

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE & SPORT SERVICE**

**THE EDUCATION OF
PUPILS WITH
SPECIFIC LEARNING
DIFFICULTIES/DYSLEXIA**

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Highland Council
Education Culture and Sport Service
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Dyslexia**

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Education Culture and Sport Service
**The Education of Pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties/
Dyslexia**

Note: In Scotland different professional groups use different terminology. The term 'dyslexia' is widely understood, is used internationally and in research, and is therefore used in this policy document. Terminology is discussed in more detail in section 2 of this policy document.

1 Rationale

1.1 This policy takes account of recent legislation including the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, Code of Practice and subsequent amendments made by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA), the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act, 2004 and its Code of Practice, and the DDA 2005.

1.2 There is substantial understanding and good practice with respect to dyslexia in Highland and this policy sets a framework for maintaining and developing this practice further to achieve a consistently high standard across all educational establishments.

1.3 Appropriate strategies and structures of support must be available for all children who have additional support needs and may be finding learning problematic. Additional support needs vary in both duration and severity so that a range of procedures, interventions and provision is required. This document sets out the policy and framework of support for children with dyslexic difficulties from the earliest stages throughout the school-age years. It also gives pointers to promoting access to lifelong learning. It should be noted, however, that the approaches and methods described in this policy can be used to benefit all children who find the learning of literacy difficult.

1.4 Educational, psychological, neurological and biological research in the field of dyslexia are progressing. This policy will require revision as knowledge of dyslexia progresses.

2. Terminology

2.1 Both 'specific learning difficulties' and 'dyslexia' are widely used because they are felt to be useful in different contexts

2.2: The term “Specific Learning Difficulties” refers to difficulties which are not of a general nature, but are specific to certain areas of functioning. It implies a recognition both that much of an individual’s learning may be progressing without difficulty and that particular support and intervention may be needed to support one or more aspects of learning. Specific difficulties in the acquisition of both literacy skills (dyslexia) and numeracy skills (dyscalculia) are widely recognised.

2.3 The British Dyslexia Association defines ‘Dyslexia’ as follows,

Dyslexia is a specific learning difference which is constitutional in origin (in the make up of the person) independent of socio-economic or language background, and can occur at any level of intellectual ability.

It can cause unexpected and persistent difficulties in acquiring certain skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, spelling and sometimes numeracy and spoken language.

There may be accompanying weaknesses in: speed of processing, short term memory, sequencing, motor skills, auditory or visual perception.

(Tresman, The British Dyslexia Association, 2005)

2.4 From a practical viewpoint, dyslexia can be seen as “a difficulty with literacy which results in a person requiring a set of accommodations* to be made to enable them to demonstrate their abilities”.

* “Accommodations here can be defined as a set of enabling arrangements which are put in place to ensure that the dyslexic person can demonstrate their strengths and abilities and show attainment.” (Crombie, 2002; 2004)

2.5 A British Psychological Society working group suggested that “Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the ‘word level’ and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities. It provides a basis for a staged approach of assessment through teaching.” (British Psychological Society, 1999)

2.6 Research suggests that the majority of dyslexic individuals have an underlying difficulty with phonological processing i.e. with processing information related to sounds and/or processing information related to the links between sounds and printed letters and words. Nevertheless it must be emphasised both that other types of dyslexic difficulty also occur and also that the severity of difficulties vary from individual to individual. While there are distinctive patterns of difficulties, the strengths and weaknesses of individuals vary considerably and where difficulties are severe and long term it is essential to identify the individual's strengths and weaknesses and to tailor learning and teaching approaches to address and compensate for these.

3. Incidence

3.1 Miles (1991) suggests that between 2% and 4 % of the population can be categorised as dyslexic. However, the British Dyslexia Association proposes that the figure is nearer to 10% in acknowledgement of the wide spectrum of difficulties which can be present. While the exact incidence found in research studies is clearly dependent on the details of the definition used and on the research methodology it is clear that teachers should regularly expect to encounter pupils who have particular difficulties in acquiring literacy skills.

3.2 Research indicates that boys are more likely than girls to have significant difficulties in acquiring literacy skills.

4. Early Identification of Dyslexia

4.1 When dyslexia goes unrecognised, the subsequent loss of self-esteem or motivation can affect the child's emotional wellbeing. This can result in frustration for the child and can on occasions be acted out through the child's behaviours, sometimes leading to withdrawal or challenging behaviour.

4.2 Until recently, it was considered inappropriate to consider the possibility of dyslexia before a child's entry into primary school. The identification of dyslexia was centred around difficulties, discrepancies and differences related to both reading and written work. Research in Edinburgh's Pilton area, however, has shown that children who make a poor start in reading tend to continue to have difficulties, in spite of subsequent intervention. Both this

and other research has also shown that “it is possible to predict, to some extent, the likely future success of children in learning to read long before they enter school” (McMillan & Leslie, 1998).

4.3 The Highland Council recognises that it is important that any difficulties which a child may have are recognised as early as possible in order that strategies can be put in place, and so a programme of **Early Screening** is in place for children in their pre-school year. Observations and assessments based on the 3-5 curriculum are a routine part of all early years provision and should lead to the identification of individual needs and to the implementation of appropriate strategies for promoting the learning and development of each child.

4.4 Early Screening builds on the observations already carried out by nursery staff while adding a few further areas of observation which could indicate a specific difficulty. While Early Screening does not focus on dyslexia, dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty which may be highlighted by the screening

4.5 The aim of the Early Screening Programme is to look systematically at children early who MAY be “at risk” of failing to learn effectively in school. Labels such as ‘dyslexia’ may not be helpful or meaningful at the early stages, but early intervention is widely thought to be effective both in limiting the impact of any early educational difficulties and in facilitating better progress as the child progresses through education.

4.6 Early Years staff routinely work closely with parents/ carers to address jointly any minor concerns which may arise. Early Screening builds on and formalises the good practice which is already in place, and reassures parents/carers that staff are looking out for difficulties which are not always obvious before a child goes to school and embarks on more formal learning.

4.7 Relevant support can usually be given in a play context within the 3-5 curriculum framework, but for the few children with very significant difficulties a Staged Approach to understanding and responding to the individual child’s additional support needs should be initiated in accordance with the Highland Council’s policies and the requirements of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act, 2004.

4.8 Checklists have been found to be helpful in raising awareness of potential indicators of dyslexia. Samples of these can be found in Appendices 4, 4a and 4b. For example, specific weaknesses (e.g. short-term-memory, phonological awareness) that lead to later reading and written language difficulties can be recognised before formal schooling starts.

4.9 Other factors including lack of socio-cultural opportunities, bilingualism, and language delays and disorders affect the performance of some children. The information gathered during observation and Early Screening can be used to identify other patterns of difficulties which are indicative of certain Specific Learning Difficulties or even of an underachieving bright child or a child with global difficulties. Staff should be alert to early indicators of difficulties and be prepared to address these for all children. Intervention should be tailored to the needs of the child based on the observations of staff and on any further information which is available, for example from outside agencies. Identification of difficulties is not an end in itself.

4.10 Information should be passed from Nursery staff to the Primary 1 teacher at least three months before the child starts to attend Primary school. It is important that primary school staff are made aware of any concerns about specific children in pre-school centres and are given information about any individualised support or intervention which has been given. This should be contextualised by also giving information about the strategies in place for all pupils. Proper liaison and information sharing at the pre-school to primary transition is essential in order to ensure that children who show indications of developmental delays or possible learning difficulties in literacy have their needs acknowledged and so that appropriate action can be taken without delay to prevent or minimise the negative effects of any problems. The Primary 1 teacher can then observe the child to monitor progress and ensure continued support if concerns or difficulties persist.

5.0 Bilingual Children

5.1 Teachers need to be alert to the possibility that bilingual pupils may have dyslexic difficulties which are masked because they are in the process of developing English as an additional language. See the document – *Learning in 2(+) languages: Ensuring effective*

inclusion for bilingual learners: Good practice for teachers, educational establishments and local authorities – available at www.LTScotland.org.uk .

5.2 It has been found that children who learn in two or more languages, as happens in Gaelic Medium Education, benefit cognitively from the processes involved. It does not mean however that dyslexia can be ruled out, and if children are finding learning to read and write problematic in either language, then the possibility of a specific learning difficulty should be investigated. Assessment needs to consider reading and writing in both languages, and where the difficulty exists across the two languages further more detailed assessment may be needed.

6. Identifying and Planning for Pupils with Dyslexia in Primary and Secondary Schools.

6.1 The majority of pupils with an additional support need will be supported primarily by their class or subject teachers in mainstream schools, and whatever the pattern or severity of difficulties the pupil with dyslexia will primarily be supported by these teachers. This is in line with the Highland Council's commitment to inclusive education. This commitment is supported by a commitment to offer a range of high quality training to staff. (See section 11)

6.2 For all pupils with literacy difficulties the educational aims are:

- To assist them to overcome their literacy difficulties
- To support them to access and achieve across the full range of the school curriculum

6.3 Parents/carers are the longest serving and most influential educators of almost all children. If there is a concern about a child's learning parents/carers should be kept fully informed and should be invited to contribute to planning processes for their child. Many parents will wish to contribute to support their child's education for example by reinforcing work done in school, for example by playing rhyming and phonic games, hearing their child read at home, helping with learning spellings, or using paired reading or paired spelling techniques.

