

Secondary Age Classroom Strategies

If schools can get the strategies of quality first teaching in place it will reduce the difficulties for the majority of pupils and will help identify the remaining groups and individuals with greater needs.

(Rose Report, DfE, 2009, page 48)

Included below is a Secondary Classroom Checklist, of Quality First Teaching strategies and resources that will enable all dyslexic pupils to access the curriculum more easily.

Many of these strategies are inclusive practice and can be equally beneficial for the majority of pupils including those with other learning needs.

Schools need to share this list with staff to identify what is already provided and what other strategies and classroom practice needs to be adjusted as whole school policy. The checklist may also provide a further measure of the impact of your school's development work with dyslexia.

Inclusive & Dyslexia Friendly Primary Classrooms		✓Tick the ones you already offer, highlight some you can do this term
Classroom environment		Examples
1	A welcoming environment	Bright, motivating, signs in a variety of languages where needed, calm, non-threatening, clear rules and routines taught, displayed and praised when observed, (catch me ...) a quiet distraction free area. "I think I need to explain it better or in a different way" instead of 'you weren't listening!'
2	A comfortable environment	Temperature, lighting, appropriate furniture, access to drinking water, fresh air, room to move, can all pupils see the teacher, board, displays etc.
3	A celebration of strengths	Not just of pupils' writing but models, ideas, behaviour, leadership, motivation charts, creative and sporting challenges and successes
4	Symbols / pictures used or other formats (language) to support written information	For example use icons, symbols or digital images for resources in classrooms, notices around the school, menus in the dining hall, purpose of rooms etc.
5	Support to facilitate multi-sensory and independent learning	Resources accessible on tables and walls: word banks, whiteboards and pens, access to concrete aids, table top illustrated glossaries and key words, self-corrective resources, self-help resources, differentiated or highlighted text
6	Special equipment for those who need it	Left handed scissors, pencil grips, fidget balls, writing slope, coloured overlays for reading, non-slip rulers
7	Clear labels with pictures or photos for classroom resources or subject areas	Pictorial labels & colour coding to help identify resources. Labelled diagrams Learner friendly fonts (e.g. Sassoon, Comic Sans) information written in lower case
8	Learner friendly seating arrangements	Facing the front, close to the front, study buddy, space for movement if needed, writing slope or file on end to create one, grouped for ability or task not low reading age!
9	Actions to help relieve visual stress and aid visual clarity	Colour backgrounds to Interactive White Board (IWB), useful tools on IWB such as spotlight and reveal, coloured paper Coloured overlays for reading Use: a variety of colours on the board to separate lines, sections or columns, use double line space between or in paragraphs to break up text, lower case words <u>not</u> CAPITAL LETTERS in learner friendly fonts
10	Visual aids/ timetables to help organisation / memory, structure of lesson / day	Symbols or digital images as reminders, colour coding for subjects and subject information, Use of digital/sand timers or IWB timers for tasks/tests

