

**ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
DYSLEXIA POLICY
April 2026**



This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's SEND Policy and Information Report.

INTENT

St Mary's CE Primary School endeavours to meet the diverse needs of its pupils to ensure inclusion for all. All of our pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced curriculum, delivered in a relevant and differentiated manner, enabling progression and continuity to be experienced. It is important in this school that the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matters. In order to make access to the whole curriculum a reality for all pupils, we foster an ethos in which positive attitudes to gender equality, cultural diversity and special needs of all kinds are actively promoted.

In order to meet the needs of all of our children we are actively working towards 'Dyslexia Friendly School' status. We believe that this will not only benefit children with dyslexic tendencies but will also have a significant impact on other pupils, as strategies that are good for the dyslexic learner are good for everyone.

What is Dyslexia?

'Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the word level and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities. It provides the basis for a staged process of assessment through teaching.' British Psychological Society 1999

According to the Dyslexia Institute, dyslexia can be defined as: *'...a combination of abilities and difficulties which affect the learning process in reading, writing, spelling and sometimes numeracy.'* Dyslexic children frequently have difficulty with short-term memory, sequencing and processing information. Many of our pupils have needs in these areas, so Dyslexia Friendly teaching will support all of our pupils, whether they have been identified as 'dyslexic' or not.

IMPLEMENTATION

Teaching strategies

Everybody has an individual learning style. Dyslexic children can process information differently. Understanding how they learn best, and being flexible enough to adapt teaching approaches are vital factors in enabling dyslexic children to learn effectively in the classroom. Therefore, at St Mary's Primary School, we employ the following teaching strategies for dyslexic children:

- We promote a 'can do' culture.
- We understand and value the different ways in which children learn.
- We use multi-sensory methods of learning.
- We are prepared to explain things many times, in a variety of ways.

- We give guidance about how to do tasks systematically.
- We promote positive self-esteem.
- We are aware of signs of tiredness and fatigue, allowing children opportunity for a break within their learning.
We enable dyslexic children to show their interest, knowledge and skills, despite their difficulties in writing.
Our feedback identifies success and improvement points (next steps), at an appropriate level.
We use adult support whenever possible.

Dyslexia Friendly Classrooms

At St Mary's Primary School we recognise that the correct working environment is vital for all learners. For a dyslexic child, they may be having difficulties with listening, hearing, concentrating, sitting still, writing and finding the things they need. If their classroom environment works against them, no matter how hard they try it will be more difficult for them to succeed. Therefore classrooms are:

- Equipped with clearly labelled and neatly arranged resources so that pupils can access easily.
- Minimally distracting, so that pupils can focus on the learning opportunities presented to them.
- Adapted so that dyslexic children have opportunity to sit alongside well-motivated children or a work with a partner who can clarify instructions for them, when appropriate.
- Information and displays are accessible e.g. picture clues, buff backgrounds on the interactive whiteboards.

Dyslexia Indicators

All teachers have responsibility for dyslexic children. If the school's assessment and observation procedures indicate concerns regarding reading, spelling, writing or numeracy, teachers will implement the following procedures:

- Consult the SENCO
- Complete an Initial Concern Form (Appendix 1) and refer to the 'Identification of SEND in Bolton' document (Appendix 2)
- Consult with parents and child
- Implement 'Strategies to Support Children with Dyslexia' document (Appendix 3)
- Once strategies are in place progress will be carefully monitored for one term. At the end of this period, parents and staff will decide if a referral to Ladywood Outreach for a Dyslexia Screening is required.

Assessment and Intervention

The school's assessment and tracking procedures facilitate the early identification of particular difficulties, whilst highlighting individual abilities. Areas of difficulty are highlighted and an appropriate intervention programme may be developed if needed.

Partnership with Parents

As the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs states, 'Professional help can seldom be wholly effective unless it builds upon parents' capacity to be involved.' We acknowledge that maximum participation by parents/carers is essential in embedding positive attitudes in all learners. We endeavour to be in regular contact with parents – face to face, on the telephone or via email. We will help to allay any fears parents' may have for their child's education, by understanding their concerns and pursuing strategies to help. Parent workshops are available and held at school.

Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint please come and see us. We will listen and deal with it as quickly as possible. When parents are worried or unhappy about any aspect of school life or the curriculum they should come and talk to the class teachers first. This will usually resolve the problem; however, if they are still dissatisfied then they should contact either the Head teacher or Deputy Headteacher. Further steps would be to inform the Governing Body and the Local Education Authority.

IMPACT

At St Mary's we strive to ensure that children with any Special Educational Need and/or Disability will be identified at an early stage and that high quality support will be put in place promptly. Our staff have the knowledge, skills and understanding to provide the correct support for all children in their care. We will work closely with parents and/or carers to ensure that all children have access to all available professional support that the Local Authority and Bolton NHS Foundation Trust can provide. We have high ambitions for all of our children no matter what their circumstances and we want them to thrive in every aspect of their life. This means that they will be supported and empowered to achieve academically and socially to the best of their ability, and to have voice and influence in their lives and community. We will ensure that they truly feel that they belong at St Mary's.

