Parent Workshop: Understanding Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties

Wimbledon Park Primary School
17.11.26

Merton SEND Support Inclusion Service (MSSIS)
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Aims of the session

- To gain a better understanding of what dyslexia and specific literacy difficulties are
- To look into how these difficulties can affect reading, spelling and writing
- To explore how school supports children who are having difficulties
- To share practical ideas to help your child if they are experiencing literacy difficulties at home

Please ask questions...

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What is dyslexia?

- Dyslexia is a learning difference that mainly affects reading, spelling and writing
- Children with dyslexia may find it difficult to link sounds to letters, remember spellings, or read fluently
- Many children also have memory difficulties, especially with: remembering sequences (e.g. days, instructions, spelling patterns)
- Holding information in mind while reading or writing
- Dyslexia can look different in each child, and with the right support, children can make good progress

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Delphi dyslexia definition

Dyslexia is a set of processing difficulties that affect the acquisition of reading and spelling.

In dyslexia, some or all aspects of literacy attainment are weak in relation to age, standard teaching and instruction, and level of other attainments.
Across all languages, difficulties in reading fluency and spelling are key markers of dyslexia.

Dyslexic difficulties e**xist on a continuum** and can be experienced to various degrees of severity.
The nature and developmental trajectory of dyslexia depends on multiple genetic and environmental influences.

Dyslexia can affect the **acquisition of other skills, such as mathematics, reading comprehension** or learning another language.

The most commonly observed cognitive impairment in dyslexia is a difficulty in **phonological processing (i.e., in phonological awareness, phonological processing speed or phonological memory**). However, phonological difficulties do not fully explain the variability that is observed.
Working memory, processing speed and orthographic skills can contribute to the impact of dyslexia.

Dyslexia frequently **co-occurs with one or more other developmental difficultie**s, including developmental language disorder, dyscalculia, ADHD, and developmental coordination disorder.

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Myth Busters....

- Myth 1: Dyslexia means reading letters backwards
- Myth 2: People with dyslexia “see words moving”
- Myth 3: Dyslexia is linked to intelligence
- Myth 4: Dyslexic people just need to try harder
- Myth 5: Dyslexia is rare
- Myth 6: Kids “grow out of” dyslexia

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Activity coming up…

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Activity

Copy the sentence.....

Photosynthesis is the process in which plants use light energy absorbed by chlorophyll in the chloroplasts to convert carbon dioxide and water into glucose and oxygen, with gases moving through the stomata.

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Feedback

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Why was that challenging?

Spellings
Short term memory
Tracking from board to paper
Reading skills
Previous knowledge
Presentation
Cognitive overload
Distractions
Handwriting/stamina
Equipment, organisation, glasses

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I HAVE DYSLEXIA

It affects the way I learn,
but it doesn't mean I can't learn!

I may read slower

- Reading takes more time and effort.
- I may need to read things more than once to understand.

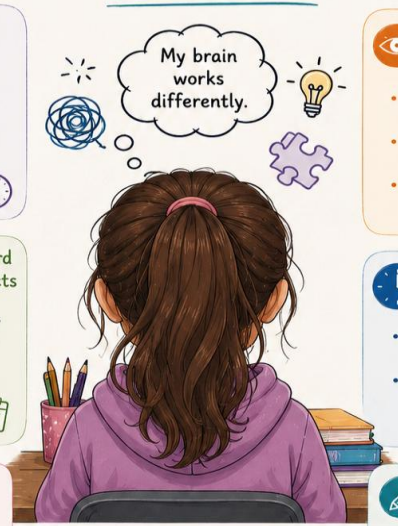
I may find it hard to remember facts

- Dates, times, sequences or lists can be difficult to recall.
- I might forget things easily.

I may struggle with words

- I might find it hard to spell words.
- I may mix up letters (e.g. b and d).
- I might find the right word hard to think of.

abc



I may find reading challenging

- Words can look confusing or jumbled.
- I may find it hard to stay focused.
- Long texts can feel overwhelming.

I may need more time

- I may take longer to complete tasks.
- I need time to think, process and check my work.

I may find writing difficult

- Putting my ideas into writing can be hard.
- My handwriting might be messy.
- I may make more mistakes.