6.4 The Highland Council has in place a staged process for the identification of children who may have difficulties in learning. See Pathway Plan in Appendix 1.

6.5 Class or subject teachers will recognise when a child is showing some difficulties with learning and will often respond by offering some extra time or attention, presenting material in varying ways and taking steps to maintain the pupil's confidence as a learner.

6.6 If, however, difficulties are more severe or longer term it is the responsibility of the class or subject teacher to investigate further, for example by observing the pupil's behaviour as a learner noting patterns of strengths and difficulties in relation to literacy skills, and to consult with colleagues as appropriate. Key colleagues at this point are the person responsible for Support for Learning in the school and the Head Teacher and/or Principal Teacher. An English as an Additional Language teacher should be consulted where appropriate. If the pupil's literacy difficulties appear particularly unusual or severe the school's educational psychologist is sometime also consulted as part of this process. Most dyslexic children and young people, however, do not require an educational psychologist's assessment in order that appropriate strategies and support can be identified and put into practice.

6.7 For some dyslexic pupils this consultation process will identify simple measures which can be put in place to provide the necessary support.

6.8 For children whose difficulties are a little greater, Support for Learning staff may advise some differentiation of the curriculum and other supports such as homework books. Teachers may need to give small periods of additional time. Teachers will need to ensure that classroom seating arrangements are appropriate and that children are treated in a positive way to maintain self esteem and encourage learning. Peer group support approaches may also be used.

6.9 If there are severe problems, a collaborative approach is vital to ensure appropriate intervention, and where appropriate schools should ensure that Health and other agencies are involved in planning for the child.

6.10 Support for Learning staff may carry out more detailed observations for example through the analysis of errors in reading or in spelling and by looking at the pupil's learning style. It may be helpful to use some standardised assessment materials and Appendix 5 gives examples of some materials that teachers might find helpful.

6.11 For pupils with long term and significant difficulties some elements of the literacy teaching programme will be of an individualised nature and the child is likely to require an IEP, teaching may take place either in a one-to-one or small group situation. The class teacher in liaison with the Support for Learning teacher, the pupil, parents/carers and appropriate others will plan this daily support in a range of literacy areas, including reading, phonics, word attack, spelling and dictation. Much of this can be supported by the use of technology. Programmes will be carefully structured and progress carefully monitored. Teaching has proved most effective when supported both at home and by school staff on a daily basis.

6.12 If, after a few months working on an individualised programme, there is still little significant progress the IEP should be reviewed. It may be appropriate to carry out a more detailed assessment. If the school is still unsure about how to meet the pupil's needs effectively or the school's Educational Psychologist should be consulted.

6.13 If the pupil's difficulties are:

- complex or multiple;
- long-term (last a year or longer);
- are having a significant adverse effect on their learning, and
- require substantial input from one or more agencies outwith Education;

it is appropriate to consider whether pupil will benefit from a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP). This is illustrated in diagrammatic form in Appendix 1.

6.14 Many children with dyslexia also have other difficulties: for example in relation to attention and concentration, personal organisation, movement and coordination, physical difficulties, speech and language problems. These difficulties may or may not be related to dyslexia. What is important is not that we try to tease out how much of what we see is due to one difficulty and how much is another, but that we understand how far the child has progressed, identify what the next steps are, and put in place appropriate support and accommodations.

6.15 There are considerable cultural and social differences in children's backgrounds, and children will also exhibit a range of individual patterns of strengths, difficulties, discrepancies and differences. Careful assessment must therefore investigate all the areas likely to be affected and consider how these match the child's potential. We can then use the areas of strength to develop the weak areas. We must also continue to develop the wider

abilities of the child. Through knowledge of individual learning needs gained by observation and assessment, we can appropriately differentiate, individualise, adapt, enhance and/or elaborate the curriculum. It is important to balance developing areas of weakness with giving access to the full breadth of the curriculum.

7 Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Dyslexia in Primary and Secondary Schools.

7.1 Dyslexic pupils should have access to the full breadth and depth of the curriculum and strategies should be found to allow each pupil to access the curriculum at an appropriate level. If pupils require the support of a reader or scribe, notes, mind maps or taped materials, or technology such as a word processor and/or dictaphone to enable this access then every effort should be made to make this support available. Different types of support may be given by class, subject and support teachers, by non-teaching support staff and by peers. It should be noted that where a pupil is benefiting from the use of a computer and/or other aids, and is working at an age-appropriate level **with** the use of appropriate technology, it is important to maintain this support. It should not be withdrawn simply because the technology has brought the pupil's academic work to an age-appropriate level.

7.2 Any intervention must be appropriate for the age and stage of the child and should not affect access to other areas of the curriculum. Identifying and implementing the most appropriate strategies is almost always assisted by taking account of the pupil's view, and this is especially important for older pupils and young adults.

7.3 Self esteem and motivation are vital to the learning of all children and young people. Dyslexic pupils are particularly vulnerable to feelings of failure and lack of self-worth because of the unusual; and specific nature of their difficulties, and will benefit from educational and emotional support throughout their school years. Different children may, therefore, require different approaches, and there is no one method of tackling dyslexic difficulties. The type of support given will depend on whether the child is at the mild or severe end of the dyslexia continuum, on the child's learning style and on the pattern of strengths and weaknesses. While help for areas of difficulty is important it should not be at the expense of encouraging pupils to develop their strengths. For example a talented swimmer should not be excluded from swimming lessons in order to give more language practice. Emotional support may be best achieved through involvement in non academic areas where the pupil can achieve success and gain enjoyment. In some cases, where "success" is not obvious, close observation of the child can result in positive reframing – e.g. "he is a loner" can be phrased "his independence skills are good".

7.4 Teaching methods and groupings require to be given sensitive consideration and different methods and groupings may be appropriate in different situations. For example, while a dyslexic child may be seated with other readers of similar reading level for certain reading activities, it should be possible for that child to sit with others of similar oral ability for discussion of other material. The grouping of children within classes should be sufficiently flexible to ensure that all children have access to talking and listening activities where good language models are offered

7.5 It should never be assumed that a pupil with dyslexia will be incapable of progressing in a specific subject area such as learning a modern foreign language. Some dyslexic pupils do make very good progress in such areas and every effort should be made to ensure that the curriculum is presented in a way that suits the learning needs and styles of the pupil. However, when every effort has been made by pupils, school staff and parents/carers to ensure access to the full range of the curriculum, there may be a few severely dyslexic pupils for whom a curricular area becomes clearly inappropriate or even intolerable after a time. In such situations it is appropriate to consider whether alternative arrangements should be made for the pupil so that they can opt out of this part of the curriculum. This is most likely to apply in relation to learning a modern foreign language, where a pupil with severe short-term memory and auditory problems may be unable to gain from even speaking and listening. In such cases careful consideration is required to ensure that the pupil is able to use the time freed up for more profitable learning in another subject area. Both the pupil and parents/carers must be involved in the decisions which are made.

7.6 Pupils with early or mild difficulties will benefit from appropriate and timely intervention from the class teacher within the routine classroom situation. Difficulties which are severe and/or identified later, may require specific one-to-one tuition. The vast majority of children will however be able to be supported effectively in the classroom. (The assessment and planning processes are described in section 6 of this policy).

7.7 While children with basic decoding difficulties may be grouped with others with similar decoding difficulties, it is very important that all children with literacy difficulties have access to a full range of language activities including experience of challenging text. The teaching of phonics requires to be kept under review in discussion with both the child and

their parents/carers in order that repeated failure can be avoided and appropriate circumvention strategies can be put into place at a relevant stage.

7.8 The importance of a supportive ethos cannot be overstated, and dyslexic pupils must be confident that others understand their difficulties. It is important to have a range of support strategies and that the choice of strategies should be negotiated with pupil, and wherever possible parents/carers should be involved in planning for and supporting the pupil. Through collaborative working, even the smallest success of any child can be celebrated, and the child can be motivated to continue to strive for further success. Dyslexic pupils have sometimes been described as ‘lazy’ but this rarely either helpful or appropriate. It is important to identify the pupil’s learning styles and to put in place appropriate strategies which utilise strengths and accommodate weaknesses.

7.9 Positive teacher expectations have been shown to be powerful. It is important to be sensitive to the difficulties which children are experiencing while at the same time having regard to the fact that (a) pupils with dyslexia will have variable performance, and (b) when given the appropriate support may be capable of showing knowledge and understanding at a far higher level than they can read and write about. The use of peer group tutoring of various kinds can help children to develop their literacy skills, for example both paired learning and peer group tutoring can be of enormous value in helping children to develop their literacy skills. It is important that teachers feel confident that they can support children with literacy difficulties and that they empathise with the challenges which literacy acquisition can present to some children.

7.10 As well as ensuring that a dyslexic pupil can access a curriculum which is appropriate it is also important to provide support to develop the pupil’s literacy skills. This may require more individualised teaching, for example additional practice, over-learning or learning to specified criteria (described as ‘Learning to Mastery’ within Precision Teaching approaches), or multi-sensory approaches.

7.11 The term ‘metacognition’ is often used to describe an individual’s awareness of his or her own learning styles and approaches to learning. Helping a pupil to develop this understanding has often been found to have significant positive effects: typically such pupils feel more in control of their own learning, are able to take more responsibility for their own

learning, are less anxious and are more able to learn effectively. Teachers should encourage pupils to think about their own learning and to develop effective learning styles and strategies. Active participation by children in their own learning and in the learning of others can transform approaches to learning for all.

