



## Dyslexia Policy

### Introduction

This policy explains and outlines Haydn's approach and practice in relation to its pupils living with specific literacy difficulties (dyslexia). It provides a definition of dyslexia and describes the roles and responsibilities of school staff in supporting pupils with specific literacy difficulties (dyslexia).

This policy draws on the guidance and summaries of research as presented in the Rose report (2009) *'Identifying and Teaching Children and Young People with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties.'*

There are four main elements to this Policy:

- Description & Definition of dyslexia
- Identification and Assessment of dyslexia
- Intervention and Support
- Working with parents

### Description

Pupils with specific literacy difficulties (dyslexia) present varying degrees of difficulty in aspects of the learning process, particularly in some of the prerequisites necessary for the acquisition of literacy. Such prerequisites include speed of processing language, memory skills, sequencing, following instructions, organisational skills, orientation, perception, phonological awareness and fine motor skills. They may demonstrate below expected rates of progress despite appropriate learning opportunities in reading and spelling. They may have difficulties in sequencing ideas and in forming words and sentences when writing; a few may have similar problems in spoken language. Disparity between potential and attainment often leads to low self-esteem, frustration and even social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## Definition

Sir Jim Rose's report on 'Identifying and Teaching Children and Young People with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties' (2009: 30) constructed a working definition of dyslexia, for the purpose of their study, which appears fairly broad in its description of the characteristics of dyslexia, linking co-occurring difficulties with phonological processing difficulties. Haydn has adopted this definition along with the British Dyslexic Associations definition to underpin the policy and practice in relation to pupils with specific literacy difficulties (dyslexia).

Rose defined dyslexia as:

*A learning difficulty that primarily affects the skill involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.*

Rose lists the characteristic features of dyslexia as being;

Primary features:

*'Difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.'*

Secondary features:

*'Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor coordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these themselves are not markers of dyslexia'*

*'Dyslexia occurs across a range of intellectual abilities and it is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut off point.'*

In addition to the Rose Definition the British Dyslexic Association has also included the following:

*'Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. It is likely to be present at birth and to be life-long in its effects. It is characterized by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual's other cognitive abilities. It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effect can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counseling.'*

## **Identification and Assessment Pathway**

### **Identification**

Haydn is committed to the early and accurate identification and recording of a pupils literacy needs through a rigorous school-based approach, as it is felt that the skills necessary to identify children living with specific literacy difficulties (dyslexia) (SpLD) should be available within the school.

In accordance with the Rose Report (2009) at Haydn we recognises that what matters most is not a diagnosis of dyslexia for our pupils but that pupil's difficulties with literacy learning are identified early and quickly addressed in ways that promote progress.

#### **The initial identification of literacy difficulties will be achieved by:**

A pupil's literacy progress

The class teacher and TA observation.

Results of indicators questionnaire.

Parent's comments and information.

Evaluation of a pupil's response to literacy intervention and support programmes.

A pupil's literacy progress will be monitored formally using literacy assessments such as teaching assessment, statutory assessment tests, standardised reading and spelling tests, phonics assessment and writing assessments.

If a pupil is deemed to be struggling to progress in their literacy and shows severe and persistent problems with accurate and fluent word recognition and spelling they will be referred to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo) further assessment.

### **Specialist Assessment**

At Haydn we recognise that there is no one test for specific literacy difficulties (dyslexia) but that assessment should be holistic, take place over time, involve parents/carers and involve a careful evaluation of the pupil's response to teaching and targeted intervention.

After referral to the SENDCo parents will be contacted and the literacy difficulties discussed and information gathered of the pupil's early development and family history of literacy difficulties. Permission will be sort from parents to undertake a dyslexic screener. The LASS dyslexic screener is an internet based assessment tool that gives some indication of whether there are specific literacy difficulties. The assessment covers six areas and gives indication of a pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses that may impact reading.

