

Birkdale Primary School

Dyslexia Policy

2023-2024



We are accredited as a 'Dyslexia Friendly School'
('Dyslexia Friendly Status' achieved in December 2015)

Mission Statement

"Attainment through Caring, Challenge & Creativity"

- Where Caring and respect for others are the responsibility of all who belong here. So that we may grow to understand our individual uniqueness and learn to love and respect the world in which we live.
- Where the potential within us all is encouraged to flourish without fear or prejudice. So that we may learn to become all that we are meant to be.
- Where creativity has a pre-eminent place in the life and the work of the school. So that we may celebrate our own achievements and those of others.

Statement of Aims

For many children their journey through education presents them with opportunities which may not be repeated. We are acutely aware of the need to ensure that each child makes the most of these opportunities. We want to create an environment where they feel confident and secure, which they are happy to come to each day, a place to which they feel they can contribute and where their contribution will be valued.

At Birkdale Primary School we aim to include all children and ensure that all their needs are fully met.

This policy uses the term Specific Learning Difficulties to describe a combination of strengths and weaknesses which can affect the learning process. Specific Learning Difficulties encompass difficulties with reading, spelling and writing (dyslexia), difficulties with numeracy (dyscalculia) and difficulties with coordination (dyspraxia). A child with Specific Learning Difficulties could have difficulties in one or any combination of these areas.

In this policy we recognise that all Specific Learning Difficulties can seriously hinder pupils' learning, confidence, self-esteem and engagement with school. We also recognise, however, that dyslexia and literacy difficulties have a strong focus in schools because of the key role that reading and writing have in accessing information and demonstrating knowledge and understanding.

At Birkdale Primary School we see 'dyslexia friendly' schools as a way to improve the experiences and learning of children with Specific Learning Difficulties, as well as having benefits for other children.

Dyslexia is a continuum, with no clear cut off points, but the percentage of the population severely affected by dyslexia has been estimated as ranging between 4% and 15%. It is not necessary to carry out a specialist assessment and diagnose every child on the continuum.

We feel, at Birkdale, that it is important that we focus on the inclusion and learning of this group of pupils, differentiating for them so that they can access the whole curriculum.

"a focus on identifying weaknesses rather than celebrating strengths can result in an emphasis on remediation by specialists rather than resolution by knowledgeable class and subject teachers... this places responsibility for remediation on the SENCo and diverts attention away from the mainstream classroom which is, after all, the place where dyslexic students spend most of their time."

(Dyslexia Friendly Schools pack, BDA)

This is not to say that pupils with dyslexia will not find it hard to learn some skills, or that they will not need additional intervention, but that we have adjusted our approach across school because:

"Teaching 'harder' does not address persistent learning difficulties, though teaching differently does. The most effective response to persistent difficulties is to acknowledge that 'if they don't learn the way we teach them, we must teach them the way they learn'."

(Dyslexia Friendly Schools pack, BDA).

At Birkdale Primary School all the teachers teach in a dyslexia friendly way. This includes: using dyslexia friendly fonts and paper, dyslexia friendly backgrounds on the interactive whiteboard, avoiding unnecessary copying from the board, providing alternative methods of recording, providing a multisensory curriculum and celebrating achievements across the whole curriculum equally.

Well founded intervention is put in place to address the needs of children who are not reaching their potential. This is taught in a very multisensory way to address the needs of dyslexic pupils. This is closely monitored by a specialist dyslexia teacher and the school SENDCo.

We are also aware that a small minority of children will require specialist help. If we have concerns about a child's progress, a specialist teacher in school will assess and plan for their needs.

For some children, that are not making expected progress despite early intervention, a full standardised assessment will be carried out to identify areas of strength and weakness. This will make recommendations to class teachers of adaptations that can be made to support learning. This will be carried out by the SENDCo or an educational psychologist,

We believe that parents make a valuable contribution to the education of their child and therefore we believe that it is important that we work in partnership with you to ensure that your child makes good progress. We have an open- door policy and therefore if you have any concerns at all that your child has a Specific learning Difficulty we are always ready to listen.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governors annually.

Date for Review: Summer 2023