7.12 Homework can be a particular source of frustration and stress for dyslexic pupils, and a stressful experience for parents/carers if it is not well managed. Schools should be aware of how long a piece of homework may take dyslexic pupils – what may appear to be a poor piece of work produced with insufficient effort may be the result of hours of work at home. Consultation and collaboration with the pupil and the parents/carers will ensure that homework, where necessary, is set in a way which is manageable to the school, the pupils and the parents/carers. This may involve for example giving a week's homework in advance so that the pupil and parents/carers can plan what will be done when.

7.13 For pupils of secondary age it is particularly important to ensure that strategies appropriate to the pupils' age and stage of development are put in place. Some pupils may not be willing to cooperate with further teaching of literacy skills and the emphasis may need to be on ensuring access to an appropriate curriculum with support to demonstrate knowledge and understanding. Secondary and older primary pupils with reading difficulties may be acutely if asked to read aloud in class and should not be asked. Pupils with reading difficulties or whose work is difficult to decipher, may require training in the use of assistive technology (keyboard skills, use of software, use of a Dictaphone), a reader and/or scribe. It is important that the use of technology is explored to enable the pupil to access written material. Where it is considered appropriate for the pupil to have a reader and a scribe it is important to ensure that the pupil routinely practises with the person who will read and scribe in important assessments.

7.14 The Highland Council has developed an Accessibility Strategy. Although this strategy covers buildings, physical access and information, the most relevant aspect for children who may be dyslexic are issues relating to access to the curriculum. The Highland Council's Accessibility Strategy is available at the Support for Learners Web Page, on Highland Council's Web Site.

8 Primary/Secondary Transfer

8.1 The transfer from primary to secondary school is extremely important for all children, but particularly so for the child with difficulties of any kind. It is therefore vital that all those who will be concerned with a young person with dyslexia in the secondary school are made aware of the likely difficulties and the additional support and accommodations which will be required to allow the pupil to gain maximum advantage from all subject areas.

8.2 For pupils with Additional Support Needs the Education, Culture and Sport Service has identified the need to begin to plan the primary to secondary transition up to three years in advance, because of the time which may be required to take any action necessary. The planning timetable should be as follows:

- 3 years before transition: identify any building adaptations which are likely to be necessary;
- 2 years before transition: identify any specialist staff training which will be required;
- 1 year before transition: identify any staffing or equipment needs.

A member of the secondary school's management team should be involved throughout in the transition planning process for each pupil with significant needs.

8.3 A meeting involving both primary and secondary teaching staff, parents/carers, and the young person involved may be helpful. Where there are significant needs, the secondary school should nominate a key member of staff to take responsibility for ensuring transitions are as smooth as possible, including ensuring that all relevant information is circulated to secondary staff before the pupil joins the school.

8.4 It may be appropriate to organise a meeting or a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for appropriate staff to ensure that they are informed about the pupil's needs and the support and accommodations required.

8.5 It is the responsibility of the designated secondary staff member to ensure that appropriate information is acted on.

8.6 With relevant strategies in place, the pupil's transfer from primary to secondary school should not cause undue anxiety.

9 Supporting Pupils with Dyslexia during Assessments and Examinations

9.1 If a pupil has literacy difficulties and receives support in the classroom in order to access the curriculum and to demonstrate knowledge and understanding then reasonable adjustments reflecting those which are made in the classroom should be available in assessment situations. This should apply to all formal and informal testing situations in both primary and secondary schools.

9.2 The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) provides guidelines on how and when to apply for reasonable adjustments for formal national examinations. If a pupil is dyslexic and there is evidence that reasonable adjustments will enable the pupil demonstrate his or her true level of attainment, these can be made available at the discretion of the SQA. A range of reasonable adjustments is available: e.g. readers and scribes, computer technology and extra time. For certain arrangements, candidates may require separate accommodation. The presenting centre is required to make application through the Area Education or Service Manager, and the young person should be given opportunities to practice the use of appropriate skills in order to take full advantage of the reasonable adjustments which are made available. Schools that require further information should contact the Development Officer (Secondary and Special) or contact the SQA directly. There is also information on the SQA website (www.sqa.org.uk).

10 Technology

10.1 The contribution of Information and Communication Technology to the development and support of literacy in all pupils has long been recognised. Its particular relevance to pupils with dyslexia and associated difficulties is well documented.

10.2 Difficulties experienced when writing and recording work can be eased considerably through the use of voice recording devices, word processors, spelling checkers, and software that helps with the organisational demands of writing. Issues such as illegibility of writing and spelling difficulties can be significantly reduced through the use of relatively simple and accessible tools. More severe writing and spelling difficulties can be addressed using

predictive software and, in some cases, software that translates speech into text. The use of such software tools can also reduce or remove dependence on a scribe.

10.3 Research and experience have shown that pupils with reading difficulties can find it very helpful to have text read out to them by computer software. Text readers and word processors that support text-to-speech can increase reading rate and understanding, and can reduce the anxieties so often reported by pupils with dyslexia and by their parents/carers. Supporting reading and study through such technology also offers greater independence and, arguably, a more useful life skill than reliance on a human reader. If it is felt that the pupil's independence skills have reached a point when an aspect of technological support is no longer required, then the help should only be withdrawn in consultation with the pupil, and with the full knowledge and collaboration of parents/carers.

10.4 A wide range of software packages exist that address specific areas of difficulty for dyslexic pupils such as spelling, phonic development, word building, and reading. There are also similar programs that support development in the area of numeracy. Such software is often presented as a game or challenge to try to make the intended, but necessarily repetitive, over-learning more enjoyable.

10.5 It is important for all staff to know of the general benefits of technology in teaching and learning but it is critical that staff supporting pupils with dyslexia have a high level of awareness and practical experience with key hardware, software, and delivery models for effective deployment. Training and advice for pupils, staff, and parents/carers is available through an annual diet of in-service training as well as by the individual referral and assessment procedure provided by the Assistive Technology Support Service.

11 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

11.1 According to their role teaching and support staff in schools will require different levels of knowledge and competence in assessing and meeting the needs of dyslexic pupils. A range of CPD opportunities is therefore required.

11.2 Basic staff development should raise awareness of patterns of difficulties, differences and discrepancies within a child's profile, and should enable staff to understand the importance of both addressing the specific learning difficulty and providing access to an appropriate curriculum. It should also empower and enable staff to be able to provide

suitable interventions which takes account of the individual pupil' strengths and learning styles.

11.3 All staff should be able to recognise and support dyslexic pupils with modest levels of difficulty and should have the opportunity to undertake awareness training either during their initial professional qualification or as part of personal post-qualification CPD. Staff with more specialist roles, for example in support for pupils' teams, may need to undertake further CPD through attendance at short, specialist courses and conferences. In addition, externally accredited qualifications will provide for those who require or desire more specialist knowledge.

11.4 In every school, including nursery classes and partner centres, the aim should be to ensure that there is access to an identified member of staff who is familiar with techniques for supporting pupils with dyslexia. Where there is no appropriately trained person on the staff of the school it will be the Head Teacher's responsibility to ensure that personnel outwith the school are consulted and involved where appropriate.

12 The Role of Specialist Services

12.1 Many children with dyslexia have other difficulties and these may include health problems. For example problems with hearing and eyesight may occur in any child but have an additional impact on those with dyslexia and may exacerbate any existing difficulties. In some cases, if problems are persistent, they can result in misdiagnosis. For this reason it is important that hearing and eyesight are checked at an early stage if a child is having a significant difficulty with learning. In particular, if a child is having difficulty in progressing in phonics, or with developing auditory discrimination, or appears to have visual-perceptual or memory difficulties etc, then it is best to rule out any sensory problems. These can appear to be signs of dyslexia when in some cases they are the result of a health problem.

12.2 Dyslexia can occur together with almost any other difficulty or need. Research has shown, however, that a child who has any one of the conditions of Attention Deficit with or without Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD/ADD), Developmental Co-ordination Difficulties (DCD) or Dyspraxia, a Speech and Language disorder, or an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASDs) is more likely than other children to have one or more of the other conditions. These conditions are sometimes called 'co-morbidity disorders' because they may occur together.

12.3 Some symptoms of Dyslexia can be symptoms of other conditions or visa versa. Particular symptoms like headaches, tummy aches and a reluctance to go to school can indicate that the child finds school difficult for a whole number of reasons. Whilst it is important to be aware that health problems can occur alongside dyslexia this is not always the case and each child needs to be individually considered. Staff should be aware of the possibility of health problems and should know who to consult about whether to refer for further assessment or diagnosis.

12.4 It is important that concerns such as those mentioned above are investigated at an early stage and not left until they become real difficulties for the child and/or family. If school staff suspect a hearing or vision problem, or one of the co-morbidity disorders, then it may be appropriate to consult with the School Nurse (Health Visitor in Nursery).

12.5 Educational psychologists are able to offer advice and consultation to staff involved in supporting pupils with additional support needs, including those with dyslexia. Large schools receive pre-arranged regular visits, while smaller schools can contact ‘their’ educational psychologist at need. In most instances schools are expected to have used a staged approach to assessing and meeting the needs of a pupil before consulting the educational psychologist, so that there will already be information from observation and assessment which will inform the consultation. The educational psychologist may suggest implementing particular strategies. Occasionally, where the strategies put in place by the school have not proved successful, the educational psychologist may become directly involved with a pupil for assessment and / or intervention. (The Staged Approach to identifying and planning for pupils’ Additional Support Needs is set out in Appendix 1, some assessment materials for use in schools are suggested in Appendix 9).

