

Supporting Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty. Students with dyslexia process information differently and usually require additional support in school. Here we set out some simple suggested strategies schools can implement that can make a difference in supporting dyslexic students to succeed. It is important to note each child will have different needs and require different levels of support. In addition, regular, up to date dyslexia-specific training is also encouraged to support understanding.

Top 10 Tips:

- **Manage information overload** by giving students extra time to process what has been taught. Support students to take regular breaks to help relax their mind. Suggest note taking and using images such as diagrams or illustrations to represent the information learnt. Ensure the working environment is calm, non-cluttered and quiet. Minimise wall display where possible as this could be distracting.
- **Support understanding** by teaching in a multi-sensory way. Ensure lessons have visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning opportunities. Break up teaching into chunks and incorporate mini plenaries after each chunk. Provide learning resources that reiterate the learning such as images, copies of slides and word banks.
- **Support reading** by revisiting phonics where needed and listening to the audio whilst following along with the text. Providing reading material in larger text and dyslexia friendly font and colours. Work on developing a love for reading by make reading fun and using literature that aligns with the student's interest where possible. Encourage silent reading opportunities to give students the chance to read without fear of judgment.
- **Support writing** by working with the student to create a plan before undertaking a writing task. Provide them with additional resources such as punctuation support sheets, key words and any lesson related prompts. To support handwriting provide custom pencils, grips and sloped surface aids. Allow the use of a laptop or iPad if needed, speech to text technology can support writing speed.
- **Support spelling** by continuing to remind students of spelling rules, providing spelling rule support sheets, dictionaries and allowing the use of a spell checker. Do not penalise students for spelling mistakes instead give praise and recognition for creativity and ideas. Encourage students to develop a growth mindset in order to not feel frustrated or anxious around any misspellings.
- **Support processing** by encouraging students to ask questions and write down answers so they can refer to the information later on and revise it. Allow extra time to process information and to re-read written materials provided. Assistive technology can be a great way to process information on screen with options such as 'talk and text' which will prescribe the information as you read it.
- **Support the following of instructions** by giving short and clear instructions, once it is completed then give the next instruction. Encourage students to write down and verbally repeat what is being asked of them. It is also helpful to provide a note with the instructions on or a visual reminder to prompt memory.
- **Support working memory** by encouraging note taking, drawing and the use of mind maps and diagrams. Provide additional learning resources such as handouts out summary sheets which condense the learning. Schedule set revision time to go back over the learning done each day, this could be adult lead group led or individual. Putting the learning into song and rhyme can also be effective.
- **Support planning and organisation** by using to do lists, post-it notes, calendars, and ticking off systems. Breaking up larger tasks into chunks and scheduling breaks in between tasks is also helpful. Have all equipment needed to carry out tasks easily accessible ahead of time.
- **Manage procrastination** by taking time to understand students most energised time of the day and capitalise on this by planning bigger tasks around this time. Remove as many distractions as possible and create a clean calm environment that supports effective learning. Incorporate the use of a timer and to set deadlines to ensure tasks are completed. Give recognition and use rewards after task have been completed.