Other things I might experience

- Difficulty with organisation and planning
- Trouble following instructions with multiple steps
- Sensitivity to noise or busy environments
- Low confidence at times

Ways I can be supported

- Give me extra time when I need it.
- Use clear instructions and structure.
- Use tools like spell check, text to speech or audiobooks.
- Break tasks into smaller steps.
- Encourage my effort and celebrate my progress.
- Be patient, be kind and believe in me.

Dyslexia is just one part of me. I can learn, I can improve, I can succeed!

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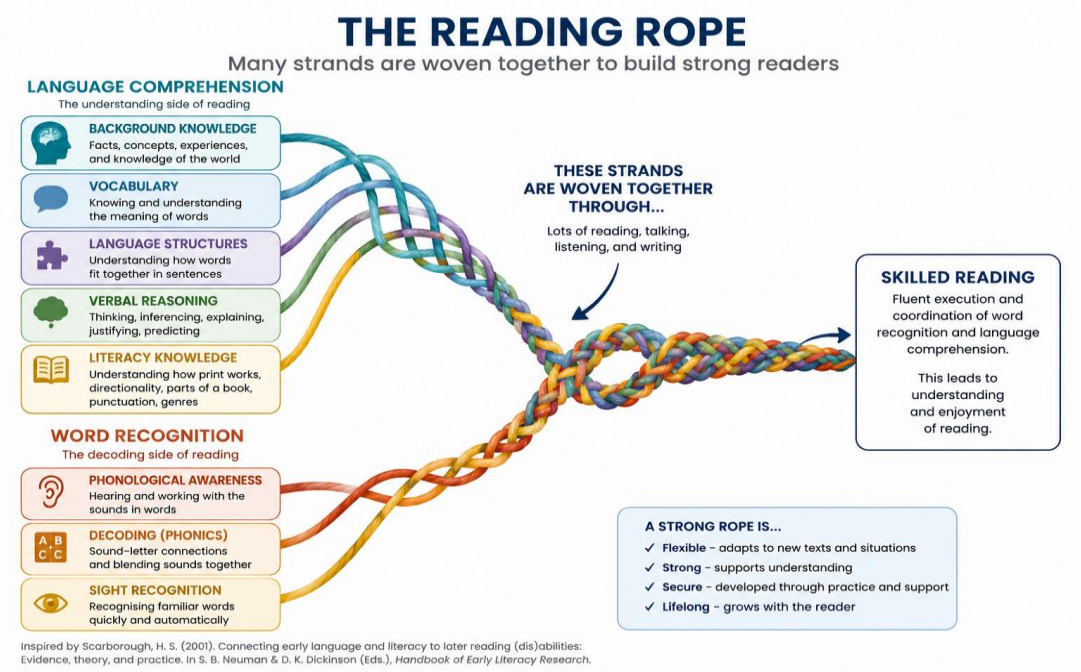
Self esteem and motivation

- A child who believes they can improve is more likely to keep trying
- Celebrate strengths
- Notice effort
- Separate reading/spelling difficulty from intelligence
- Frustration... can manifest in dysregulation especially if been holding things together at school



SUPERPOWERED: Transform Anxiety into Courage, Confidence, and Resilience for kids - Transform Anxiety into Courage, Confidence and Resilience

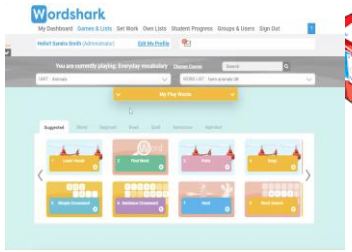
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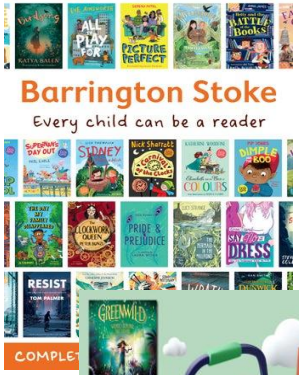
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Support with reading

- Praise effort.
- Give thinking time.
- Take turns with reading.
- Echo reading.
- Different types, comics, non-fiction, graphic novels. Build up a collection of favourite books your child can read independently to support fluency and reading rate.
- Before reading, look through the pictures, talk about what is happening and discuss any new vocabulary or sight words.