Date for review: April 2027

APPENDIX 1

INITIAL CONCERN



Name of pupil _____

DOB _____ M/F

Year Group _____

Name of Teacher _____

Most recent class assessment: A=Above, I=Inline, B=Below (for their age group) Please give age related scores where possible					
Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Maths	Social

1. Language and Literacy

Writing : Letter formation, spelling, sentences, handwriting, fluency	
Reading : word attack skills, phonics, sight vocabulary, fluency and confidence	
Speaking and Listening : fluency, confidence, ability to follow instructions, discrepancy between oral reading and writing skills.	
Speech and Language : immature language, speech patterns of impediments, communication with peers and adults.	

2. Mathematics

e.g. counting, number operations, number recognition, sequencing, sorting, matching, measurement, shape, space, time, money.	
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3. General learning skills

e.g. concentration, co-operation, work completion rate, independence, dependent upon staff support, ability to work without support in groups.	
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4. Personal and Social Development

e.g. self esteem, confidence, motivation, poor organisation of self and equipment, attendance and punctuality.	
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5. Behavioural

e.g. disruption to others, frequently out of seat, general off-task behaviour, makes noises, aggressive behaviour towards others or property, response to 'authority.'	
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6. Emotional Development

e.g. withdrawn, isolated, shy, few friends, anxious.	
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7. Physical Development

e.g. co-ordination, gross and fine motor control, left handed, laterality, pencil grip, clumsy.	
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8. Sensory Needs

e.g. hearing, visual, not hearing instructions or unable to copy or see accurately.	
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9. Medical Needs

List any medical conditions / needs which could affect learning, periods of hospitalisation.	
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10. Other factors

List any other factors which could affect learning. e.g. family issues, transfer between schools .	
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Differentiated classroom provision implemented over time

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Key notes from discussion with parents/carers

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Key notes from discussion with pupil

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Date discussed with SENCO: _____

Decision to place pupil on SEN record?: _____

If 'no' – advice from SENCO on strategies for supporting the pupil through class differentiation to be outlined below.

APPENDIX 2

BOLTON COUNCIL SEND HANDBOOK IDENTIFICATION OF SEND IN BOLTON	
Dyslexia	
<i>Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.</i> <i>Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities and it is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points. Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia.</i>	
Areas of concern	Typical indicators
A lack of progress in reading and/or spelling	Lack of progress despite the use of evidence based reading and spelling interventions used consistently over a period of time
Phonological awareness	• Lack of awareness re grapheme to phoneme correspondence. • Difficulties with auditory discrimination • Difficulties with phoneme manipulation e.g. blending and segmenting • Poor word attack skills so over reliant on the use of context, picture clues or sight vocabulary etc • Mishear/mis-sequence sounds within a word when writing • Bizarre unusual spellings
Verbal short term or working memory	• Difficulties with retaining information over a short period of time for example the order of phonemes in a word, blending, remembering lists and instructions etc • Difficulties following lessons and instructions • Short attention span • Difficulties planning work • Difficulties with mental maths • Limited/inconsistent retention over time
Verbal processing speed	• Slow, hesitant reading/writing • Slow response to instructions/conversation • Need for additional thinking/planning time
Visual difficulties (including visual stress)	• Sensitivity to white, reflective surfaces • Reports of text blurring, moving or falling • Confusions between visually similar letters e.g. b/d/p etc • Slow hesitant reading • Difficulties tracking texts • Frequently rubs eyes • Headaches
Motor processing issues	• Difficulties with speech production when reading • Poorly formed handwriting • Slow writing speed • Poor cursive writing • Difficulties writing on the line • Omits letters from familiar words • Difficulties with co-ordination e.g. shoe laces/buttons, using a knife and fork, dressing and catching a ball etc

Sequencing issues	• Ordering phonemes in words • Learning the alphabet/days of the week/months of the year etc • Frequently crosses out work
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APPENDIX 3

BOLTON COUNCIL SEND HANDBOOK STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN	
Dyslexia	
Strategies to implement in a Dyslexia Friendly Classroom	
• The use of multi-sensory teaching approaches. • Giving pupils adequate thinking time before expecting a response. • Use of alternative means of recording for example mind maps, ICT, verbal responses, diagrams etc. • Use of effective differentiation. • All pupils are able to see the board easily. • All students have space to write comfortably. • Use of a pastel background on the whiteboard to avoid glare. • Use of colourful visuals and large font used to highlight keywords. • Staff CPD focusing on dyslexia so that staff are aware of the signs of dyslexia and how to support pupils with dyslexia. • Parental involvement in planning, learning and decision making. • Screening programmes and early intervention programmes in place. • Use of the Bolton Dyslexia pathways to plan for children experiencing literacy difficulties and track response to interventions and progress. • Marking is based on knowledge rather than the presentation of work/spellings etc. • Effective use of ICT to support pupils. • Use handouts/date stamps etc to avoid pupils with dyslexia having to copy large amounts of writing from the board. • Chunking instructions and tasks to reduce the reliance placed on working memory.	