- Working memory
- Phonological awareness
- Phonological processing
- Reasoning
- Single word, sentence and non-word reading
- Spelling

## **Intervention and Support**

Haydn's interventions for literacy difficulties focus' initially on whole school practice and strategies to be used in mainstream classrooms. The school aims to have a dyslexic friendly environment that promotes inclusion for all despite the individual difficulties and differences in literacy.

### **A Dyslexic Friendly School:**

As a dyslexic friendly school we aim to identify and respond to the 'unexpected difficulties' that a dyslexic learner may encounter. We understand the importance of early identification and implement intervention for pupils with literacy needs. We have termly literacy assessments that track pupils' progress which enable us to set appropriate targets and identify additional support required.

As a dyslexic friendly school we provide;

- A school literacy scheme that is phonics based, multi-sensory and clearly differentiated.
- A dyslexic policy.
- Have a strong ethos of inclusion.
- Recognise the role self-esteem and emotional literacy plays in learning.
- Provide a broad and balance curriculum alongside the need of a pupil to acquire literacy and numeracy skills.
- Will focus on strengths rather than weaknesses.

### **Dyslexic Friendly Classroom.**

#### **Environment**

We understand the importance of the environment in support learning. Dyslexic friendly classroom include;

- Well organised classroom
- Resources clearly labelled, colour coded, highlighted
- Use of visual cues, timetables, instructions
- Use of signs and symbols
- Reading rulers, non white paper

- Literacy aids readily available e.g. spell checkers
- Correct placement of pupils in the classroom e.g. near the front, next to study buddy etc.
- Reader for some tests and work activities.

## **Teaching Style**

- Good differentiation of work to match pupils needs.
- Multi-sensory methods of learning where possible.
- Explanations to be clear, slow, and given more than once in a variety of ways if necessary.
- Slow, deliberate and quiet instruction given, allowing time for the meaning of the words to be processed then checking they have understood.
- Marking to target only spellings that have been specifically taught.
- Realistic work output for pupil with literacy needs to avoid total fatigue.
- Use of other methods other than writing to demonstrate skills and knowledge e.g. talking postcards, ICT
- Extra time to complete tasks
- Provide personal transcript sheet of information written on class board.
- To use small white boards for reminders
- When possible use coloured background on the IWB
- Allow plenty of time for pupils to read and use information from the class board.
- Leave instructions and spellings displayed for whole lesson.
- Focus on strengths and interests to increase motivation and self esteem
- Use of ICT where possible

## **Additional Support and Intervention**

If a pupil have difficulty responding to the above strategies and whole school practice, and their assessment has identified the need for additional support, we will aim to provide additional support and interventions, which include one or more of the following:

- Daily differentiated small phonics group (using letters and sounds) in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2.
- 1:1 Dyslexia Action programme
- Switch - on 1:1 daily reading and writing intervention
- Units of Sound spelling intervention
- 1 to 1 phonics 'catch up' sessions.
- Additional guided reading and individual reading practice.
- 1 to 1 top up sessions with teaching assistant
- 1 to 1 precision teaching strategy

## **Partnership with Parents**

We value parental opinions and cooperation will be sought at every stage from the early identification of literacy difficulties, the process of assessment, the need of additional interventions and the pupil's response and progress.

Parents will be given a copy of any profiles, reports and assessments carried out and will be informed about classroom interventions through individual provision maps (IPMs). Parents will be able to discuss these with the SENDCo, class teacher and external support agencies if necessary (e.g. Education Psychologist or Learning Support).

Parents will be informed of where they can go for help or support or to receive an assessment that would give a diagnostic outcome e.g. local dyslexic associations.

Reviewed January 2020 by Sarah McLeod

## **References and Further Help**

DfE Special Educational and Disability Needs (SEND) Code of Practice (0-25 yrs) 2014

DfE Rose Report (2009)

Equality Act (2010)

British Dyslexia Association

Dyslexia Institute

International Dyslexia Association

Listening Books (The National Listening Library)