12.6 Educational psychologists also contribute to authority and whole school initiatives and to awareness raising and training for school staff to support the development of practice in working with dyslexic pupils and in creating “dyslexia friendly” schools and classrooms.

13 Working in partnership with Parents and Carers

13.1 Parents/carers are the longest serving and most influential educators of almost all children. If there is a concern about a child's learning parents/carers should be kept fully informed and should be invited to contribute to assessment and planning processes for their child. Working collaboratively with parents/carers is vital in order that appropriate support is given both in school and at home. Many parents will wish to contribute to support their child's education and should be advised how they can best do this. It is often helpful for parents/carers to attend and/or contribute to staff development activities. If for any reason there cannot be active collaboration with parents/carers it may be helpful to involve other significant adults, for example grand-parents, provided that parents/carers give consent.

13.2 Where parents/carers are concerned that their child may be dyslexic, Form 1 (See Appendices 2 and 3) should be completed even though the class teacher may feel that the pupil is not dyslexic. Strategies should also be in place to reassure parents/carers that their concerns are being taken seriously and that appropriate teaching is in place.

13.3 If a parent or carer is concerned about an aspect of their child's education it is usually quickest and most effective to contact the school. It is recommended that parents/carers contact the class teacher in the first instance. If, however, concerns are long-term or significant, or the parent or carer feels that appropriate assessment and/or support is not being given to their child, they should contact the Head Teacher in order to discuss their concerns and identify a way forward. It may be helpful to agree an action plan including who will do what, and over what time scale. Parents/carers should be given a copy of the action plan. Solution-focused meetings are often helpful in developing action plans.

13.4 If parents/carers continue to be concerned it is recommended that they make further contact the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher should consider organising a meeting of appropriate personnel to try to address parental/carer concerns. Parents/carers should be consulted on who will be involved and may wish to take someone to the meeting in a supportive role. An action plan or an individualised educational plan should be compiled and a copy given to the parents/carers

13.5 If all school-based dialogue has been exhausted and a satisfactory conclusion has not been reached, the Head Teacher or parent/carer may wish to request the assistance of a

representative of the Authority by involving the Area Education Manager/Education, Culture and Sport Manager.

13.6 As required by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004) The Highland Council also provides access to independent mediation and dispute resolution services. Further information about these services can be found on the Council's Support for Learners website: www.highlandschools-virtualib.org.uk/sfl. Independent mediation and dispute resolution can be accessed by contacting the Additional Support for Learning Co-ordinator (See Appendix 9).

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Glossary

5-14 National Guidelines: Non-statutory guidelines used by Scottish local authorities and schools in relation to the structure, content and assessment in primary schools and the first two years of secondary education.

Achievement: Achievement recognises individuals' strengths and progress and takes into account more than just academic results, including success in non-academic areas of sport and music and activities outwith school.

Additional Support Needs: The concept of 'additional support needs', introduced by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, refers to any child or young person who, for whatever reason, requires additional support for learning.

Assessment: Ongoing process of gathering , structuring and making sense of information about a child or young person, and their circumstances in order to inform decisions about the actions necessary to maximise their potential.

Attainment: Attainment forms part of achievement. It is achievement of the planned aims of the curriculum, usually expressed in terms of the 5-14 levels of attainment, or Standard Grade / National Qualifications results.

BECO: Behaviour Co-ordinator – responsible for ensuring that strategies are in place to deal with pupils’ behaviour problems and for providing support to the school and young people.

Carer: A person or persons including parents and others with parental responsibilities who are caring for children and young people under supervision requirements; close relatives such as siblings or grandparents caring for children who are not looked after or are under home supervision requirements.

Circle Time: A whole-school approach to enhancing self-esteem and positive behaviour and relationships. Participants sit in a circle and take equal responsibility for solving problems and discussing issues raised by the participants.

Community School: A school whose doors are open to those of all ages living within its area. Facilities and resources are made available to meet the learning and social needs of the community. Many such schools are now called Integrated Community Schools and facilitate collaboration among various agencies working in education, social work and health.

Co-ordinated Support Plan: Statutory strategic planning document to co-ordinate the provision of services for those children and young people, who meet the criteria to help them work towards their agreed long-term educational objectives.

CPD: Continuing Professional Development

IEP: Individualised Educational Programme – programme for children who have needs which require a programme which is specifically tailored to meet their individual needs in one or more areas of the curriculum. The programme is the responsibility of class teachers, and is drawn up in collaboration with the pupil, parents/carers and appropriate others.

Liaison Group: A multi-agency group which adopts a solution-focused approach to discuss ways forward for children, young people and families.

Metacognition: An awareness of learning styles and approaches to learning which can help children take control of their own learning.

Multiple Factors: These are factors (in terms of legislation) which are not by themselves complex but which when taken together have or are likely to have a significant adverse effect on a child’s or young person’s school education.

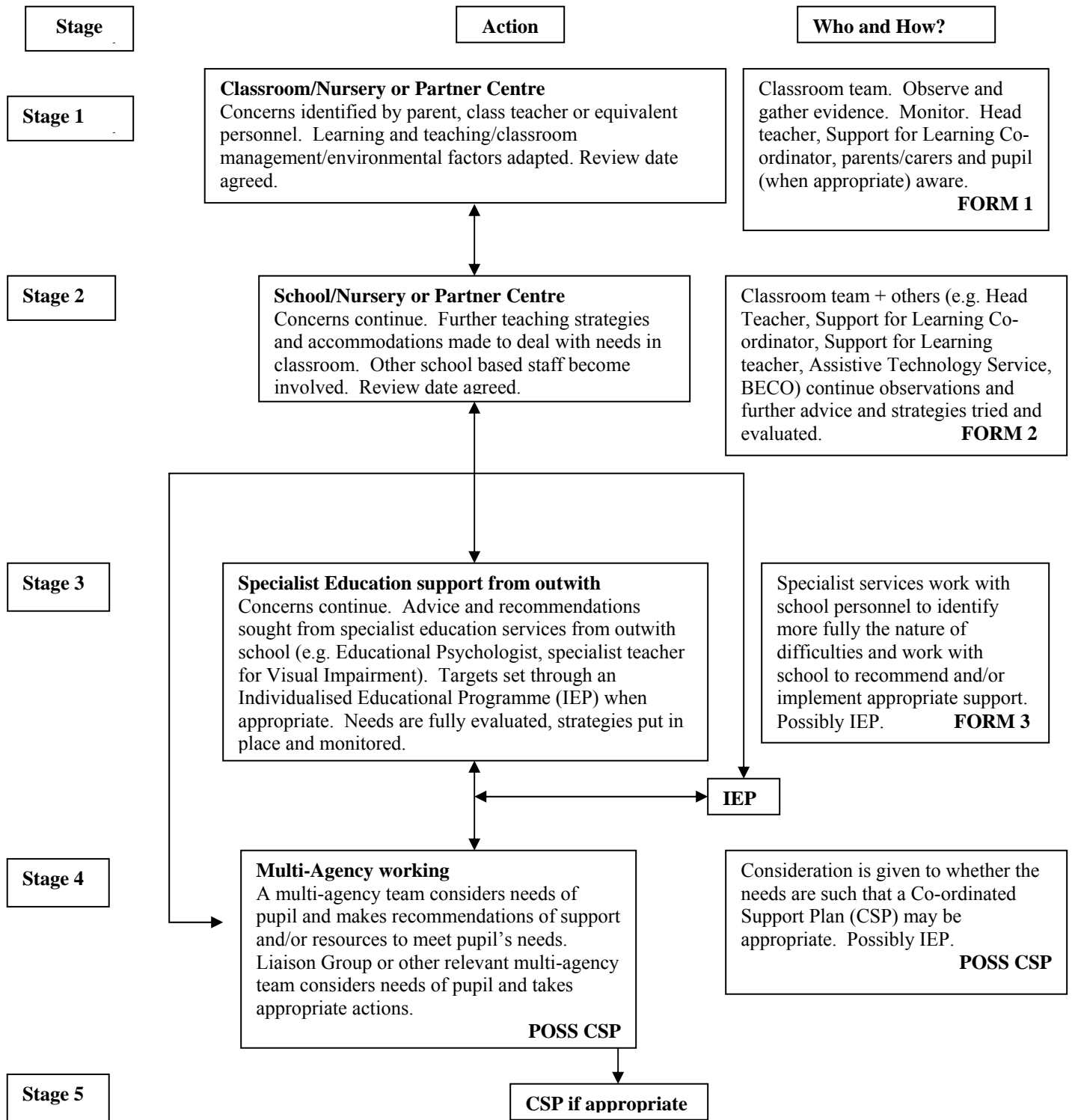
Paired learning: A method of learning which involves one person working with another who can help by providing support and specific strategies to enable the learner to take control.

Peer group tutoring: A method of learning which involves a whole group of children in learning and supporting one another's progress.

Personal Learning Planning: Process by which children, young people and parents/carers are involved in discussions with the school about the goals of learning including those for personal development. Its focus is on supporting dialogue and ultimately about engaging children and young people ,in their own learning.

