



St Joseph's RC Primary School, Ramsbottom Dyslexia Friendly Schools Policy

"If a child does not learn in the way in which we teach then we must teach him in the way in which he learns. Let dyslexia be looked at from a different angle, not as a learning disability but a different learning ability."

Mission Statement

"There are 3 things that last: Faith, Hope and Love. Love one another as I have loved you."

Our school is proud to be part of the Roman Catholic community in the Parish of St Joseph's, Ramsbottom. Our school has a distinctive character, because everything we do is based on the values of the Gospel. The purpose of our community is to recognise the worth and dignity of all and to fully develop the talents of each person."

Rationale

At St Joseph's School every child is equal, valued and unique. We aim to provide an environment where all pupils feel safe and can flourish. As part of the Dyslexia Aware Quality Mark initiative here at St Joseph's, we recognise the strengths of pupils with dyslexia/dyslexia type learning needs 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.

We recognise that pupils learn at different rates and staff are familiar with the individual learning styles of children and adopt a range of multi-sensory teaching approaches.

Governors, senior leaders, teachers and all other staff are committed to supporting children with dyslexia to remove the barriers to learning and enable them to participate fully in the curriculum and all areas of school life.

What is Dyslexia?

According to the Dyslexia Institute, dyslexia can be defined as:

'...a combination of abilities and difficulties which affect the learning process in reading, writing, spelling and sometimes numeracy.'

Dyslexic children frequently have weaknesses in short term memory, sequencing and processing information - skills everyone needs to learn effectively in a busy classroom.

What may start as a learning difference becomes a learning difficulty if dyslexia goes unrecognised and the teaching is inappropriate.

However, if those with milder forms of dyslexia are identified early and given the opportunity to learn the way they learn best, they may cease to have special educational needs. The skills and strategies which dyslexic children need in order to learn can be taught and administered through quality first teaching methods

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies from individual to individual. Dyslexia is a difference in the way the brain processes words, however it affects much more than reading and writing. There are often associated difficulties such as:

- Auditory and/or visual processing of language-based information
- Phonological awareness
- Oral language skills and reading fluency
- Short-term and working memory
- Sequencing and directionally
- Number skills
- Organisational ability
- Motor skills and co-ordination may also be affected.

Our aims therefore are to reduce or remove these barriers to learning by creating an inclusive learning environment and using teaching and learning techniques which engage and reach all children. In particular, we aim to reduce visual stress and anxiety whilst developing self-confidence and building self-esteem.

Early identification and provision

It is class teachers' responsibility to recognise the early signs of dyslexia and raise this as a concern to the schools Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and parents. Further assessment may then be carried out to identify the child's strengths and areas for development. Assessment may include background information, pupil interview, classroom observation, consideration of the pupil's work, and standardised and/or non-standardised assessments. The outcome of this assessment will be discussed with parents/carers.

Action taken may include all or some of the following:

- Appropriate differentiated work planned by the class teacher
- Targeted intervention
- Alternative methods of recording
- Dyslexia friendly books
- Strategies to support memory during teaching and learning tasks
- Value placed on verbal contributions
- Regular reviews with parents to discuss progress and evaluate effectiveness of support

Access to the mainstream curriculum

- Children with dyslexia have access to a 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 coordinate
- Staff use multi-sensory techniques to facilitate learning. Children access the curriculum through differentiated tasks, outcomes and resources.
- Staff support pupils in some, or all, of the following ways on a day-to-day basis:

The steps we will take to ensure that dyslexic children achieve their potential include:

Environment

Writing on boards



Research suggests that increased line spacing and the use of the dark text on a pastel background can help reduce visual stress, because some children find it harder to read when it is a high contrast level (e.g. black on white).

- Be consistent in your use of font, and background.
- Use bold for emphasis rather than highlighting, underlining or italicising.
- Use a larger font (minimum size 14)
- Avoid colour combinations which cause visual stress e.g. does not combine red and green.
- When it is necessary for children to copy from the board ensure that the writing is well-spaced.
- Read aloud as you write.
- Give children a copy of what is on the board - copying/reading close work is easier.

