

# Dyslexia

Information for parents and carers



## What is dyslexia?

It is estimated that 10% of people have dyslexia. Dyslexia exists in all cultures and across the range of abilities and backgrounds. Dyslexia often runs in families. There is no 'cure' but lots of practical things can help overcome some of the barriers it presents. Dyslexia is a learning 'difference', which means that the brain can approach things in a different way to other people. Dyslexia can affect the way people communicate, and it is different for everyone. It is not just about reading and writing, and it has nothing to do with intelligence. Dyslexia is classed as a disability under the Equality Act. (Dyslexia Scotland)

There is a Scottish Working Definition of Dyslexia (2009):

'Dyslexia can be described as a continuum of difficulties in learning to read, write and/or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities and may not be typical of performance in other areas.'

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning, teaching and working environment, as there are often associated difficulties.'

The full definition can be found on the Addressing Dyslexia website  
[addressingdyslexia.org/what-is-dyslexia](http://addressingdyslexia.org/what-is-dyslexia)

## Helpful resources

- **Dyslexia Scotland** – Empowering people with dyslexia to reach their full potential  
[dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://dyslexiascotland.org.uk)
- **Dyslexia Unwrapped** - Information for children and young people  
[dyslexiascotland.org.uk/unwrapped/](http://dyslexiascotland.org.uk/unwrapped/)
- **British Dyslexia Association** - 'See dyslexia differently' film for children and young people.  
[www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexia](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexia)
- Online Dyslexia Masterclass for parents  
[www.udemy.com/course/dyslexia-masterclass-for-parents/](http://www.udemy.com/course/dyslexia-masterclass-for-parents/)
- **Education Scotland** - Additional Support Information for parents  
[education.gov.scot/parentzone/additional-support](http://education.gov.scot/parentzone/additional-support)
- **BBC Bitesize** – Learning Activities  
[www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/parents](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/parents)
- **Made by Dyslexia** - a global charity led by successful dyslexics, the world's largest community of dyslexic people and their allies.  
[www.madebydyslexia.org](http://www.madebydyslexia.org)
- Search online for a range of dyslexia friendly graphic novels / books i.e Barrington Stoke
- Speak to your local library about audio books or dyslexia friendly font books they have available

For more information speak to your school or visit [www.fife.gov.uk/pupilsupport](http://www.fife.gov.uk/pupilsupport)

## Strengths associated with dyslexia

- Good at thinking out the box and seeing the whole picture
- Great problem solvers
- Shows creativity across a range of areas
- Good builders, fixers and makers – can be practical
- Strong visual thinking skills (i.e. creating something 3D from something 2D, strong spatial awareness)
- Good verbal skills in areas of interest
- They can be ‘people people’ (show kindness, empathy and interest in others)

## Difficulties associated with dyslexia

- Being able to process information given through words (i.e. following directions, instructions or a story)
- Difficulties with phonics, reading, spelling, writing and handwriting.
- Bring able to find the words they want to use, remembering words and telling a story so it makes sense.
- Short-term and working memory (remembering previous learning, being able to play with letters or numbers in your head, remembering lists)
- Sequencing and directionality (i.e. confusing right and left, under and above, forwards and backwards, reversals in letters and numbers)
- Number skills (remembering times tables, telling time, reading a timetable)
- Organisational ability (getting dressed and organising their possessions, unable to tidy room, forgetting things).

**It's important to remember, everyone has different strengths, difficulties and strategies that work for them.**

## Support strategies for children

Everyone is an individual and so what supports one person may not support another. Sometimes asking the person with dyslexia to suggest solutions to problems can produce simple but effective results.

## Key supports

These supports may be offered in school and if you wish to provide them, your child may find them useful at home.

- Use of mind-mapping, flow charts or visuals to present and plan learning
- Regular tasks and instructions broken down
- Use of coloured overlays and coloured paper
- ICT/Assistive Technology for reading, writing and recording of information
- Peer support for help with reading/writing activities
- Early identification and provision of appropriate support as soon as possible

## Tips for parents

- Support your child to organise themselves and their resources for school
- Break down instructions and only give one or two at a time
- Homework shouldn't be a big struggle – support your child / agree an amount of time for the task and speak to the school if completing the homework is still problematic
- Using technology and / or getting help enhances learning and is not ‘cheating’
- Your child needs time to play and to unwind, school can be exhausting when you have dyslexia
- Every child should experience joy in accessing texts even if the text has to be read to them
- Embrace opportunities for learning in real life context i.e. going to the shops