

- ✓ For older poor readers find books, articles, comics, catalogues related to a special interest of the child, whether it is football, fishing, Super Mario, Barbie, a pop group or wargames and they will be more motivated to 'read along'.
- ✓ Encourage the use of talking books, either on a computer or, tape + paper book, to provide a multi-sensory support for reading.

References

Googling the internet provides a wonderfully extensive, but unfiltered and unfocussed source of information.

However these are some useful sites to start with:

For local support : www.dyslexinetworkplus.org.uk

For national support:
www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

For private assessment and teaching support:
www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk

For SEN Tribunal support:
www.ipsea.org.uk

The following companies have detailed websites, but also produce catalogues, often containing reviews:

www.dyslexic.com
www.inclusive.co.uk
www.smartkids.co.uk
www.bdastore.org.uk
www.r-e-m.co.uk

H.E.R.D. is a drop-in session and a bank of resources for those with a pattern of difficulties consistent with dyslexia.

Come and join
the **H.E.R.D.**

Helpline 0845 22 60 240

www.dyslexianetworkplus.org.uk



Preparing for



a Review Meeting

A guide for parents

Helpful Educational Resources for Dyslexia

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Some Useful Terms

- BDA** British Dyslexia Association—national organisation to provide support to parents/ teachers / employers
- Code of Practice** Government guidelines on support for children with SEN
- DA** Dyslexia Action—provides private assessment and specialist teaching
- DNP** Dyslexia Network Plus—local voluntary support group, linked to BDA
- HLTA** Higher Level Teaching Assistant has extra qualification to work as a support for children in the classroom
- IEP** Individual Education Plan with targets to help the child’s learning that should be monitored and reviewed regularly
- IPSEA** Independent Panel for Special Education Advice Offers free and independent advice on Local Education Authorities’ legal duties to assess and provide for children with special educational needs
- LA** Local Authority responsible for funding / overseeing education provision
- LSA** Learning Support Assistant / **TA** Teaching Assistant work as an assistant to the teacher in the classroom
- LSS** Learning Support Service provides peripatetic specialist teachers to support SEN children in schools
- Parent Partnership** independent advisers funded by LA
- School Action** support funded and provided by school
- School Action Plus** support using specialists from outside the school
- SEN** Special Education Needs
- SENCo** Special Education Needs Co-ordinator—teacher in school responsible for organising support for pupils with SEN
- Statement of SEN** Legal document identifying provision for child’s SEN
- Support Teacher** Qualified teacher who works with individuals or small groups of children with SEN

Initiating a meeting



If you are worried about your child’s lack of progress, especially where there is a family history of dyslexia or dyspraxia, you need to have a serious talk with the school at a convenient time and not on a parents’ evening when time is restricted.

There are several ways this may be initiated:

- At a parents’ evening requesting another in-depth meeting
- Talking to the class or subject teacher and asking for a meeting
- Contacting the SENCo (teacher who is the school’s Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) to arrange a meeting
- Contacting the headteacher to arrange a meeting



If you are ‘fobbed off’ as a ‘fussy parent’, you can appeal to :

- the SEN Governor
- the Chair of Governors,
- Parent Partnership, www.nvparentpartnership.co.uk/
- or directly to the Local Authority SEN Department.

Should you still get no response, you can contact IPSEA www.ipsea.org.uk who will give free advice.

Before the meeting

- Make a list of all your worries and prioritise them on a scale of 1-5, with 1 = *serious concern* and 5 = *niggles*.
- Get your child to make a similar list, using a sibling or friend to do the writing.
- Compare and discuss these lists with your child.



- Collect together and make a list of any reports of tests / screening / private tuition relevant to the child.
- If relationships with the school are good, send the lists to the SENCo before the meeting. It will help in drawing up an agenda.
- If relationships with the school are not good, check the list before you go and keep it where you can look at it discreetly, so you do not forget any details.
- Find a relative or friend to go to the meeting with you – it is very easy to miss important details and/or to only hear what you want to hear! As dyslexia is genetic, you may or may not have your own issues with short term memory or making written notes, so choose someone who has strengths in this area.



At the meeting

It is very normal for you to feel anxious / threatened / fearful when discussing your child's education, which may make you appear to be confrontational, but this will not improve the situation for anyone – least of all your child.



- Try to keep the atmosphere calm.
- Acknowledge any extra help that the school has provided for the child and indicate that you appreciate that time and resources are at a premium, so how can you work with the school to help provide any support the child needs.



In an ideal world, the child should be provided with all the equipment, resources and support that are needed, but schools will never have enough resources for everyone. If you have the money to provide technology, software or extra books that could benefit the child, or time to spend on activities recommended by the school, co-operation between you and the school will be beneficial all round and will not entail the child waiting until resources become available.

This sort of co-operation is important at any age, but if you recognise potential problems in the early years due to family history, early intervention can pre-empt problems before the child is aware of differences and loses self confidence and esteem.

Older children may have appeared to cope in the past, but increased volume of work and expectations of what needs to be done, may be the final straw and new strategies need to be put in place.

It is important to remember that dyslexia is never cured, but the sooner bypass strategies are learned, the better they are integrated into the life style of the child.

What kind of support is available?

Find out if the child is receiving support at *School Action* or *School Action Plus* and ask what this involves and whether there is an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Appropriate support will depend on the age of the child and the severity of the dyslexic differences, but these are some areas that may be provided by the school and/or by you, with ongoing recommendations from the school.

Special accommodation for homework

- Recognition by school that the child has to make much more effort to produce written work than peers, so it is acceptable for a parent to type up some work to the child's dictation and/or accept a shorter piece of work
- Agree that it is unreasonable for the child to learn long lists of class spellings or tables or to expect/allow the child to fail in the class test each week
- School to provide a short list of spellings related to child's reading and provide for over-learning e.g. leaving some of last week's spellings on the new list
- Allow the child to produce some 'written' work as a tape recording or video
- Let teachers know if homework is taking up an unreasonable amount of time

Technology support



- If the child has personal technology, you can help by scanning texts, inputting wordlists from books and wordlists provided by the school ahead of the relevant lessons.
- You can also supervise the child regularly accessing remediation software, including entering appropriate wordlists provided by the school.
- Before the child starts to use a wordprocessor in the classroom, you can supervise and encourage the acquisition of keyboard skills, until s/he can type as fast as s/he thinks.
- If the child has an electronic notebook, you can supervise downloading into a PC, final editing and printing of work.

Reading support



- ✓ With young children learning to read, you will need to spend more than average time working on text.
- ✓ Encourage interest in reading by reading a wide range of books with the child, getting him/her to spot words they know as part of a reading session
- ✓ As they get older use the 'paired reading' technique, where you read along with the child, speaking the words they don't know, so they do not lose the thread of the story.