During Lessons

Inclusive & Dyslexia Friendly Primary Classrooms		✓Tick the ones you already offer, highlight some you can do this term
Classroom environment		Examples
1	Clear objectives & success criteria	Shared, displayed and discussed and success criteria adapted if necessary
2	Regular opportunities to show understanding or potential difficulties	Traffic Light cards, thumbs up, tell a friend how to.... Assessment for learning questions and techniques
3	Opportunities for pupils to demonstrate strengths	Opportunities to demonstrate creative, leadership, problem solving, sporting, musical, debating, dramatic, verbal, visuo-spatial skills
4	Regular use of audio/visual aids and ICT as an alternative form of accessing information, learning and recording	Digital camera, video camera, digital recorders, talking word processors e.g. DocsPlus (Crick), Read&Write (Texthelp) etc Text to speech tools and onscreen word banks
5	New/technical/difficult vocabulary introduced, explained, displayed and referred to	Table-top glossaries, displays, posters, word banks, subject specific dictionaries
6	Help available to support processing, sequencing and memory	Time to process questions and oral information before responding, large topic map of course that you are following with a 'You are here' movable arrow, post it notes, instructions on language master, talking word processor, memo cards, small whiteboards
7	Tasks that reduce the barriers to writing and offer options of alternative forms of recording	Mind maps, computer based recording such as Clicker grids, DocsPlus, predictive text, digital books, labelled diagrams, bullet points, tables, charts, demo on whiteboard using <i>record</i> facility, use of writing frames, planners or planning software (e.g. Inspiration, has speech support and converts visual plans to linear text) Give plenty of time to process and organise written information, extra time for any written tasks, opportunities to discuss and plan, short written or verbal instructions, use the digital recording facility on computers for pupils to make their own recordings instead of or to support a writing outcome Produce PowerPoint presentations to demonstrate knowledge and understanding
8	Provide opportunities to work independently with self-corrective activities	Speech supported ICT, self-corrective games and tasks
9	Plenty of time to process and organise spoken information or instructions	Short instructions, visual cues, task management boards, language master card instructions, pictorial information to support spoken work
10	Reducing the homework load	Manageable / relevant vocabulary or spellings to learn, alternative forms of recording offered, minimal writing / reading, as it will take 3x longer Set times e.g. as much as you can do in 30 minutes and ask parent to sign off at that point. Homework notes available on school intranet, homework buddies, time to get HW written down or given direct already written
11	Reduce the reading load	Highlighting key text, copy and paste text into talking WP, e.g. Clicker Writer or DocsPlus bullet points rather than full paragraphs, visual information not just text, digital books, CDs, videos Line trackers, overlays, IWB tools such as spotlight and reveal Use the digital recording facility on computers to record instructions or texts that can be heard Record instructions on memo microphone
12	Sensitive marking of work	Marking to agreed success criteria, constructive help with spellings etc. Give next step to make progress, verbal feedback when possible "Use a dictionary" is not helpful to a dyslexic who does not know A-Z

Use of Language

Questions	Answers
Questions pitched to challenge all abilities and alternatives made to invite a response	Adjust questions to differentiate, multiple choice, can you think of 3 things you would like to, give me 5 ways
Questions used to ensure others are listening and on task	Who agrees with? Does anyone want to ask another question about...?
Use the language of success Use the language of possibility Use the language of hope	Learners may express limits to their achievements with phrases such as "I'm no good at..." and "I always get X wrong". Support a climate of greater possibility by the language you use in response, such as "yes you did get it a bit mixed up but let's see which bit is causing you problems" Create an ethos where it is acceptable for pupil to say "I'll try but I need some help..." rather than "I cannot do it...". Support this by using phrases such as "You can do it...", and "What helps you do it?"

Further approaches

Further approaches that could be used include:

- Observing performance on nonsense words and irregular words
- Diagnostic tests such as a running reading record to look for error types
- Simple assessments of phonological processing skills and visual discrimination
- Commercially-produced screening tests, including computerised activities that assess (for example) auditory sequential memory or visuo-spatial memory

The overall importance of the emotional climate cannot be underestimated. School staff and parents/carers need to be understanding and positive, identifying strengths and showing that these strengths are genuinely valued and used in teaching and learning strategies.

Staff who are directly involved with teaching a pupil who may have dyslexia will need to monitor:

- The pupil's progress towards specific targets on their provision map using assessment for learning strategies
- Strategies for removing barriers to learning and providing full access to learning objectives in the classroom where literacy is not the main focus
- The variety of teaching styles they are using and whether these match the individual strengths and interests of the pupil
- Manageable systems for tracking the pupil's progress over time
- The quality of the relationship between adult and pupil
- The effect of the assessment and intervention procedures on the pupil's self-esteem
- Procedures for listening to the pupil's view and actively involving the pupil in decisions that affect them
- Effective, constructive and positive liaising and working together with parents/carers