

Special Educational Needs and Disability Leaflet

| DYSPRAXIA | | | |
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| PHYSICAL Fine motor skills Gross motor skills Balance Coordination | SPATIAL AWARENESS Spatial awareness Knowing where we are in relation to other people/objects | STRENGTH & LANGUAGE Strength Language Understanding Verbal communication Written communication Understanding of instructions Understanding of symbols | |
| SOCIAL Eye contact Social thinking Knows to address Others correctly Background noise | SENSORY Over/under-sensitivity to touch, temperature, noise, smell, taste, pain, light | CONCENTRATION Exhaustion Concentrating for long periods of time Background noise | |
| SENSE OF DIRECTION Getting lost easily Difficulty following left-right Left | ORGANISATION Disorder some materials Forgetting things - memory | THOUGHT PROCESSING Lower Less of thought at once - slow Abstract thinking Abstract | |
| MEMORY Short term Working Long term Verbal | EMOTION Easily stressed - frustrated New routines | EYE MOVEMENT Tracking Saccades | |

Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia- Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)

Dyspraxia is a disorder affecting fine and gross motor co-ordination. Poor co-ordination can have a significant impact on daily living and learning. It is diagnosed through motor skills screening (Movement Assessment Battery for Children). From this screening the child could be referred to a paediatrician or Occupational Therapists. The condition rarely comes alone. There is a 50% co-occurrence with dyslexia and 7% of children with ASD also have dyspraxia. It is more common in boys (1:4/girls: boys). There are 2 forms: motor dyspraxia and verbal dyspraxia. These 2 forms co-occur. There are also hidden aspects to do with senses and perception.

Key facts about Dyspraxia:

- Many sufferers do not crawl (often bottom shufflers) or have poor bilateral co-ordination e.g. only using 1 hand such as not holding paper when writing.
- They can also fidget and fall off chairs or fall over nothing and can appear awkward physically e.g. in PE, especially in playing team games including ball skills.
- They can experience difficulty with self-care e.g. tying shoes laces, putting clothes on the right way around and using equipment like scissors and rulers.
- It can affect one side only. If the right-hand side is affected (left hemisphere of the brain) this can lead to difficulties with speech and language and phonics and therefore problems with reading and writing.

People with dyspraxia may find it difficult to:

- Organise themselves and their belongings e.g. losing pens and papers, forgetting books and equipment they need.
- Plan tasks e.g. writing tasks.
- Interact socially e.g. have difficulty in groups, emotional difficulties and low self-esteem.
- Remember rules and instructions.
- Understanding language that is not literal.
- Sleep.



For further support and information visit the websites listed below:

British Dyspraxia Association

www.dyspraxiafoundation.org

www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyspraxia

Ways to support a child with dyspraxia

- Intervention needs to be little and often.
- Dance mat.
- Touch type activities (BBC bitesize)
- Handwriting activities.
- Weighted products such as mats and cushions (should be advised by OT).

Support in school may need to include playtimes and lunchtimes which will be decided by class teacher and SENCO.

Before the age of 7 particularly, lots can be done to improve difficulties.

Grow together
Excel together
Learn together

Classroom strategies used to support a child with dyspraxia

- Reduced background noise.
- Reduced visual input e.g. sit child at front of class facing the board, have plain background to board.
- Information and instructions given in chunks.
- Task then demonstration (avoiding doing both at the same time).
- Gross motor skills established before tackling fine motor e.g. in PE diagonal movements e.g, cross over elbow to opposite knee, marching with arms down (they may need to hold a beanbag to help with this)
- Writing lessons started with warm-ups e.g. windmills and finger exercise. Wedge cushions (to improve core stability).
- Chunky, triangular pencils or pencil grips, weighted pens (e.g. stabilos), angled pens and pencils or wrist bands (sportwriter).
- Rulers with grips.
- Writing slopes and anti-slip mats.



What to do if you have any concerns:

- **Speak to the class teacher**
- **Speak to the SENCo/ SENCo assistant**

Contact the school office to make an appointment: 01432 273 784

