

Advice for the Mainstream Primary Teacher

1. Provide a clear view of the pupil's situation to his/her parents. Explain to the pupil with dyslexia that she or he has a reading difficulty which with help can be overcome. Emphasise that she or he is able to learn. Try to emphasise their strengths.
1. Keep parents informed and enlist their support where possible.
1. Foster positive self-esteem in pupils. Give genuine praise whenever possible and promote activities that yield success.
1. Be aware of different learning styles and be flexible in your teaching style. Accept that everyone learns differently and recognise each pupil's learning difference.
1. Encourage and support a whole-school policy on learning differences and early identification and intervention.

Teachers should:

- Differentiate in the classroom by modifying class work and homework, materials, texts and tests.
- Build up a bank of resources for the pupil. This will not be your last pupil with dyslexia, and you will be more prepared for the next one.
- Employ visual and oral stimuli in the classroom environment.
- Differentiate tasks, including practical activities, to provide opportunities for extensive enhancement, practice and consolidation;
- Use the appropriate language to support the activity being undertaken.
- Provide opportunities for individual, small group and whole class work, giving feedback as relevant.
- Prepare charts, overhead projector acetates, computer-based presentations and blackboard work that is clear and precise, and where appropriate supported with pictorial cues.
- Employ Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources including educational software, hardware, and web resources that are appropriate to the pupil's needs.
- Evaluate all commercial texts and sources to ensure readability and, where necessary, establish ways of enhancing readability.

- Assess the whole pupil rather than the specific learning difficulty; identify the strengths and areas for support and further development.
 - Be aware of and keep a record of error patterns in areas such as reading, spelling, writing and number work.
 - Ensure that the pupil's individualised education plan is reflected in practice in the classroom setting.
 - Cooperate collegially with support teachers, including, where relevant, the special education needs coordinator.
 - Implement the policy, practices and procedures established in the school's special education needs/dyslexia policy.
 - When a classroom or special needs assistant is available, provide advice and direction to enhance the learning of students with dyslexia and ensure a clear understanding of roles.
 - See the section titled 'Strategies for Mainstream Teachers -ages pre-school - 7 (The Early Years)'
 - See the section titled 'Strategies for Mainstream Teachers – ages 8 – 11'
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- Mainstream primary teachers can address memory difficulties by –
 - Training pupils in the creation and use of mind maps
 - Frequently assessing the work of the pupil informally and formally and identifying aspects needing review
 - Sitting the pupil close to the teacher
 - Ensuring clarity of classroom and homework tasks
 - Consolidating and practicing familiar skills
 - Rehearsing familiar knowledge
 - Making sure the pupil receives important information in written or audio-taped form
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- Mainstream primary teachers can address sequencing difficulties by –
 - Placing items in sequence
 - Practicing sequencing activities and games
 - Developing activities to enhance understanding of left/right top/bottom; above/below/ in/out; next to, beside, between/ in the middle, to the side of, and other spatial/directional terms

- Mainstream primary teachers can address visual-perceptual difficulties by
 - Providing repetitive practice with alphabetical and numerical cards
 - Using stencils of letters and numerals
 - Using stencils of upper and lower case letters
 - Using cards with picture cues for number operations
 - Using language flashcards for social sight word activities
 - Using graphics or picture cues for directional movement

- Mainstream primary teachers can address reading difficulties by -
 - Encouraging reading for meaning
 - Providing text at an appropriate level of difficulty
 - Analysing oral reading error and providing appropriate follow-up
 - Using appropriately a look, cover, say, check method to encourage sight word learning
 - Highlighting significant text, and focussing upon formal terminology in curriculum areas such as history or science
 - Providing graphic and picture cues
 - Constructing logs/diaries of essential words and lists of specific terminology assisted with picture and graphics cues
 - Creating pupil-teacher conferencing activities
 - Using appropriate literacy software

- Mainstream primary teachers can address mathematical difficulties by -
 - Employing appropriate apparatus for the development of the understanding of number
 - Employing Mind Maps and graphical and pictorial cues for number operations
 - Employing materials for the development of understanding throughout the requirements of the curriculum
 - Analysing pupils error patterns in written calculations
 - Developing informal and formal mathematical language through practical activity within structured play, with structured apparatus and concrete materials, and in concrete fashion during activities involving problem solving or investigational situations

- Using practical situations, and cross-curricular opportunities such as physical education to develop spatial awareness of pupils
 - Developing mental mathematics and mental mathematical strategies as alternatives to pencil and paper recording and implement the appropriate and sensible use of the electronic calculator
 - Employing mathematical games, physical- and ITC-generated, to assist with consolidation and practice
 - Using appropriate maths software
 - Planning learning experience across the width of the curriculum before commencing upon the hierarchy of the concepts, so establishing sensible inter- conceptual links and relational understanding.
- Mainstream primary teachers can address writing difficulties by –
 - Encouraging and practicing correct posture
 - Employing activities to practice manipulative skills and movement
 - Employing writing frames, outlines, flowcharts and/or mind maps to develop ideas and concepts
 - Encouraging the process of drafting and redrafting
 - Using appropriate educational software tools to support writing
 - Employing doodle pads – both physical and ICT generated
 - Employing a variety of writing implements according to the age and needs of the pupil
 - Employing materials to address letter reversal where they persist
 - Encouraging the use of an appropriate learning strategy (e.g. look-say-cover-write-check) to learn individual words for spelling
 - Training the processes of revising and proof-reading
- Mainstream primary teachers can address emotional and behavioural difficulties by –
 - Reducing the pressure upon the pupil to verbally respond in front of his/her peers
 - Creating opportunities for collaborative working environments
 - Demonstrating that pupil responses are valued
 - Ensuring that classroom-based and homework tasks are appropriate to the ability of the pupil
 - Providing consistency of approach through partnership with parents, explaining the strategies to be employed in the classroom and school setting and those to be mirrored in the home setting

- Reducing pupil anxiety by planning for pupil success, goal achievement and reward conferring

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