Appendix 1

**Pathway Plan
Identifying and responding to Additional Support Needs
A Staged Approach**



* Parents/carers should be involved throughout the process and timescales agreed.

Appendix 2 Guidance to accompany Staged Approach to supporting Pupils

The Support for Learners Policy Framework in Highland details the Staged Approach to assessing, identifying and providing for the support needs of children and young people. It advises the co-ordination and early intervention, from low level in-class strategies to multi-disciplinary assessment and planning. The Staged Approach outlines the pathway for accessing additional support services to support the individual needs of a child or young person. This Staged Approach advises on the multi-agency supports to meet the additional support needs of a child or young person that can be accessed through general school liaison, the Liaison Group process and Additional Support Liaison meetings.

The Staged Approach to planning for Additional Support Needs in schools must be followed and this needs to be evidenced. Good observation, assessment, identification of needs and planning to meet those needs are essential from the very beginning and underpin good practice. The following paperwork should be used to provide evidence of what is being done to support the child or young person. The amount of time that a child or young person remains at a particular stage will be dependent on the level of need, age and stage of pupil. For example a ten-year-old child who moves into a school at the Primary 5 stage with severe reading difficulties would pass quickly through the Stages 1 to 3, whereas a five-year-old in Primary 1 who is struggling to come to grips with phonics would progress more slowly as a variety of strategies will be employed to support development and allowing for further maturation and readiness. The Staged Approach can be a two-way process, and allows for children and young people to return to a previous stage when appropriate.

At all stages, if the concern is one of Child Protection, the Authority's guidelines must be followed and must be followed up through the designated officer for Child Protection in the establishment.

Stage 1 Initial Identification of Concern – to be completed by Class/Subject teacher

Classroom/Nursery or Partner Centre

FORM 1 should be used when a concern is identified by class teacher, equivalent personnel or parent/carer. Learning and teaching, classroom management and/or environmental factors may require to be varied, FORM 1 should be used to record the concern and to evidence the arrangements put in place to manage the needs of the child or young person.

Strategies employed should be recorded along with the time scale involved and the success level of these strategies. If the strategies are successful and there are no further concerns, the situation should continue to be monitored at least termly. If unsuccessful, or of limited success, the information noted will inform the next stage. FORM 1 should be copied to, and discussed with, the member of the management team with responsibility for Additional Support Needs.

A copy of the form should be retained in the Pupil Progress Record (PPR) for future reference and parents/carers made aware of this.

Stage 2 School/Nursery or Partner Centre – Sharing concern

Following discussion with appropriate school staff, FORM 2 should be completed to record continuing concerns and the actions agreed. This should be completed by the Head Teacher or delegated member of the Senior Management Team with responsibility for managing additional support needs in the establishment. They must ensure parents/carers are involved

and this should be recorded on the form. Strategies employed should be noted along with the time scale involved and the success level of these strategies. If the strategies are successful and there are no further concerns, the situation should continue to be monitored at least termly. If unsuccessful, or of limited success, the information noted will inform the next stage. A review meeting should be held at this point to agree the way forward. It may be decided that the child/young person remains at Stage 2 with additional support from within the establishment. A Group or Individual Plan may be drawn up to accommodate and/or set out the programme to be followed. When more detailed target-setting within the establishment is required an Individualised Educational Programme (IEP) may be appropriate. (See [Highland Council IEP guidance](#).)

A copy of the form should be retained in the Pupil Progress Record (PPR) for future reference and parents/carers made aware of this.

Stage 3 Specialist Education support from outwith the establishment

Where there are continuing concerns, specialist education services will work with school personnel to identify more fully the nature of the difficulties and work with the school to recommend or implement appropriate support. This might for example involve the Autism Outreach Education Service, Psychological Services or other Highland Council specialist education service. For details of services, see [Support for Learners' Website](#).

FORM 3 should be completed by the person responsible for the management of additional support needs in collaboration with other appropriate staff. There is a column on the side of FORM 3 to indicate at which stage the child/young person has entered the process. For example, a child moving into the area may go directly to Stage 3, and this would be highlighted at the appropriate stage on the "Current Stage column".

Parent/carer and pupil's comments should be recorded on the form.

If referral to outside partner agencies (e.g. NHS Highland) is necessary, this must be recorded also on the form.

A copy of the form should be retained in the PPR for future reference and parents/carers made aware of this.

The detail noted on the form will determine the relevant services and agencies who will require to be involved as the child/young person moves into Stage 4.

Stage 4 Multi-agency working

The Additional Support Needs, of most children and young people will continue to be identified and provided for by the systems which all schools have in place, such as IEPs. Some children and young people may require help from other agencies and this will be co-ordinated through Liaison Groups. This may result in an enhanced IEP or an Action Plan with multi-agency involvements and targets. A small number of children and young people may require a high level of multi-agency help in addition to Education if their needs are significantly complex, are likely to last for more than a year and are proving a barrier to learning. Some of these children and young people may require a Co-ordinated Support Plan in order to record and co-ordinate the support. Consideration for a Co-ordinated Support Plan may be triggered at an Additional Support Liaison meeting if this is thought appropriate. [Professional tools](#) are available to assist in this process.

At all stages the views of the child or young person and the parent/carer should be acknowledged, noted and considered as they are active partners in the child or young person's education.

A form is available to summarise and record discussion at meetings and the agreed actions.



**Initial Identification of Concern
To be completed by Class/Subject teacher**

Name of Pupil: _____ Class: _____

When was concern identified: _____

By whom: _____

Area of concern:

| Strategies tried | Time Scale | How successful were these? |
|------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| | | |

Strategies successful - Monitoring tick

Parent/Carer/Pupil's view:

Strategies not successful –
Referral to member of school staff with responsibility for Additional Support Needs.
Date: _____

Copy this form to member of management team with responsibility for Additional Support Needs.

Appendix 3b



Form 2 Name of School: _____

Sharing concern

To be completed by person responsible for management of additional support needs in collaboration with appropriate school staff

Name of Pupil: _____ Class: _____

Date when concern was shared with support manager: _____

By whom: _____

Summary of discussion:

**Parental Involvement
Outcome:**

Date: _____

Support Manager's Involvement – tick box

Advice/Consultation Co-op Teaching Resources/Materials Other detail _____

Over

| Strategies tried | Time Scale | How successful were they? |
|------------------|------------|---------------------------|
| | | |

Strategies successful - Monitoring tick
Strategies not successful tick

Parent/Carer/Pupil's view:

Review meeting with parents _____ **Date**

Referral to Other Services/Agencies _____ **Date**

Specialist Service (_____)
 Psychological Services
 tick Other (specify) _____

Form 3 Name of School: _____



Continuing concerns

To be completed by person responsible for management of additional support needs in collaboration with other appropriate staff.

| | | |
|--|--|-------------|
| SURNAME | DOB | DATE |
| FORENAME | SCHOOL | |
| ADDRESS | CLASS | |
| | CLASS TEACHER | |
| | SfL MANAGER (School) | |
| POST CODE | Ed PSYCHOLOGIST | |
| | SUPPORT TEACHER | |
| TEL NO | | |
| POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE PUPIL'S LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR | | |
| <p>ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS (GIVING RISE TO THIS FORM) <i>Areas of need (Complete as appropriate):</i></p> | | |
| CONCERNS WHICH REQUIRE TO BE ADDRESSED | | |
| MOTIVATION | | |
| PHYSICAL/MEDICAL/PASTORAL & OTHER FACTORS: | | |
| Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> | Speech & language <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Eyesight <input type="checkbox"/> | Medical <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Frequent absence <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Further referral to: _____ | | |
| Special Arrangements: | | |
| PUPIL/PARENT/CARER COMMENTS: | | |

CURRENT STAGE

Highlight stage pupil is at.

STAGE 1
Classroom

STAGE 2
School

STAGE 3
Other Agencies/ Services

STAGE 4
Multi-agency Liaison Group
CSP considered

STAGE 4+
CSP in place

Review Required

Date: _____



Appendix 3d

GROUP/PERSONAL PLAN

Name of School: _____

Pupil Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

| Action Targets (Long and Short-term) | Programme of Work | Frequency | Monitoring/Assessment/Re- porting/Arrangements/Date | Staff involved | Results and Next Steps |
|---|----------------------|-----------|--|-------------------|---------------------------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Appendix 3e

Name of School: _____ Date: _____

Summary of Case Conference/Review



Name of Pupil: _____ Class: _____

Purpose of Meeting: _____

PRESENT:

APOLOGIES:

KEY POINTS RAISED (Concerns, risks etc)

AGREED ACTION BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL

AGREED ACTION BY OTHER SERVICES (e.g. Psychological Services, Area SfL, AHPs, EAL Support, Beco, VI / HI Specialists, Social Work etc. Confirm information can be shared between services.)

