

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission Briefing Report

Dyslexia Support in Schools

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Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a briefing to Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission (C&YP SC) on the support for children and young people (C&YP) with dyslexia in Leicester City Schools.
- 1.2 Dyslexia is a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) characterised by difficulties with reading and spelling. Children with dyslexia have abilities and strengths in many areas.
- 1.3 The educational progress made by all children, including those with SEND, is the responsibility of the school the child attends. Schools support children's progress through quality teaching in lessons throughout the school year. Schools adjust their curriculum and teaching to meet different needs of different children.
- 1.4 All schools have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) who is the professional responsible for supporting the progress of all children with SEND in their school. This includes children with dyslexia.
- 1.5 Wherever possible children should receive education in a mainstream school. Our ambition is for the whole education sector to support those with additional needs.
- 1.6 The specialist provision for C&YP is made principally by 2 local authority services
 - Learning Communication and Interaction (LCI) Team, SEND Support Service
 - Educational Psychology, SEND Integrated Service 0-25

2. Recommendations

C&YP SC are asked to note the contents of the briefing report at this stage.

3. Supporting information including options considered:

What is dyslexia? (See Appendix 1)

- 3.1 Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities.
- 3.2 The Leicester City SEND teams use the Rose definition of dyslexia, this is the definition favoured by the British Dyslexia Association.

How the city council supports schools

3.3 All schools in Leicester City have access to support from SEND Support Service (specialist teachers and teaching assistants) and Educational Psychology. This is funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated School's Grant.

3.4 Each school has an annual time allocation for specialist staff support. However, additional time is available to schools through the services' traded offers.

3.5 Educational Psychologists (EPs) and Learning Communication and Interaction (LCI) Team specialist teachers are qualified to undertake dyslexia assessments and make a diagnosis. (See Appendix 2).

Getting a dyslexia diagnosis

3.3 As with all SEND needs there should be a graduated response to supporting CYP who may be struggling with their learning. This graduated response is further detailed in the SEND Code of Practice (2015)

Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

3.4 On first identification of a concern regarding a CYPs progress and learning the class teacher or parent would consult with the school SENCO and appropriate assessment support and interventions would be implemented at a school level. These would be discussed with the parent. If after a period of additional support, no progress has been made, the school SENCO, after discussion with the parent, would request additional support from a Specialist Teacher or Educational Psychologist. At this point assessments will be undertaken by specialist staff and if appropriate a diagnosis may be made. This diagnosis could be dyslexia or other special educational need. The specialist staff would then provide further advice and support to the school around meeting the CYPs needs. A detailed report will be shared with parents and the school. (Appendix 3)

3.4 Some parents may seek a diagnosis through private assessor. If a child receives a diagnosis in this manner, parents should then alert the school SENCO and support measures would be implemented as required. However, it is important to note that additional support may already be in place for the CYP and the diagnosis in itself would not necessarily alter the interventions/support implemented by the school, if these are already appropriate for Dyslexia.

Supporting individuals with a diagnosis

3.7 The LCI team offer a range of support to CYP and their families (Appendices 4,5) this includes parenting courses and sessions for CYP around their diagnosis.

3.8 The LCI team also offers a training, advice and support for schools and education staff including a Post Graduate Diploma in Dyslexia (Appendices 4,5,6)

3.9 A range of resources to support schools and signposting is available through specialist staff and on the schools' extranet. (Appendix 5)

3.10 Best Endeavours and Reasonable Adjustments (BERA) document is a document which identifies the support schools should be implementing to support any CYP with a SEND need as part of their usual school provision and budget. Both LCI specialist teachers and Educational Psychologists' were

involved in writing the Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) section of the new BERA document that will be shared with schools this Autumn. This will extend schools ability to build on in school provision for those with diagnosed SpLD or possible SpLD.

3.11 Many children with dyslexia can be well supported and make excellent progress using the school's usual provision and SEND budget. Should they require additional support (costing more than £6000 per annum) schools can apply for additional Element 3 top-up funding, or in more complex cases a Statutory Assessment to facilitate an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

4. Details of Scrutiny

Add details of any relevant scrutiny reviews and engagement.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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5.2 Legal implications

No legal Implications

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5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

There are no significant climate emergency implications associated with this report.

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5.4 Equalities Implications

Schools are covered under Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

Schools must not discriminate against a child by not offering a place or by only offering a place under specific terms and conditions. They must ensure that the child has full access to education, facilities and services. They must not subject 'the pupil to any (other) detriment' which means they must not subject the child to any form of disadvantage. Schools and education authorities have a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils,

Equality covers all aspects of school life enjoyed by children – teaching and learning, school trips, activities, clubs, etc. Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child or young person's ability to learn.

Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty that can cause problems with reading, writing and spelling. It is estimated up to 1 in every 10 people in the UK has some degree of dyslexia.

Unlike a learning disability, dyslexia isn't related to a person's general level of intelligence. Children and adults of all intellectual abilities can be affected by dyslexia.

