



# Information Sheet: Dyslexia

## What is dyslexia (or difficulties with literacy)?

Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty which causes problems with reading and writing.

Every child is different so learners with dyslexia may experience it differently. Dyslexia does not have any effect on intelligence. Instead, it is a type of neurodivergence that causes a difference in the way that information is processed and understood.

### Common traits of dyslexia

- Issues with verbal memory.
- Difficulty processing information given verbally.
- Difficulty with phonological awareness.
- Issues with short term memory.
- Difficulty with organisational skills.

Whilst many people with dyslexia may struggle with reading, it is also common for dyslexic people to excel in areas such as creative thinking, problem-solving skills, or visual learning.

It is not common to diagnose children below the age of seven with dyslexia as their difficulties may be a result of a general literacy delay. However, there are some traits that can show, and support can be given.

### Signs of dyslexia in preschool children

Sometimes, children display signs of dyslexia before starting school. Some of these symptoms may include:

- Delayed speech development compared with other children of the same age.
- A range of speech problems, e.g. difficulty pronouncing long words, or saying words in an incorrect order.
- Issues with written expressions, e.g. difficulty with sentences and word choice.
- A limited understanding of rhyme.
- Difficulty with or disinterest in letters of the alphabet.

### Signs of dyslexia in children at school (aged 5-12)

- Difficulties learning the names and sounds of letters.
- Inconsistent spelling.
- Reversing numbers or letters, e.g. writing "6" instead of "9", or "b" instead of "d".
- Reading slowly or making errors when reading aloud.
- Visual disturbances when reading, e.g. a learner may describe letters and words as appearing blurred.
- Confidence when answering questions verbally but difficulty when writing the same answer.
- Struggling to learn sequences, such as days of the week, months of the year or times tables.
- Slow writing speed or poor handwriting.
- Issues copying written words.
- Taking longer than normal to complete written work.
- Forgetting the names of familiar people or objects.

- Forgetting instructions.
- Poor ability to recall items on a list.

## How can learners with dyslexia or similar traits be supported?

- Read to your learner, or when they are able, regularly ask them to read short sentences.
- Provide word banks to support their spelling.
- Repeat learning in short bursts.
- Keep instructions to a minimum.
- Avoid correcting all spellings and grammar.
- Avoid asking learners to copy from the board – if possible, provide a copy in front of them.
- If possible, give learners access to technology with spell checkers.
- Where possible, provide visual support.

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