AGREED ACTION BY PARENTS/CARERS/CHILD/YOUNG PERSON

DURATION OF SUPPORT

DATE OF COMMENCEMENT

NAME OF LEAD PROFESSIONAL

DATE OF REVIEW

(No later than 12 months from commencement of support)

THIS IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF MEETING

Appendix 4a

Checklist of early observations which may point to dyslexia

PRESCHOOL

- (1) Difficulty in playing rhyming games.
- (2) Lack of awareness of alliteration - the slimy snake slithered slowly in the sandy -----.
- (3) Difficulty in maintaining rhythm - clapping games etc.
- (4) Problems with sequential tasks, such as doing up buttons.
- (5) Difficulty in following and carrying out more than one instruction at a time.
- (6) Possible clumsiness - e.g. skipping, hopping, throwing and catching a ball.
- (7) Possible slow speech development.
- (8) Word finding difficulties.
- (9) Difficulty in repeating nonsense words.
- (10) Balance tasks eg one foot balance, blindfold balance.
- (11) Distractibility.
- (12) Reaction speed slightly slower than peers.
- (13) Visual and/or auditory perceptual difficulties.
- (14) Difficulty or slowness in automatising processes (doing two or more tasks simultaneously)
eg saying a rhyme and fetching something, learning to ride a tricycle.
- (15) Family history.

Most of these signs will be present in all preschool children to some extent. It is important therefore that we do not read more into the situation than is present.

However with this word of caution, steps can be taken to develop and encourage skills which the child finds difficult without the necessity to formalise training at this stage. A games approach will avoid any stress so long as the tasks are presented in such a way that the child achieves success. As these are skills which will benefit all children, the child will not feel isolated or singled out, as they might when the difficulties are being tackled later. Some suggestions as to the type of games which can be played in the nursery or playgroup are given in Appendix 5.

Appendix 4b

Checklist of early indicators of dyslexia/reading difficulties at the early stages of primary school

In language work

- (1) Poor reading progress on look-and-say or phonic methods.
- (2) Discrepancy between the child's oral work and reading ability.
- (3) Severe difficulty with spelling. Sometimes apparently bizarre spellings.
- (4) Considerable confusion over simple punctuation and grammar.
- (5) Confusion of letters similar in shape: b/d/p/q; u/n; f/t; M/W.
- (6) Omission or confusion of small words: the, a, so, to, of, from, for.
- (7) Badly or wrongly formed letters.
- (8) Uncertainty about when and where to use lower and upper case letters.
- (9) Reversals of letters and whole words: "was" for "saw"; "god" for "dog".
- (10) Confusion of similar sounding letters: d/t; v/f/th; short vowels.
- (11) Faulty auditory sequencing in reading and in the repetition of words: "permilinary" for "preliminary"; "emeny" for "enemy", "pasghetti" for "spaghetti".
- (12) Foreshortening of words in written work: "permance" for "performance", "intrinng" for "interesting".
- (13) Difficulty in finding a name for an object.
- (14) Difficulty in doing two or more things simultaneously, especially when one involves the use of language: eg skip and recite a rhyme.
- (15) Transposals: sift for fist.
- (16) Fusion of the letters in words: bom for born.
- (17) Difficulty in remembering what day it is, his birthday, his address or telephone number.
- (18) Possible history of slow speech development.
- (19) Difficulty in copying from the blackboard.
- (20) Difficulty or extreme tenseness in holding pencil.

In other areas

(20) Difficulty in sequencing: days of the week, months of the year, the alphabet, word order in a sentence, number bonds, multiplication tables.

(21) Confusion over directionality: left/right, up/down, to/past on clock or watch.

(22) Difficulty in remembering a short sequence: numbers, instructions etc.

(23) Mixed laterality.

(24) Family history of reading and spelling problems.

(25) Difficulty in understanding concepts such as yesterday/today/tomorrow.

(26) Problems with simple mental arithmetic.

With Early Screening in place pre-school, it would be hoped that strategies for support would be effective before children go to school with ongoing monitoring of progress. However it is still possible that difficulties will only become apparent once the child is in formal schooling. In such cases, often the class teacher senses intuitively that this is a "puzzling, underachieving child". The importance of this should not be overlooked. It is suggested that in cases where a group of these indicators (more than six) persist into the child's second year of schooling, the classroom teacher should note the precise difficulties early in the first term. If dyslexia is severe, they may be apparent even earlier than this. In which case, steps should be taken as soon as difficulties are noticed.

The class teacher should draw in any skilled help which is available. This will require the involvement of the learning support coordinator and head teacher, and will be recorded through the Stepped Process paperwork. Advice and materials and sometimes cooperative teaching support may then be available.

Appendix 4c

Checklist of indicators of dyslexia at the later stages

For the child suspected of having dyslexia who is only discovered at a later stage (Upper Primary or Secondary), the following checklist will be more appropriate. Again a group of indicators would suggest the need for further investigation.

- (1) Oral work/vocabulary/intellectual capacity and comprehension level significantly greater than performance in reading or written work.
- (2) Failing completely at reading, or reading just adequately in the early stages, with ability insufficient to cope in upper primary and early secondary stages.
- (3) Mechanics of reading weak, inserting or omitting words, guessing, ignoring phrasing and punctuation marks.
- (4) Avoidance of reading whenever possible, never reading for pleasure.
- (5) Failure to spell adequately to allow the reader to understand.
- (6) Inconsistency in spelling, even of previously memorised words.
- (7) Omission of letters or whole syllables, or addition of inappropriate ones.
- (8) Poor use of syntax.
- (9) Mispronunciation, misuse or inability to retain words for verbal use.
- (10) Misunderstanding due to inadequacy of reading ability - e.g. reading "hysterical" for "historical".
- (11) Difficulty in understanding sequences read aloud or in comprehending directions.
- (12) Difficulty in answering questions which rely on the interpretation of own written work.
- (13) Difficulty remembering the sequential movement patterns necessary for letter formation, resulting in poorly formed and disordered presentation.
- (14) Inability to remember words and phrases which are dictated.

Initially, the class teacher must ensure that the child has his eyesight tested and that an audiometric test of hearing has been carried out recently. This can be checked from the child's medical records and if problems are suspected, may require the involvement of the school medical practitioner with possibility of further referral to orthoptist or audiometrician.

A number of children and young people have been found to have scotopic sensitivity, also known as Meares-Irlen Syndrome (MIS). MIS is a visual perceptual dysfunction that can be treated with tinted lenses. Signs which a teacher should watch out for include recurrent headaches, sore eyes, screwing up or frequent rubbing of the eyes, fatigue, skipping lines and

omitting words, and sometimes aversion to bright light. They may also describe print jumbling, moving or blurring.

Another problem which may occur with dyslexia is poor vergence control of the eyes. For children under the age of eight and a half, monocular occlusion (wearing a pair of spectacles with one lens occluded) for reading may be of help. For older children, vergence exercises are sometimes given.

These problems require the child to be referred to a skilled orthoptist and recommendations can only be made after a complete assessment of the eyes has been completed. An orthoptist is available at Raigmore Hospital. Parents/carers must of course be kept informed at all stages, referral being made through either the school community paediatrician or the child's general practitioner. It must be stressed that neither form of treatment for the eyes is a cure for dyslexia, nor are such eye problems confined to dyslexic individuals, but it is important to ensure that existing difficulties are not being aggravated unnecessarily.

Appendix 5 Assessment Materials

There is no one test which should be relied on to predict or to confirm dyslexia.

Assessment should be a process of observation and hypothesis testing alongside a diagnostic approach to ensure appropriate intervention.

When it is felt that dyslexia is present, criterion and curriculum-based assessment and observations will be required to ensure that both curriculum and support strategies are appropriate.

The Assessment is for Learning programme offers practical help and guidance.

The following assessment instruments are felt to be well constructed and may be useful to schools.

NFER-Nelson

British Picture Vocabulary Scale: 2nd Ed.
Phonological Assessment Battery –Standardised Edition
Neale Analysis of Reading Ability 2nd Rev. British Ed.

www.nfer-nelson.co.uk

Vernon, P.E.

Graded Word Spelling Test

www.amazon.co.uk

Appendix 6a

Strategies to help children at the early stages

Preschool/At Nursery

At this stage the best approach to adopt is the use of games. Activities will have a purpose designed to improve a number of different skills, in particular those which are important for future reading and writing. Nonetheless, the child should see all these activities as fun. While we may suspect that a child is at risk of later specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) when faced with formal schooling, there is no need or desire to label children at this early stage, so if we make the activities of a group nature, then all the youngsters in a group are likely to benefit.

The following are merely suggestions of possible activities and strategies for preschool children designed to improve various important skills at an early stage. The possibilities for games are limitless, restricted only by the time and opportunities available:

- The use of rhyme has proved vital in the development of later reading and writing. Research has shown that intervention at the preschool stage can and does affect future development. Encourage these skills through games, activities, songs and stories which emphasise rhyme and rhythm. For example:

- ◇ Snap games where children have to identify rhyming pairs of picture cards.

- ◇ Games where children pick out the one which does not match from a series of rhyming picture cards.

- ◇ Encourage the children to make up silly alliterative sentences: "Silly Samantha Snake Slithered Slowly."
"Potty Pete Peered Past Polly."
All children will need considerable help with this at first.

Try putting in a word which is out of place and see if children can identify what it is: "Rich Rude Robert Really Runs Round Rabbits' Houses." Ask children to identify the first sound they hear in the words.

It will help if the teacher stresses the first sound till the children get the idea.

"Lucky Linda likes lollies. What else does she like?"
Everything must start with /l/ - lions, lights, lorries etc.

For some children, it will be apparent that they have difficulty in any rhyming-type or alliterative activities, and these children will need patient help in a very small group or individually for a time.

