



Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Dysgraphia

Information Sheet for Parents/Carers

Understanding how learning differences like dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia impact your child is the first step toward supporting their educational needs. This guide explains these conditions, how the school meet these needs, and how adaptations can be made in the classroom. It also provides information about assessments and the role of the local authority.

What are Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Dysgraphia?

- **Dyslexia:** A common learning difficulty that affects reading, spelling, and writing. Children with dyslexia may have difficulty recognizing words, reading fluently, and spelling accurately.
- **Dyscalculia:** A learning difficulty that affects the ability to understand and work with numbers. Children with dyscalculia may struggle with basic math concepts, memorizing math facts, or performing calculations.
- **Dysgraphia:** A condition that impacts writing. Children with dysgraphia may have trouble with handwriting, spelling, and organizing their thoughts on paper.

These conditions do not reflect intelligence; rather, they are differences in how the brain processes information.

How are these needs met in school?

The Gem Federation have strategies and tools in place to support children with learning difficulties. Although formal assessments for conditions like dyslexia are currently not available through the local authority, schools are still able to provide support.

Key interventions include:

1. **Handwriting Sessions:** These are targeted sessions to help children improve their handwriting. Teachers may work on fine motor skills, letter formation, and legibility, using tailored exercises.
2. **Pencil Grips:** Special pencil grips are used to help children who have difficulty holding a pencil correctly, improving control and comfort during writing tasks.
3. **Typing and Use of Technology:** Some children find typing easier than handwriting. Our school may encourage the use of typing software or provide laptops/tablets to assist with written tasks.
4. **Nessy:** This is a well-known program designed to help children with dyslexia. It focuses on improving reading, spelling, and writing through interactive, game-based learning.
5. **Collaborative Spelling:** Collaborative spelling allow students to work together to learn spelling patterns. This method helps children learn from one another and offers support in a less pressured setting.
6. **Support in the Classroom:** Teachers and learning support assistants often work one-on-one for parts of a task, or in small groups to provide extra help. This may include breaking tasks into smaller chunks, offering additional time, or providing alternative formats for assignments.

Do I Need a Formal Diagnosis?

While having a formal diagnosis can provide additional insight into your child's specific learning needs, it is **not required** for the school to make adjustments or adaptations. In fact, schools can begin providing support as soon as a need is identified, without waiting for a diagnosis.

However, if you feel that a formal diagnosis is necessary for your child, **private assessments** are available, and this is something you as the parent/carer would need to pursue independently. Local authority services currently **do not** offer dyslexia assessments, and there are no plans to offer them in



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the near future. Although the school does have access to a screener, this is not the substitution for a formal assessment, and it simply provides an indication of Dyslexia or Dyscalculia. It is important to note that a moderate or significant indication could be for a number of reasons unrelated to these specific learning differences.

For the foreseeable future, the local authority is focusing on training school staff to better support children with literacy difficulties through a more generalized approach, as opposed to providing individual assessments. This new service, launched in January 2025, and will focus on providing teachers with the knowledge and tools to support all students experiencing literacy challenges.