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*Information for Teachers*

*Dyslexia*

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## What is dyslexia?

The Dyslexia Association of Ireland defines dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty affecting the acquisition of fluent and accurate reading and spelling skills. This occurs despite access to appropriate learning opportunities. Dyslexia is characterised by cognitive difficulties in

(1) phonological processing

(2) working memory

(3) speed of retrieval of information from long term memory.

Dyslexic difficulties occur on a continuum from mild to severe and affect approximately 10% of the population. People with dyslexia may experience greater stress and frustration as they endeavour to learn, resulting in heightened anxiety, particularly in relation to literacy acquisition. People with dyslexia may also have accompanying learning strengths.

## Signs of Dyslexia

Students with Dyslexia may have difficulties in some or all of the following:

| Reading | Spelling | Writing | Note-Taking |
|---|---|---|---|
| Concept-formation | Attention to Task | Speed of Processing | Phonological Processing |
| Memory | Information Retrieval | Organisation/Sequencing | Directional Confusion |

Low self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation is also common.

## Signs of Dyslexia in older students:

Students may:

- Read laboriously, phoneme by syllable by syllable or word-by-word
- Avoid reading
- Have difficulty in comprehending texts/rely on context or images to get the meaning of a text.
- Have messy handwriting and/or many spelling errors which make the work difficult to read.
- Process information slowly
- Have difficulty in copying from the board
- Have difficulty acquiring new vocabulary

- Have difficulties in self-organisation
- Have difficulty in acquiring new skills
- 'Drift-off' in class
- Not finish tests on time

## Difficulties at Second Level

- Organisation
- Reading
- Note-taking, from dictation, board and books
- Memory and learning, particularly rote learning
- Written expression
- Verbal expression
- Sequences
- Spelling
- Slow processing
- Directional confusion
- Poor self-esteem

## Support for all

- Whole school policy on handouts use a dyslexia friendly font, size etc… example www.dyslexiefont.com
- Vocabulary Keyword Notebooks for all subjects- sample notebook

**https://www.nbss.ie/sites/default/files/publications/vocab_notebook_copy_0.pdf**

- Bring Your Own Devise (BYOD)
- SQ4R Strategies (survey, question, read, recite, relate, and review).
- Quizlet
- DEAR-(Drop Everything And Read)
- Think time- allow students time to process the question they have been asked and allow time to process the answer, a simple strategy, ask a student a question, then write the question on the board before asking the student to answer the question. This should allow an adequate processing time.
- Writing Framework-POWER- plan, organise, write, edit, review
- Touch Typing for all first years
- Visible thinking routines- what do you see? What do you think? What does it make you wonder?
- Positive Correction- examples
  - Success/Tip/Think
  - Wholes school policy on abbreviations and symbols used when correcting
  - 3 stars and a wish
- Graphic Organisers- examples
  - PDST booklet

- XMind
- Avoid the use of cursive handwriting on the board
- Use of coloured handouts, coloured overlays, reading rulers
- Put homework and notes on computer: Edmodo, Classdojo, School bag etc.
- DES Asking for Help Form- in the SEN folder
- Metacognition- (thinking about thinking) mindmaps/graph organisers to plan their work and use check lists to monitor progress. KWLH- (Know, Want to know, Learned, How do I learn it) PMI - Plus Minus Interesting.
- A PMI strategy can help you to:
  * to brainstorm ideas
  * make decisions quickly by analysing and weighing the pros and cons
  * reflect upon or evaluate a product or process after the fact
  * identify strengths and weaknesses for future improvement