- Prompt the child to verbalise sequences of organised motor activities. Use music and movement activities to give experience

of sequencing, encouraging children to stand in sequence in counting games etc.

- Allow time to organise activities. Talk through what must be done in a sequence, and encourage repetition of order before carrying out tasks.
- Ensure a focus of attention before giving instructions or telling a story.
- Encourage listening skills in various ways. For example:
 - ◇ With eyes closed, identify certain familiar sounds – jingling keys, rustling paper, bang of drum, clapping hands etc.
 - ◇ Commercially produced tapes of sounds, such as aeroplanes, trains etc.
 - ◇ Present a short sequence of sounds with children's eyes closed, then omit one sound, and children must spot what has been missed - Clapping, snapping fingers, banging, then omit snapping fingers. Gradually increase the length of the sequence.
 - ◇ With children seated in a circle, one child is chosen, and sits in the middle with eyes closed. Teacher points to another child who must whisper the child in the centre's name. Child then opens eyes and says the name of whoever whispered his or her name.
- Take every opportunity to praise the child for achievements. Self esteem is vital to learning at all ages. Encourage the child to further develop any skills in which s/he seems to achieve success.
- Encourage skills that children will require later, such as the ability to divide words into parts or syllables. Teacher claps the children's names one at a time and children copy. Later individual children try to clap names of other things - animals, toys etc.
- Develop observation, sequencing and memory skills by inviting children to copy a sequence of actions, firstly observing the teacher -

Hands in air, walk round chair, stamp feet and nod head. Teacher picks a child to copy sequence.
- Co-ordination skills can be developed by various activities for both gross and fine motor development - bead threading,

sequencing beads to match a colour sequence; catching a soft ball; throwing ball to try and get it into bucket; picking up a sequence of small cards for matching activities etc.

The teacher must be aware of children who do not manage well in particular activities, and immediately follow up that activity with one where the child will meet with immediate success.

Appendix 6b

Strategies to help dyslexic children in school

While appropriate help at an early stage will minimise difficulties later, there will be children who will still require considerable support at a later stage. There will be children too whose early experiences before coming to school will leave them at a disadvantage when faced with learning to read and write, and these children will need considerable work on pre-reading and pre-writing skills before being introduced to books and formal letter formation. Many of these children will not be dyslexic, but in the early years, it is often difficult to be sure.

If children's difficulties are relatively mild, or if they are considered to be working to their intellectual capacity, then a well-structured programme will help minimise these children's problems. Valuable help can be given within school by a support for learning teacher. Children who have dyslexic difficulties, even though they may be mild, will require the programme to be of a multisensory nature and structured phonically in such a way that any points which a child is unsure of will be covered methodically and thoroughly in a cumulative way. Diagnostic assessment will determine what must be included in the child's programme.

The class teacher can also do a considerable amount to alleviate problems in the classroom. Much can be achieved by adopting a positive outlook towards the child and praising whenever possible. These children are only too well aware of their own inadequacies and need constant encouragement to build confidence. The following suggestions may help:

- Give credit for oral responses whenever this is feasible.
- Mark written work on content. While you must make it clear that there are spelling errors, do not dwell on this aspect, or the child will become inhibited and unwilling to produce written work. Find other ways of tackling the spelling difficulties. Games and computer work as well as a structured multisensory spelling programme will be more effective than red ink.
- Avoid too much homework, particularly of a written nature. Also, take care that you do not always expect the child to catch up on work at home. Homework should be for reinforcement of teaching, and not an ordeal for parents or carers.

If you do give set homework, find out how long this takes the child to complete at home, and adjust the amount accordingly so that it can be completed in a reasonable time according to the child's age. Children with dyslexia may take hours to complete work which would take others ten minutes.

If expecting dyslexic children to copy homework, then always check they have done this correctly before allowing them to take their work home.

- Seat children with dyslexia in a position where you can give help easily, but without embarrassing them. Make sure they are facing the blackboard, as they may become easily disorientated by having to turn round.
- Allow the child to make use of a tape recorder or MP3 digital recorder whenever this is feasible. This will give the child confidence in using the machine and can be used

to record answers orally if written work is liable to be illegible or difficult to understand. Children and young people can gain enjoyment and increase comprehension and listening skills by listening to taped books. A quiet corner of the classroom will be necessary for this type of work.

- Some children with dyslexia may wish to carry a Personal Passport which explains their difficulties and strengths as well as their likes and dislikes. This can be easier for the child than having to explain why it is that they find certain things difficult. It also lets people know that there are areas which they find much easier than reading and writing.
- Give frequent breaks during work and indeed during any tasks that require concentration. The pupil with dyslexia requires much more concentration and effort to achieve a reasonable standard than his/her peers.
- Allow the child extra time to copy work from the blackboard or book. With older children, it may be best to provide a neat copy, a digital copy or a photocopy, if insufficient time is available or if efforts prove to be indecipherable.
- If the child is unhappy about reading aloud in the class, don't ask him/her to. Allow the child to join an appropriate group for discussion whenever the child is able to participate even though written work or reading may not be up to the standard of the higher group, the dyslexic child will be motivated by being included in discussions which are more suitable for his intellectual level. Pupils with dyslexia should not be thought of as generally slow learners.
- Give practice with alphabet sequencing and dictionary skills. Throughout life, the use of a dictionary will probably prove to be necessary. Therefore, as soon as the child knows the sequence of the letters in the alphabet, s/he should practise his skills in using the dictionary.

Encourage children to use their own personal dictionaries as soon as they are able. Into these they can put words which they find difficult to spell, and words which they may need for various different subject areas.

- Activities such as telling the time can be very stressful for the dyslexic pupil and care needs to be taken not to assume that difficulties will only affect reading and writing. Pupils should be treated sensitively and not asked to speak out answers unless they volunteer.
- While individual help for a sustained period of time is not always possible in the classroom situation, try to give a few minutes regularly throughout the day to ensure the child is succeeding at least in some of the work. Where it is not possible to give as much attention as the child needs, consider using the same structured multisensory programme for other types of learning difficulties and form a group for this type of teaching. In this situation, groupings have to be flexible as the child will probably be better in a different group for areas of the curriculum not affected by his specific difficulties.
- Allow the child to make use of a computer as often as possible. This will

help familiarise the pupil with technology and build confidence.

Use the computer for reinforcement work, for a fun way of presenting material and for word processing. Make use of technology from an early stage and ensure children become familiar with the keyboard.

- Organisational skills are very often weak, and it will help if the teacher can suggest ways of helping. Primary teachers, for example can get the whole class to make a note in homework jotters that the next day is a gym day and that they must bring their kit. This way, parents/carers will probably see it and make sure that they remember to put their kit in their bags.

For secondary children, they must have multiple copies of their timetable, so that if one gets lost or mislaid, they always have a spare copy. They must keep a copy in a sensible place, such as a Homework Notebook where it can be readily consulted. They must know where to find a spare copy if the first gets lost. Digital timetables with automatic reminders might be useful.

Parents/carers can help here too by having a large copy of the child's timetable mounted on the child's bedroom wall where it can be consulted each night so that the child always puts the necessary books and kit in his bag for the next day. Having everything labelled with the child's name, class and home address may seem an obvious precaution, but for the child who is liable to mislay things, it is really a basic essential.

- Start training the child on memory skills if this is an area of weakness.
- Make extra allowances. Pupils may get very tired due to the concentration and effort which they have to make just to keep up.
- Take every opportunity to praise for effort. Even though your pupil may not have achieved the standard of his/her peer group, the dyslexic pupil may have made considerably more effort than others at the same stage.
- Try to take the pupil's learning style into consideration. Teachers may assume that children learn in the way that they did, which will certainly not always be true. Many teachers are systematic, sequential learners and adopt this style quite naturally. Many dyslexic youngsters however will adopt a holistic, more global approach. Awareness that there might be a mismatch between pupil and teacher will lead to increased understanding of why certain pupils find classroom learning difficult. There is much too that teachers can do to meet the learning style of individual pupils.

Appendix 7 Some support materials

| <u>Company, Author Or Website</u> | <u>Materials available</u> | <u>From</u> |
|--|---|--|
| BDA | Planning a dyslexia-friendly school | www.bdaweb.co.uk/downloads/planningadfs |
| Broomfield, H. | Overcoming Dyslexia: Resource books | www.amazon.co.uk |
| Cowling & Cowling | Toe by Toe | www.amazon.co.uk |
| Crossbow | Games, photocopiable materials, books, study skills, aids etc. | www.dyslexiahelp.co.uk |
| Dyslexia Action | Units of Sound multisensory reading program | www.dyslexia-inst.org.uk/uos/unitsofsound.htm |
| Dyslexia Teacher | Tips on teaching, recognition, assessment, books etc | www.dyslexia-teacher.co.uk |
| Hatcher, Peter | Sound Linkage: Integrated Programme for overcoming reading difficulties | www.amazon.co.uk |
| Hornsby, B. | Alpha to Omega (A to Z of teaching reading, writing and spelling) | www.amazon.co.uk |
| Nessy Learning | Learning programme for reading, spelling and writing | www.nessy.co.uk |
| Dyslexia Research publications etc | Oxford Dyslexia Unit | www.cogneuro.ox.ac.uk/dyslexia |
| Wellington Square | Keith Gaines, Shirley Tully and Wendy Wren | Nelson Thornes |
| Breakthrough to Literacy | Carolyn Brown and Jerry Zimmermann | McGraw Hill |
| Jolly Phonics | Susan M Lloyd and Sara Wernham | Jolly Learning Limited |

Appendix 8 List of useful software and publishers.

