

BEXLEY VOICE DYSLEXIA INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS



What is Dyslexia?

It is a specific learning difficulty which mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. Recent research has proved that dyslexia is certainly a difference in the way the brain works. Dyslexics have strengths in areas other than literacy. They may be exceedingly creative and artistic, excellent engineers and scientists or have great entrepreneurial skills (including the 'gift of the gab').

A dyslexic child may have some of the following problems:

- Reading and spelling / Putting letters and figures the wrong way round (Transposed).
- Difficulty remembering times tables and the alphabet / using their fingers to make simple calculations.
- Leaving letters out of words or putting them in the wrong order.
- Confusing letters such as "b and d" or words such as "on and no".
- Poor concentration / Taking longer than average to complete their work.
- Problems processing language at speed.
- Tying shoe laces, ties, dressing etc / Difficulty telling left from right.
- Poor organisational skills / Lacks confidence and has a poor self image.

It is important to establish if the child is following the "normal" age related problems or if there needs to be an assessment leading to a possible diagnosis being made. All children who have any problems, with or without a diagnosis will need support in their education. Dyslexia does not 'go away', but strategies can be successfully learnt to overcome the problems it causes. If not helped, these children may not reach their full potential.

Advice for helping Dyslexic children:

- Allow plenty of time for homework, in a stress free environment.
- Using coloured plastic wallets as overlays over a white page with black text, can help them with school work and reading. (Different colours work for children so try blue, green, red and yellow over different text to see what has the best effect. You can buy these in most stationary shops).
- Use coloured backgrounds/text/paper wherever possible. Blue text on cream paper is popular.
- Coloured lenses can be used in your child's glasses although they are not free on the NHS.
- Use logos, pictures, listening books, audio tapes and visual aids.
- Local libraries often lend audio books to Dyslexic children for free.
- Change school timetables into coloured squares as Dyslexic children can associate that, for example, maths is always a green square. Match this with a green cover on any maths books and a green paper file at home for any maths paperwork/projects etc.
- Use a Dyslexic Friendly dictionary (the words are listed how they sound with the correct version next to them). Try PURRFIKT SPELLING by Christine Maxwell ISBN 978-1-84299-281-4.
- Try Dyslexic Friendly software for computers - the British Dyslexia Association can recommend approved suppliers.
- Join your local and national Dyslexia Associations (**see our website for membership details**).
- Use a search engine, the internet is full of advice. Just make sure it is from an approved/recognised website.
- An excellent website by a Dyslexic teenager is www.iamdyslexic.com.
- BT offer a free directory enquiry service for Dyslexics, for details call 195.

What should parents/carers do if they feel their child is having problems at school?

Firstly always speak to your child's teacher to discuss any issues. A SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), Head Teacher or Head of Year may also become involved. They will help you and your child get the best support in their education. You can also get support from Bexley's IASS service. Our website has details of the IASS and local/national Dyslexia Associations that you can get advice and support from.

Visit www.bexleyvoice.org.uk for more information.