The classroom environment

We recognise that the correct working environment is vital for all learners. Anxiety can arise if a child does not know what is happening next, we can reduce this anxiety and better prepare children for transitioning by using:

- Visual timetables - they need to be on display, in a prominent place and each card removed after the lesson is ended.
- To help children to know which subject is which we have a consistent colour-coding for our exercise books and any subject boards.

English -Green

Maths - Red

Topic - Blue

Religion - Pink books/purple background

To promote independence within the classroom environment, there should be:

- A clock
- Alphabet Arc (from letter join) on display in each classroom
- Interactive items placed at child height
- Resources to be labelled with name and picture.
- Toolbox with resources available and children to know about them. Contents will vary to suit the needs of the class but might include, 100 squares, writing mats, multiplication squares, alphabet strips, overlays.
- All classrooms to have photo of staff who will work in the classroom on that day, on the front of their doors.

The Child

It is each class teacher's responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning for all pupils within their class. In a positive and encouraging environment, every child will experience the feeling of success and self-value. Many children need a boost to their self-confidence before they can learn to overcome their difficulties. They may have already experienced failure and deep down they don't often believe they are capable of learning. To re-establish self-confidence it is essential that we provide the opportunity to succeed and give praise for small achievements.

- Encourage the children to use the feeling faces and discuss any emotions.
- Remind children to use 'Worry box' if needed.
- Celebrate children's gifts/talents/work.
- Use positive reinforcements.
- Keep copying from the board to a minimum. Where it is unavoidable, ensure that the writing is well spaced and try and use different coloured pens for each new point. This enables children to 're-find' where they are up to on the board.
- Leave the writing on the board long enough to ensure the child doesn't rush, or that the work is not erased from the board before the child has finished copying.
- Encourage a 'growth mind-set' through discussion, displays and positive reinforcement.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching should include input which suits children with different learning styles or strengths. Multi-sensory teaching helps children to use of all of their senses at the

same time to ensure the whole learning experience is more memorable and therefore more likely to be learned and retained.

Reading

- Allow more time for reading, listening and understanding.
- Save the reluctant child the ordeal of having to read aloud in class. If a child is reading in an assembly for e.g. give the children the reading material beforehand, to allow them to practise it at home/beforehand.
- Read instructions to the child where appropriate.
- Teach unfamiliar subject words.
- Teacher's handwriting is legible and joined.
- Use the school's font consistently and allow a minimum of 1.5 line spacing.

Writing

- Use of alternatives of recording - talking tins, laptop, diagrams/charts.
- Using alternative methods to record such as drama, hot-seating, mind-mapping, debate, discussion etc and this is evidenced on the working wall, in books and also in the dyslexia folder on the staff network.
- Encourage legible handwriting but consider co-occurring motor difficulties may exist
- Actively encourage alternative methods of recording e.g. Clicker 7 / Word / iPad apps / mind maps etc. • Writing frames can be very useful..
- Limit the amount of copying from the board - provide children with the information on piece of coloured paper or I-pad

Spelling

- Mark written work on content and encourage the use of adventurous vocabulary.
- Have lists of key words / topic words on display and easily accessible to all children.
- Use a variety of strategies (e.g, spelling bags)
- Use computer programmes to support spelling -IDL

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
- Multiple choice
- Labelling diagrams

- Categorising
- Table/grid completion
- Title - paragraph match
- Sentence completion
- Sequencing

Partnership with parents/carers

We welcome parents/carers to share their concerns and we value the information they have regarding their child. In school we monitor children's progress very closely and as soon as any difficulties are noticed, these are discussed with parents and an action plan is formed. This may be in the format of a School Support Plan. We keep parents/carers fully informed of their child's progress at regular intervals.

Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed in line with the School Improvement Plan's 3 year Review Cycle.

This policy was last updated in November 2021