

Understanding Aspects of SEND: Dyslexia

1. What is Dyslexia? Dyslexia is a specific learning difference that primarily affects reading, writing and spelling skills. It is a neurological condition that influences how the brain processes language. Individuals with dyslexia often have strengths in areas such as creativity, problem-solving and critical thinking. It is estimated that around 10% of the population has some degree of dyslexia, making it one of the most common learning differences. (NHS)

2. How can Dyslexia present? Dyslexia varies in severity and can manifest in different ways, including:

- **Reading difficulties:** Slow reading, difficulty decoding words or struggles with comprehension.
- **Spelling challenges:** Frequent misspellings, inconsistent spelling of the same word or difficulty remembering spelling rules.
- **Writing struggles:** Difficulty organising thoughts, forming coherent sentences or writing legibly.
- **Memory issues:** Trouble with short-term memory, such as remembering instructions, names or sequences.
- **Phonological challenges:** Difficulty identifying, blending or manipulating sounds within words.
- **Processing speed:** Slower than peers when completing tasks that involve reading or writing.
- **Avoidance behaviours:** Reluctance to engage in activities involving reading or writing due to frustration or low confidence.

3. Ways to help manage Dyslexia Support for individuals with dyslexia should focus on tailored strategies and building confidence. Key approaches include:

- **Provide multisensory learning:** Use visual aids, hands-on activities and auditory tools to reinforce learning.
- **Break tasks into smaller steps:** Simplify instructions and present information in manageable chunks.
- **Utilise assistive technology:** Tools such as text-to-speech software, audiobooks and spellcheckers can reduce barriers.

- **Use a structured literacy approach:** Programs like phonics-based instruction can help improve reading and spelling skills.
- **Allow extra time:** Provide additional time for reading, writing and completing assignments.
- **Focus on strengths:** Celebrate creative thinking, problem-solving and other areas of excellence.

4. Where to Find Out More

- **British Dyslexia Association** (www.bdadyslexia.org.uk): Offers resources, support and advocacy for individuals with dyslexia and their families.
- **International Dyslexia Association** (www.dyslexiaida.org): Provides research-based information and practical resources.
- **Made By Dyslexia** (www.madebydyslexia.org): Shares tools, training and success stories to empower individuals with dyslexia.
- Book recommendations:
 - [*The Dyslexia Advantage* by Brock Eide and Fernette Eide](#)
 - [*Overcoming Dyslexia* by Sally Shaywitz](#)