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Spelling

- Phonetic, spelling words as they sound nite/knight becos/because
- Orthographic errors
- Confusing letters with similar shapes p/q/b/d
- Sight-words struggles recognising said/was/come/some
- Sounds missing hapning/happening
- Sounds incorrect rane/rain
- Incorrect suffix and prefix jumpt
- Homophones



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PHONOLOGICAL

Are all of the sounds represented? Are any omitted?

- "sop" for "stop"
- "las" for "last"

Are there any confusions?

- "fan" for "van"
- "chrip" for "trip"

ORTHOGRAPHIC

Can they match the sounds to the correct letter(s)?

Do they have an understanding of spelling conventions?

- "bowt" for "boat" (oa/ow)
- "runing" for "running" (Doubling Rule)
- "pik" for "pick" (ck rule)
- "sam" for "same" (silent e)

MORPHOLOGICAL

Can they identify morphemes: roots, suffixes, & prefixes?

- "jumpt" for "jumped"
- "wishis" for "wishes"
- "catz" for "cats"

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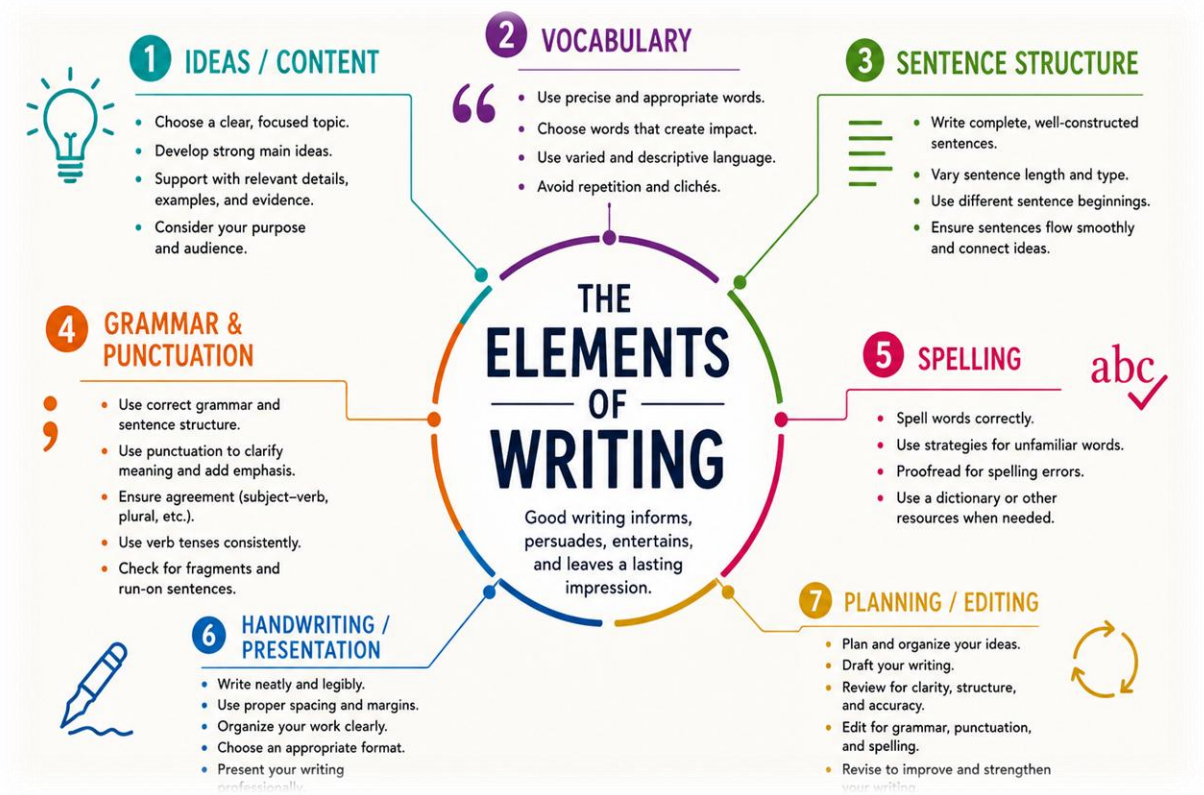
Support for spelling

