers of dyslexia.

Dyslexic difficulties exist on a continuum and can be experienced to various degrees of severity.

The nature and developmental trajectory of dyslexia depends on multiple genetic and environmental influences.

Dyslexia can affect the acquisition of other skills, such as mathematics, reading comprehension or learning another language.

The most commonly observed cognitive impairment in dyslexia is a difficulty in phonological processing (i.e., in phonological awareness, phonological processing speed or phonological memory). However, phonological difficulties do not fully explain the variability that is observed.

Working memory, processing speed and orthographic skills can contribute to the impact of dyslexia.

Dyslexia frequently co-occurs with one or more other developmental difficulties, including developmental language disorder, dyscalculia, ADHD, and developmental coordination disorder.

2. Principles

As part of the Dyslexia Friendly Schools Initiative at On Track we recognise the strengths of pupils with dyslexia and aim to use them as pathways to learning. We recognise that pupils with dyslexia are likely to experience higher levels of stress than their peers and that this may impact on their learning and emotional well-being. Directors and senior managers are committed to supporting pupils with dyslexia across the curriculum. Targets aimed at developing expertise in, and understanding of, dyslexia are reflected in the school's SEN development plan.

All staff recognise compounding factors that may co-exist with dyslexia. They are familiar with the individual learning styles of children and adopt a range of multi-sensory teaching approaches. Ongoing training continues to update staff's skills and understanding. We have high expectations of all children and the achievement of pupils is seen as everybody's responsibility. We achieve this through encouraging partnerships with parents and engaging pupils in their own learning ('Parent Voice' and 'Pupil Voice').

3. Early identification and provision

The school's policy for assessment and identification of children's special needs is set out in the SEN Policy. Pupils are screened, using the GL Assessment online, for the possible risk of dyslexia at the earliest point to entry to the school. The results of the screener are available to staff and are found on each student individual support plan. All pupils are monitored closely for areas within the curriculum where difficulties may arise.

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/ tutor.
- Specific targeted interventions – these will be detailed in the Provision Map.
- Support from a LSA/ ESW, under the guidance of the class teacher. The SENCO will offer support where appropriate.
- Regular reviews to determine progress and evaluate effectiveness of support.
- Where appropriate further exploration of individual difficulties can be considered.
- Specialist teacher 1:1 or small group sessions

Assessing literacy needs:

Phase 1:

On entry to the school pupils complete a range of assessments, including the New Group Reading Test, the New Group Spelling Test, CAT 4, Initial assessments for Literacy and Numeracy. This data identifies a pupil profile and possible gaps in skills.

Phase 2:

Pupils whose data is significantly below expected level are further investigated for gaps in Phonics knowledge, spelling and reading high frequency words.

Phase 3:

As a large number of pupils have had limited or sporadic intervention input due to SEMH needs, these are put in place to build up a history of high quality targeted input.

Phase 4:

Pupils that continue to show difficulties in the acquisition of reading and spelling skills, will be offered a formal assessment for dyslexia.

4. Provision

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 have an understanding of implications this has on the subject they teach.
- 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.
- 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.

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.

Spelling:

- Mark written work on content and encourage the use of a wide vocabulary.
- Correct only a few errors. Do not cover work in red 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.

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 LSA/ ESW
- Accept less written work. 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 ('tops and tails')
 - Multiple choice
 - Labelling diagrams
 - Categorising
 - Table/grid completion
 - Title – paragraph match
 - Sentence completion

Multi-sensory learning:

- Multisensory learning is a teaching approach that engages multiple senses (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic) simultaneously to improve learning and retention, particularly beneficial for individuals with dyslexia.
- By engaging more senses, multisensory methods create stronger neural pathways, making it easier for the brain to process and remember information
 - Sand / shaving foam writing
 - Air writing
 - Word building using magnetic letters
 - Read it, build it, write it
 - Shared reading

Special arrangements are made for pupils with dyslexia taking school tests – these are called 'Access Arrangements'. Staff will need to evidence normal working practices to support the application for exam support.

We aim to ensure smooth transition for pupils with dyslexia during their school experience.

Resources

The school is building a resource bank of materials suited to teaching pupils with dyslexia. The resource library is available to all staff and can be found in the SENCO's office. Recycled paper is available for all printing. For those students who still require colour overlays these are available from the SENCO. Each classroom has a dyslexia friendly support box with a range of resources for students to access when needed.

5. Partnership with parents and 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.

