

This leaflet aims to give you basic information on specific learning difficulties and dyslexia. Further information is available from school where staff will be happy to help you.

We would use the term 'specific learning difficulties' where a child is having problems coping with a specific area or areas of their work at school.

Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty in its own right. We use the term where a child is having difficulty with aspects of reading or writing when there's a clear difference between these and the way they perform in other areas of school work.

Research suggests that dyslexia results from differences in how the brain processes written and spoken information. Therefore dyslexic pupils often take much longer to carry out instructions and/or complete written tasks

Dyslexia varies in severity. Some people have relatively mild difficulties which cause some problems with spelling and written work whereas others can continue to have real difficulties with reading and writing despite additional support at school.

Many children have dyslexic type difficulties and with support many are able to learn strategies to help them learn successfully.

### Indications of dyslexia

- Particular difficulty with phonics, reading and spelling
- Difficulty with cognitive processing eg: understanding instructions
- Difficulty acquiring basic sight vocabulary
- Poor sequencing p-o-t becomes top, difficulty with order of days, months, alphabet, multiplication tables, telling the time
- Poor organisational skills
- Difficulty in understanding what has been read
- Auditory discrimination - difficulty hearing sounds in words / decoding / rhyming / difficulty distinguishing between similar sounds t/d, b/p
- Poor memory
- Visual discrimination - reverses letters and numbers, confusion with b/d and words such as on/no, saw/was
- Leaves letters out of words or puts them in wrong order eg: siad for said
- Confusion between directional words
- Poor sense of direction and confuses left / right
- Difficulty copying from the board
- Poor / immature handwriting
- Poor concentration
- Performance varies from day to day
- Transposes (swaps) numbers

Children who experience difficulty in many of these areas **may** be dyslexic. There is no 'cure' for dyslexia but children can be taught strategies to help them.

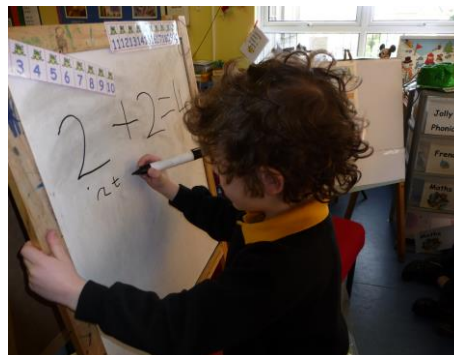
### Strategies we use to help dyslexic pupils

- 'Overlearn' common spelling words
- Revisit previously taught phonics regularly
- Use colour to teach common spelling patterns eg: **paint**
- Break longer words into syllables
- Use magnetic letters to practise spelling words
- Help develop listening comprehension using tapes and reading to pupils
- Break down instructions/tasks asking pupil to repeat back to ensure understanding
- Provide additional support where possible to practice reading, spelling and phonics aloud to develop rapid word recognition
- Encourage pupils to reread familiar texts
- Increase fluency, confidence and sight vocabulary through paired reading
- Provide opportunities to present work in different ways
- Limit copying especially from the board
- Give a lot of support in setting out work
- Use ICT, spell checkers and wordbanks
- Support pupil with organisational skills
- Use programmes such as 'Toe by Toe' and 'Codecracker'
- Talk to pupil about how they learn best

**Dyslexic pupils generally need extra support but must be encouraged to appreciate that to a great extent, success will be dependent on effort – dyslexic pupils often have to work harder than others to achieve the same standard**

## How can you help?

- Help your child improve organisational skills by providing a check list of what is required for school each day
- Encourage your child to reread familiar texts even if they are below their reading ability - this will help develop rapid word recognition
- Try 'paired reading' where you and your child read the text aloud together
- Practice reading and spelling every night
- Encourage your child to use magnetic letters to make spelling words
- Play games such as 'Pairs' to improve memory
- Check your child's school bag for homework - he/she may forget
- Praise success and be aware that dyslexic children may know a word one day and not the next
- Learning spelling over and over every day will eventually pay off
- Read to your child often
- Encourage your child to use a computer if possible and develop word processing skills
- Help build confidence and self esteem by focussing on your child's successes



## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS and TEACHERS ON Specific Learning Difficulties and Dyslexia



## ST MARK'S PRIMARY

