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**Dyslexia- what can be done?**

**Factsheet Number 33 August 2025**

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The hyperlinks in this factsheet are correct as at August 2025.

**Getting help**

If you think your child may have dyslexia, the first step is to speak to their teacher or the school’s special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) about your concerns. They may be able to offer additional support to help your child if necessary. It is a “specific learning difficulty,” which means it causes problems with certain abilities used for learning such a reading and writing.

The SENCO and senior leaders need to determine a process for screening and identifying pupils with dyslexia. CAT (Cognitive Assessment Test) scores identify pupils with literacy difficulties requiring further investigation.

If there are still concerns about your child’s progress after they have received additional teaching and support (please read all the types of support below) then it may be a good idea to have a more in-depth assessment. You can ask for them to be referred for assessment by a local authority educational psychologist or an appropriately qualified specialist dyslexia teacher.

They will be able to support you, your child and your child’s teacher by helping improve the understanding of your child’s learning difficulties and suggesting interventions that may help them.

**Requesting an assessment**

There are several ways to request an assessment for your child, although it can sometimes be a time-consuming and frustrating process.

**Positive traits associated with Dyslexia.**

* Determination to succeed.
* Resilience
* Creativity, particularly in music.
* Innovative
* Excellent verbal skills

Traits, which require support:

* Poor sequencing
* Poor inferential skills when reading text.
* Usually, the last child to be changed and last out for games activities.
* Difficulty in learning their tim.es tables.
* Difficulty in learning another language - useful to know that learning German and/or Spanish is far easier than learning French.
* Sensory processing difficulties i.e., related to food textures and bland diet.
* Poor organisational skills
* Worn-out when the young person arrives home.
* Slow reading speeds
* If he/she has ADHD as well, then can be prone to blurting out and/or being forgetful.
* Difficulties with reading and writing which are linked to phonological awareness.
* Difficulties with working memory.
* Difficulties with processing speeds, which can all be discussed with the SENCO.

**What to do if you believe your child is dyslexic?**

1.Ensure that the young person has an up-to-date hearing and eye test. Were there early hearing issues e.g., grommets/glue ear etc? Has a referral been made to an optometrist?

2. Use the British Dyslexia Association website (see below in resources), where there are free checklists for early years/ primary and secondary aged pupils.

3. Is the child able to sequence the alphabet?

4. Look at [https://www.nessy.com](https://www.nessy.com/) who offer screening tests for risk of dyslexia.

* Note that schools are under no obligation “to implement any or all of recommendations in a private report, although they may implement some and not others, which may be totally unreasonable and impractical.”
* It is always wise to talk to the SENCO in the school and be aware that an early health and care assessment is not always necessary for a dyslexic pupil if schools are implementing strategies to support the child using their Plan, Do, Review strategy using ordinarily available provision. (O.A.P.)

**Support in the classroom for dyslexic pupils.**

* Make learning multi-sensory. What does this mean? Effective dyslexia practice includes teaching/learning using auditory (hearing), visual (seeing) and kinaesthetic (doing) experiences.
* Keep walls clear with little distractions.
* No harsh lighting or noise in the room.
* Do not use laminated shiny paper- use matt.
* Avoid black print on white paper.
* Use visual timetables.
* Use dyslexic friendly fonts – ariel/colibri/comic sans and use large fonts. Ensure a simple layout with not too much information on the page.
* Do not ask the pupil to read aloud.
* Give one instruction at a time and give the pupil time to consider their response. Do not overload with questions.
* Allow the pupil to sit at the front of the class.
* Use a box of word mats and have coloured pens available as well as pencil grips.
* Change the whiteboard background colour.
* Ensure the pupil has a study-friend.
* Have a variety of coloured overlays available.
* Aim to achieve the BDA Kitemark and use their You Tube channel to look at story maps/ use of tinted glasses/overlays and use of highlighter pens.
* Print displays without using cursive writing.
* Use writing frames/templates and mnemonics to help vocabulary development.
* Use a digital clock.
* Use the FOG Index to cheek the readability of books.

**A Dyslexia Friendly School**

1. The staff are trained to be confident and to use a range of resources/teaching practices to support dyslexic pupils.

2. Staff training is regularly updated to include new staff as well as the headteacher and the SEN governor. This can also include support staff, who may encounter the pupil.