While dyslexia is a lifelong problem that can present challenges on a daily basis, a range of specialist educational interventions can help children with their reading and writing and should lead to positive impacts for people from across all protected characteristics.

The earlier a child with dyslexia is diagnosed, the more effective educational interventions are likely to be.

The type and extent of intervention needed will depend on the severity of your child's difficulties.

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Appendix 1: Definition of dyslexia

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) has adopted the Rose (2009) definition of dyslexia:

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. 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, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia. A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention.

In addition to these characteristics:

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) acknowledges the visual and auditory processing difficulties that some individuals with dyslexia can experience and points out that dyslexic readers can show a combination of abilities and difficulties that affect the learning process. Some also have strengths in other areas, such as design, problem solving, creative skills, interactive skills, and oral skills.

BDA (2010)

Appendix 2: LCI Qualifications

LCI currently have 5, level 7 specialist teachers

All teachers carrying out dyslexia diagnostic reports have the following qualifications

- Level 7 specialist teacher Post Graduate Diploma in Dyslexia
- Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) from British Dyslexia Association or PATOSS
- Professional membership of the BDA (AMBDA) and /or PATOSS

1 teacher has a Masters in Dyslexia

In order to have and maintain the APC, level 7 teachers must renew every 3 years with their professional body and submit evidence of the following:

- 1) Ongoing CPD (amounts vary as to when first APC was gained.)
 - 20-30 hours of ongoing professional CPD in Dyslexia related fields.
 - This must include 5-15 hours of accredited SASC approved training in either psychometrics or assessment
 - The other hours can be made up of a mixture of formal and informal training e.g., dyslexia conferences, webinars, professional reading, all linked to current thinking in SpLD.
- 2) Portfolio of professional reflection on the above training with evidence of the impact on daily practise submitted for comment / marking to BDA or PATOSS
- 3) A diagnostic report written in the last 18 months that must meet criteria – this is marked and returned. If the standard is not reached, one further report may be submitted for approval.

In addition, those with **AMBDA** (3 teachers) also have to submit evidence of direct teaching in the area of dyslexia (15 hours per year).

Appendix 3: Dyslexia Assessment and reports

Reports are written to the latest Specific Learning Difficulties Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) guidance including

- Using the new report format (June 2020)

<https://sasc.org.uk/SASCDocuments/FINAL%20Pre-16%20Years%20Diagnostic%20Assessment%20Report%20Format%20-Word.docx>

- Using only tests on the updated approved test list from SASC (March 2020)

<https://sasc.org.uk/SASCDocuments/SASC%20Pre16%20Test%20List%20June%202020.pdf>

A detailed family and early developmental history is also collected alongside a visual difficulties questionnaire (as per the SASC current guidelines)

Appendix 4: LCI graduated response for dyslexia

- LCI provide a range of support to schools from early identification of need in school age pupils e.g. literacy difficulties), whole school strategies, intervention support and modelling to full dyslexia assessments.
- LCI currently provide Dyslexia assessments as part of their graduated response offer of support to schools. This can come out of their allocated time for the school or can be part of a traded agreement.
- LCI have a graduated response to requests for dyslexia assessments that schools are aware of.
- On average LCI receive around 30-40 request for full dyslexia assessments per academic year.
- LCI have written and deliver a short series of sessions to help pupils understand their Dyslexia called 'Dyslexia and Me'.
- LCI specialist teachers also write and plan bespoke specialist programmes for some students when required that are then delivered by school staff.

Appendix 5: LCI Offer to Leicester City schools regarding Dyslexia Training

LCI offer the following training regarding Dyslexia both centrally and in schools.

- **Dyslexia Awareness** ½ day whole school training suitable for all staff.
- **Bespoke training** around specific areas of Dyslexia e.g. Dyslexia and memory. This is arranged and decided with schools.
- **Parent workshops** – online 1-hour workshops for parents of pupils with Dyslexia around home support. Issues cover personal organisation, using ICT to support learning at home, supporting spelling at home.
- **School Based assessment course in identifying Specific Learning difficulties.** This is a two-day course run twice a year to introduce school staff to simple range of assessment they can carry out to identify a student's possible areas of strength / need in relation to specific learning difficulties. This was introduced over 7 years ago as a response to the over identification of Moderate Learning Difficulty in schools and the under-identification of SpLD. Over 75% of all Leicester City schools have attended this course in the last 5 years.
- **Supporting Dyslexic pupils within the classroom.** This is a one day centrally run course aimed at teaching assistants supporting Dyslexic pupils in class or within intervention groups.

Meeting Individual Needs: Dyslexia

LCI & EPs initially wrote the Meeting Individual Needs: Dyslexia resource folder together and it was updated 3 years ago. This document is available to all schools. It contains information on signs of Dyslexia, ways to support with school environment, high quality teaching in whole class situation and interventions. It provides school with checklists, top tips and signposts further references. This document is available on the Schools' Extranet.

Appendix 6: Post-Graduate involvement

The LCI team also deliver the 2-year Level 7 Post graduate Diploma in Dyslexia (through Derby University & British Dyslexia Association).