- Don’t correct every word- confidence
- Hangman spelling game
- Nessy spelling
- Sirlinkalot app
- Continue to support children to learn and practise any spellings sent home from school using the same multi-sensory.
- Morphology

- **‘Helping Kids with Wobbly Spelling’ Charmaine McKissock**. https://wobblylearning.co.uk/



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Support for writing

- Purposeful writing experiences
- Whiteboard
- Technology
- Keep it practical-sentence game
- Motivating writing tools
- Handwriting apps





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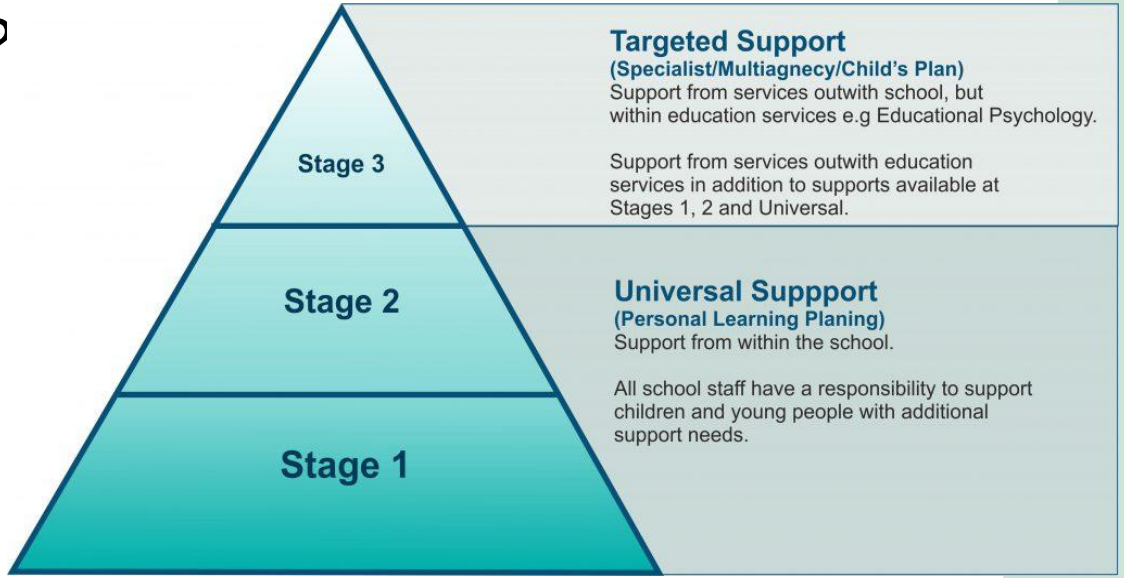


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What happens at school?

Universal Support

- Visual aids widget
- Instructions broken down
- Word/Sound Mats
- Decrease copying from the board
- Different formats for recording work.
- Mind maps photographs, pictures use of Chrome books
- Scaffolding
- Focus on quality over quantity



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What happens at Wimbledon Park if my child has a dyslexia diagnosis.....

- Report received by school and read by SENDCo
- Shared with Class Teacher
- Inclusion profile highlighting strengths and weaknesses
- Added to equalities register
- May be added to SEN register
- Support put in place, adaptations in class
- Interventions where appropriate

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Websites for Parents of Children with Dyslexia

Help is out there...

British Dyslexia Association
British Dyslexia Association
Advice, screening tools, school support, and parent resources.

Made By Dyslexia
Home - Made By Dyslexia
Strength-based information and inspiring dyslexia advocacy.

Understood
Understood - For learning and thinking differences
Parent-friendly articles about dyslexia and learning differences.

Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity
Helen Arkell
Assessments, training, family support, and learning strategies.

Nessy Learning
Dyslexia Support | Literacy Support | Nessy Learning | Nessy
Games, spelling support, reading intervention, and home learning.

Dyslexia Scotland
Dyslexia ScotlandDyslexia Scotland - Empowering people with dyslexia to reach their full potential
Practical support, webinars, and school guidance for families.

Thank you for your time this morning

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