



Harlington and Sundon Lower Schools
'A place to belong, grow and succeed'

A Parent/Carers' Guide to Dyslexia



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This guide is designed to help you support your child, whether they have a formal diagnosis or you simply notice some dyslexic traits. At Harlington and Sundon Lower Schools, we believe that parents and school are on the same team, working together to ensure every child feels successful.

What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a lifelong learning difference that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. It is not related to intelligence. Common signs include:

- **Reading:** Finding it hard to recognise familiar words or sounding out new words.
- **Writing:** Difficulty with spelling consistently or putting thoughts onto paper.
- **Processing:** Taking longer to process spoken information or instructions.
- **Memory:** Difficulty remembering sequences, such as days of the week or multi-step tasks.
- **Organisation:** Finding it hard to keep track of belongings or manage time.

What does the school do that supports children with dyslexia?

Many of our common classroom practices are designed to be dyslexia-friendly and benefit all learners:

- **Visual Timetables:** These provide a clear, shared understanding of the day's structure.
- **Memory Prompts:** We use visual aids, word banks, and checklists to minimise 'cognitive overload'.
- **Multi-Sensory Learning:** We use various ways to teach, involving sight, sound, and touch to help information stick.
- **Clear Expectations:** We check for understanding by asking children to repeat back instructions.

What else can the school do?

If your child needs more specific help, we can offer specialised interventions:

- **Coloured Overlays/Paper:** To help reduce visual stress and make reading more comfortable.
- **Assistive Tools:** Use of pencil grips, specialised keyboards, or reading pens.
- **Quiet Workstations:** Access to a space with fewer distractions for tasks requiring heavy focus.
- **Personalised Scheduling:** Breaking larger projects into small, manageable 'Now and Next' tasks.
- **Technology:** Where appropriate, we use digital tools to help children access the curriculum, such as using a laptop or computer.

What can I do at home?

- **Read Aloud Together:** Continue to read to your child even as they get older to build their vocabulary and love of stories.
- **Break It Down:** Give one instruction at a time and ask them to repeat it back to you.
- **Use Visuals:** Use calendars or pictured checklists for morning and evening routines.
- **Focus on Effort:** Give immediate and specific praise for their hard work, rather than just the final result.
- **Assistive Fun:** Use audiobooks or educational games that focus on phonics and word patterns.





What might the next steps be?

- If concerns persist despite the strategies put in place, please arrange a meeting with your child's class teacher. They may then refer the child to the school's SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator).
- Children over 7.5 years old can be directed to South Beds Dyslexia Association for a screening check: <https://southbedsda.org.uk/>

Where else I can get support?

- **British Dyslexia Association:** Resources for families (www.bdadyslexia.org.uk).
- **Made By Dyslexia:** Information on the strengths of the dyslexic mind (www.madebydyslexia.org).

We are on your team!

We know that parenting a child with dyslexia requires patience and persistence. Please know that we are here to support you just as much as we are here to support your child. Our shared goal is to see your child thrive.