3. An holistic approach to the teaching of dyslexic pupils is given importance from the top.

4.Parents’ needs are met as well as those of the child with support and advice.

5. Many websites are dyslexia unfriendly as using a creamy background, which makes reading difficult.

Dyslexia friendly schools - a Google search brought up those local schools in Greater Manchester listed below but it would be useful to do an up-to-date search.

Manchester Academy, The East Manchester Academy, Lancasterian, The Birches, Bridge College, Reddish Hall School, The Grange, Southern Cross, Audenshaw Academy.

**Support at home**

* Have a quiet place to study, if possible, away from distractions
* Check the lighting.
* Use headphones for noise reduction.
* Have doubles of any kit which might be needed e.g., rulers/protractors etc.

**USEFUL RESOURCES**

* The BDA Dyslexia Friendly Good Practice Guide [British Dyslexia Association](https://www.bing.com/search?q=british+dyslexia+association&cvid=8a1dc8dfa3ea4f568cc29dcf9801d680&aqs=edge.1.69i57j0l8j69i11004.8911j0j4&FORM=ANAB01&PC=U531)
* IT Programmes that can be helpful: Word Shark, Nessy, Toe by Toe, Alpha to Omega, Number Shark, Touch type Read and Spell, Dyslexic Kit, Wheels of Apps
* An educational psychologist directory- you can find a directory of chartered psychologists on the British Psychological Society’s website [British Psychological Society](https://www.bing.com/search?q=british+psychological+society&cvid=c673469749b949c68c4d08207038848d&aqs=edge.0.0j46j0l7j69i11004.13124j0j4&FORM=ANAB01&PC=U531)
* Dyslexia Friendly Schools Good Practice Guide - DfE 2018 [Dyslexia Friendly Schools Good Practice Guide 2nd edition.](https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=ZFf96fzd&id=82FBE8A36C7C9AEBF4F3A1928A227BA8510C96A5&thid=OIP.ZFf96fzdSc7Grbx6IASsAQAAAA&mediaurl=https%3A%2F%2Fimages.squarespace-cdn.com%2Fcontent%2Fv1%2F5f6c6000a7eee04ece99cd51%2F1617366440554-14JON546WT83TOHHDETO%2FBDA%2BDyselxia%2BSchools%2BGuide.png&cdnurl=https%3A%2F%2Fth.bing.com%2Fth%2Fid%2FR.6457fde9fcdd49cec6adbc7a2004ac01%3Frik%3DpZYMUah7IoqSoQ%26pid%3DImgRaw%26r%3D0&exph=529&expw=365&q=dyslexia+friendly+schools+good+practice+guide+2018&simid=608029166639537981&form=IRPRST&ck=E474F64795C8C35648E9E5DCB4ADB288&selectedindex=0&itb=0&ajaxhist=0&ajaxserp=0&vt=0&sim=11&pivotparams=insightsToken%3Dccid_NFvvTofd*cp_3B5291C5C878B85D485D63DBA9931666*mid_769AB36EE55196FC0B0CEE2DE2A480A239FDA826*simid_608009190748259886*thid_OIP.NFvvTofdShFuQTp5v-tcFgHaKe&iss=VSI&ajaxhist=0&ajaxserp=0)
* <https://patoss-dyslexia.org> -lots of free resources.

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| **Contact Details for SENDIASS Manchester**  Helpline Telephone number: 0161 209 8356. Please clearly leave your name, contact number and a brief message on the answerphone and a member of the team will contact you within 24 hours or the next working day.  **Or**  Email your query to us: [**sendiass@manchester.gov.uk**](mailto:sendiass@manchester.gov.uk) leaving your name, child’s name and their date of birth.  You can complete our website contact form: [**Contact Us (iasmanchester.org)**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/contact)  Visit Manchester SENDIASS website [**About SENDIASS Manchester (iasmanchester.org)**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/)  Manchester SENDIASS Podcasts [**Listen to our SEND Talk podcasts**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/podcasts)  Manchester SENDIASS YouTube channel [**https://www.youtube.com/@SENDIASSManchester**](https://www.youtube.com/@SENDIASSManchester)    **QR code for the website QR code for Facebook page** |