## Indicators of dyslexia

**(Adapted from the BDA Indicators)**

If you think your child may be dyslexic you can have a look at this list of possible indicators. No child would exhibit all the indicators and some children may show just a few. It is important is to consider your family history as dyslexia is often hereditary. Also, look for the difficulty being “unexpected”, that is, not in line with other abilities, and persistent i.e. your child has support at school but progress seems very slow.

# Pre-school non-language indicators

* May have walked early but did not crawl - was a 'bottom shuffler' or 'tummy wriggler'.
* Persistent difficulties in getting dressed efficiently and putting shoes on the correct feet.
* Enjoys being read to but shows no interest in letters or words.
* Is often accused of not listening or paying attention.
* Excessive tripping, bumping into things and falling over.
* Difficulty with catching, kicking or throwing a ball; with hopping and/or skipping.
* Difficulty with clapping a simple rhythm.

# Pre-school language/Literacy indicators

* Has persistent jumbled phrases, e.g. 'cobbler's club' for 'toddler's club'
* Use of substitute words e.g. 'lampshade' for 'lamppost'.
* Inability to remember the label for known objects, e.g. 'table, chair'.
* Difficulty learning nursery rhymes and rhyming words, e.g. 'cat, mat, sat'.
* Later than expected speech development.



**Primary School**

**Watch out for the child who does not outgrow the following possible early indicators.**

* Has difficulty paying attention
* Shows no interest in letters or words
* Has difficulty learning to sing or recite the alphabet
* Has a history of slow speech development
* Gets words muddled eg cubumber, flutterby
* Has difficulty keeping to a simple rhythm
* Finds it hard to carry out two or more instructions at one time eg put the toys in the fox, then put the box on the shelf but is fine if tasks are presented in smaller units.
* Forgets names of friends, teacher, colours
* Poor concentration.
* Has difficulty cutting, sticking and crayoning in comparison with their peers
* Has persistent difficulty in dressing eg finds shoelaces and buttons difficult
* Puts clothes on the wrong way round
* Has difficulty with catching, kicking or throwing a ball ,hopping or skipping
* Often trips, bumps into things and falls over
* Has obvious ‘good’ and ‘bad’ days for no apparent reason

**Primary school age non-language indicators:**



* Has difficulty with tying shoe laces, tie and dressing.
* Has difficulty telling left from right
* Has difficulty remembering sequences e.g. the days of the week, months of the year, times-tables etc.
* Surprises you because in other ways he/she is bright and alert.
* Has a poor sense of direction and spatial awareness
* Lacks confidence and has a poor self-image.
* Difficulty learning to tell the time.

**Primary school age language/literacy Indicators**

* Has particular difficulty with reading and spelling.
* Puts letters and figures the wrong way round.
* Leaves letters out of words or puts them in the wrong order.
* Still occasionally confuses 'b' and ‘d’ and words such as 'no/on'.
* Still needs to use fingers or marks on paper to make simple calculations.
* Has poor phonological awareness – cannot easily analyse the sounds in spoken words or blend sounds to make words
* Has problems understanding what he/she has read.
* Take longer to read and process written information.
* Takes longer than average to do written work.
* Problems processing language at speed

# Secondary School – pupils age 11+

**Written Work**

* Has a poor standard of written work compared with oral ability
* Produces badly set-out written work, does not stay close to the margin, work is messy with lots of crossings out.
* Has poor handwriting, possibly with ‘reversals’ and badly formed letters; still confuses letters which look similar, particularly b/d, p/g, p/q, n/u, m/w
* Has poor spelling: spells a word several different ways in one piece of writing e.g. wipe, wype, wiep, wipe; makes anagrams of words eg tired for tried, breaded for bearded; produces phonetic and bizarre spelling that is not age/ability appropriate
* Uses unusual sequencing of letters or words
* Difficulties with composition and organising writing

# Reading

* Makes poor reading progress
* Finds it difficult to blend letters together
* Has difficulty in establishing syllable division or knowing the beginnings and endings of words
* No expression in reading
* Comprehension poor
* Hesitant and laboured in reading, especially when reading aloud
* Misses out words when reading, or adds extra words
* Fails to recognise familiar words
* Loses the point of a story being read or written
* Has difficulty in picking out the most important points from a passage

## Other associated difficulties

**Mathematics**

* Shows confusion with number order, e.g. units, tens, hundreds
* Is confused by symbols such as + and x signs
* Has difficulty following math’s rules.
* Has difficulty remembering anything in a sequential order,

e.g. tables, days of the week, months of the year

* Has difficulty learning and remembering times tables
* May reverse numbers, e.g. 2, 5
* Has difficulty with positional language

**Time**

* Has difficulty in learning to tell the time
* Shows poor time-keeping and general awareness
* Has poor personal organisation
* Has difficulty remembering what day of the week it is: birth date, seasons of the year, months of the year
* Difficulty with concepts – yesterday, today, tomorrow

**Motor Coordination**

* Has poor fine motor skills affecting pen control, letter formation and slow writing speed
* Can be clumsy and lack general coordination
* Is confused by the differences between left and right, up and down, east and west
* Has indeterminate hand preference

**General Behaviours**

* Employs work avoidance tactics, such as sharpening pencils and looking for books
* Seems to ‘dream’, does not seem to listen
* Is easily distracted
* Has obvious 'good' and 'bad' days, for no apparent reason
* Appears bright and able but can’t get their thoughts down on paper. Can lead to frustration and behaviour difficulties or becoming passive and withdrawn
* Easily tires because they have put so much effort into learning
* Acting as the class clown to mask difficulties
* May have memory and word finding difficulties.
* Excel in some areas and are very weak in others

