



Literacy difficulties and dyslexia

Dyslexia is listed as an SpLD under 'Cognition and Learning' in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) along with dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Taken from the Rose Report (2009):

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills 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 the 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-coordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation.

Doncaster EPS Definition

As a service, we have chosen to adopt the British Psychological Society (1999) definition of dyslexia:

'Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the 'word level' and implies the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities.'

The Role of Doncaster EPS

The EPS does not 'diagnose' dyslexia. We follow a process of:

- Quality First Teaching
- Assess-plan-do-review.

We support and advise schools over time in their implementation of good quality and effective literacy teaching for all.

We work with schools to help them use preventative strategies and support them with the early identification of pupils with literacy difficulties.

The key message here is **action** over **diagnosis**! You do not need a diagnosis to put intervention

Interventions and practical strategies to support literacy difficulties and dyslexia

Learning should be **personalised**, matching provision to meet the child's needs. Monitor the child's **progress over time** and consider the impact that the teaching strategies have had on their learning. If progress is not being made, consider how teaching can be **adapted** to meet the needs of the pupil.

Rose (2009) states that children with dyslexic difficulties particularly benefit from teaching that adheres to the following principles:

- Highly structured
- Systematic
- Little and often (daily sessions where possible)
- Use of multi-sensory methods
- Time for reinforcement and generalisation.

Simple strategies:

1. Students are not learning anything when copying from the board. Give all students handouts and use the extra time to concentrate on assessment or consolidation of learning instead.
2. If you need to dictate information, don't expect students to be able to write down everything you say - write it on the board as well.
3. Display instructions visually and make them simple and in the order you want them completing.
4. Break tasks down into smaller sequences of steps - create a checklist that students can use to tick off each task.
5. Make sure the learner is facing the board and near to the front.
6. Give homework instructions on a sheet that they can stick in their planner.
7. Make sure the classroom is quiet when explaining something important.