Software is not always suitable for every pupil and we would recommend taking advice before buying. The Assistive Technology Support Service, iANSYST, and Inclusive Technology can be contacted for advice and support (details below). The software detailed below is only a selection of what's available but all of this material is commonly used in Highland Council schools.

The software has been grouped according to where it was referenced in Section 11: Technology.

| Writing Section 11.1 | To support writing, spelling, organisation, and presentation. | Features | Further information/buy from: |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | Textease | Text to speech, write anywhere facility, voice recording, ease of use, in every Highland primary school. | www.softease.com buy from Softease |
| | Write:OutLoud v.3 | Text to speech, ease of use, phonetic spell checking, combines well with Co:Writer (below) | www.donjohnston.co.uk buy from Learning & Teaching Scotland |
| | Clicker Writer | Text to speech, can be used with symbols and in combination with Clicker Grids, in every Highland school | www.cricksoft.co.uk buy from Learning & Teaching Scotland |
| | WordTalk | Text to speech for MS Word, Phonetic spell checking, in every Highland school. | Assistive Technology Support Service 01349 863441 Free |
| | Co:Writer | Prediction system, easy to use, topic dictionaries, useful for all ages, supports use of portable Alphasmart Extensive range of features – including flexspell for phonetic spellers. | www.donjohnston.co.uk buy from Learning & Teaching Scotland |
| | Penfriend | Prediction system, easy to use, works with all writing applications. Best prediction and clipboard text-to-speech reader. On-screen keyboard facility. Integrates with Clicker. | www.penfriend.biz buy from Learning & Teaching Scotland |
| | TextHelp | Prediction system for older users. All-in-one package. | www.dyslexia.com iANSYST (at above link) |
| | Inspiration | Organisational tool for writing, mind mapping, text to speech, voice recording, in every Highland school. | www.inspiration.com buy from Learning & Teaching Scotland |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| | Kidspiration | Younger version of Inspiration, in every Highland school. | www.kidspiration.com buy from Learning & Teaching Scotland |
| | Dragon Naturally Speaking | Voice recognition, text to speech, requires setting up and training, success rates relatively low. | www.dyslexia.com iANSYST (at above link) |
| | IBM ViaVoice | Voice recognition, text to speech, requires setting up and training, success rates relatively low. | www.dyslexia.com iANSYST (at above link) |
| Reading Section 11.2 | Text to speech, click to read, for use with digital text, web pages and search engines. | Features | Further information/buy from: |
| | SOLO | Support with reading – any e-text or web page, through planning to drafting and writing. All-in-one package incorporating reading (Read:OutLoud), organisation (Draft:Builder), and writing (Write:OutLoud), with predictive support (Co:Writer). Elements all easy but combined use for older pupils only. | www.donjohnston.co.uk buy from Learning & Teaching Scotland |
| | Textease | Best and simplest click-to-read word processor. Copy text from any source then simply click any word to hear it spoken. Super for self-differentiated reading. In every Highland primary school. | www.softease.com buy from Softease |
| | Clicker Writer | Text to speech, can be used with symbols and in combination with Clicker Grids, in every Highland school | www.cricksoft.co.uk buy from Learning & Teaching Scotland |
| | WordTalk | Text to speech for MS Word, Phonetic spell checking, in every Highland school. | Assistive Technology Support Service 01349 863441 Free |
| | TextHelp Gold | For older users who need to scan text and convert it for text-to-speech. All other TextHelp facilities available. | www.dyslexia.com iANSYST (at above link) |
| | Kurzweil 3000 | For older users who need to scan text and convert it for text-to-speech. Expensive but very high scanning recognition success. | www.sightandsound.co.u k/ |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | Start-to-Finish | An extensive range of literacy starters, novels, and non-fictional material, graded and specifically designed and written for pupils who experience difficulties with reading. Includes Text, CD version and topic dictionaries for Co:Writer. Literacy Starters, Blue. Quite expensive. | www.donjohnston.co.uk buy from Don Johnston |
| | BrowseAloud | Free software to enable text-to-speech within your Internet browser. | www.browsealoud.com Download |
| | HelpRead | Free software to enable text-to-speech within your Internet browser. | http://helpread.net Download |
| | ReadPlease | Free software to enable text-to-speech within your Internet browser. | www.readplease.com Download |
| | Speegle | Speech for the Google search engine. | www.speegle.co.uk Download |
| Skills development Section 11.3 | Spelling, phonic, memory programs, and games. | Features | Further information/buy from: |
| | WordShark 3S | 36 Games using sound, graphics, and text to teach spelling and word recognition | www.inclusive.co.uk Inclusive Technology |
| | Gamz Player CD | Multi-sensory swap/fix card games that involve seeing and hearing words and letter strings. | www.dyslexia.com iANSYST (at above link) |
| | NessyLearning Programme | Fun, interactive literacy scheme. The software guides you through 10 islands in Loch Nessy with literacy development tasks at every turn. | www.dyslexia.com iANSYST (at above link) |
| | For these – and more..... | | Call 0800 018 0045 for Dyslexia.com catalogue & 01457 819799 for Inclusive Technology catalogue & 01925 256500 for Don Johnston catalogue or Assistive Technology Support Service 01349 863441 for advice, support or to organise group training/software sessions. |

Appendix 9 Useful Contacts and Web Addresses

Highland Council

Area Learning Support Team Leaders

(Will meet with parents/carers and children/young people (Primary school age) and advise on Education matters)

| AREA | TEAM LEADER | BASE | ADDRESS | BASE TEL |
|--|--|---|---|--------------|
| CAITHNESS | Isobel McBay | Halkirk PS | Halkirk KW12 6YN | 01847 831830 |
| SUTHERLAND | Angela Sutherland | Lairg PS | Lairg IV27 4DD | 01549 402346 |
| EAST ROSS | Anne Brownlee | Bridgend PS | Ardross Road Alness IV17 0XW | 01349 884527 |
| WEST ROSS, DINGWALL & BLACK ISLE | May Hughes | Ullapool PS | Quay Street Ullapool IV26 2UE | 01854 612625 |
| SKYE & LOCHALSH | Wilma MacDonald | Area Education Office | Elgin Hostel Portree, Skye IV51 9EE | 01473 613697 |
| INVERNESS WEST | Currently vacant. Contact Area Education Manager | Area Education Office | Ardross Street Inverness | 01463 794519 |
| INVERNESS EAST | Currently vacant. Contact Area Education Manager | Area Education Office | Ardross Street Inverness | 01463 794519 |
| LOCHABER | Pat MacQuarrie | Area Education Office, Camaghael Hostel | Fort William PH33 7ND | 01397 707359 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---|--------------|
| SECONDARY AGE PUPILS | Jane Baines | The Education Centre | Castle Street, Dingwall, IV15 9HU | 01349 863441 |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---|--------------|

Alan Stewart
Co-ordinator
Assistive Technology Support Service
The Education Centre
Castle Street
Dingwall
IV15 9HU

Barrie Forbes
Additional Support for Learning Co-ordinator
Morven House
Raigmore Hospital
Old Perth Road
Inverness
IV2 3UJ

Marlyn Campbell
Co-ordinator (Disability Services)
Morven House
Raigmore Hospital
Old Perth Road
Inverness
IV2 3UJ

Bernadette Cairns
Acting Principal Psychologist
Psychological Services
11/12 Culcabock Avenue
Inverness
IV2 3RG

Stephen Iliffe
Senior Manager (Additional Support Needs)
Morven House
Raigmore Hospital
Old Perth Road
Inverness
IV2 3UJ

External Agencies and websites

CHIP+ Children in the Highlands Information Point
Birnie Child Development Centre
Raigmore Hospital
Inverness
IV23 3UJ

www.childreninthehighlands.com

BRITE

www.brite.ac.uk

Access to information and expertise in the use of enabling technologies to support students with disabilities and additional support needs in post-16 provision. The Brite Centre (on the campus of Stevenson College in Edinburgh) offers staff development and a come-and-try facility for enabling and assistive technologies. The work is mainly aimed at the Further Education sector.

The BRITE initiative at Stevenson College
Bankhead Avenue
EDINBURGH, EH11 4DE

0131 535 4756

enquiries@brite.ac.uk

British Dyslexia Association

www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

98 London Road, Reading RG1 5AU

[Helpline](#) Tel: 0118 966 8271

[Admin](#) Tel: 0118 966 2677

Dyslexia Action (previously Dyslexia Institute)

www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk

Head Office
Park House
Wick Road
EGHAM
Surrey, TW20 0HH

Dyslexia Scotland

www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk

Stirling Business Centre
Wellgreen
Stirling
FK8 2DZ

General Office number: 01786 44 66 50

Fax: 01786 47 12 35

Helpline number: 08448 00 84 84

Dyslexia Teacher

www.dyslexia-teacher.com

For Parents

www.dyslexics.org.uk
www.dyslexia-parent.com (American site)

European Dyslexia Association

www.dyslexia.eu.com

International Dyslexia Association

www.interdys.org

Learning and Teaching Scotland

www.LTScotland.org.uk

Scottish Qualifications Authority

www.sqa.org.uk

TAG Learning

www.taglearning.com