

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND LEARNING DISABILITIES AND/OR DIFFICULTIES POLICY



Updated January 2010 – Sue Symons
To be reviewed August 2010

Contents

Section 1:

SEN/LDD Provision

- Aims and Objectives
- Definition: Children's Act 1989, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Education 1996 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- Co-ordination of Provision
- Admission arrangements
- Specialist Provision
- Facilities for LDD/SEN pupils
- Allocation of LDD/SEN Resources

Section 2:

Policies for Identification, Assessment and Review

- Identification of pupils with LDD/SEN
- To Monitor
- Early Years Action and School Action
- Early Years Action Plus and School Action Plus
- The LDD/SEN Register
- Assessment and Review
- Annual Review of a Statement of Special Educational Needs
- Access to the curriculum and integration
- Evaluation and review of the School's LDD/SEN Policy
- Arrangements for complaints

Section 3

Staffing Policies and Contact with Outside Agencies

- In-Service Training
- Partnership with Parents
- Links with other Schools
- Links with Outside Agencies
- Recognising Learning Difficulties and Disabilities/ Special Needs

Section 1: Special Educational Provision

Aims and Objectives

The aims for children with Special Educational Needs or Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities at Hall Grove School are the same as those for *all* children. The culture, practice, management and deployment of resources are designed to ensure all children's needs are met. The expectations are high and we strive to ensure that all children are enabled to achieve their full potential.

Hall Grove is known to be a caring environment that aims to support and encourage families and individuals through times of difficulty. Recent school inspections have especially praised the ethos of the school and the quality of the pastoral care.

We recognize that at times, within some children's development, additional support to aid progress may be required. Whilst we do not offer a full blown Special Educational Needs (SEN/LDD) unit, the support for children who need help aims to be effective and proactive. We do however adopt a balanced view of what additional help individuals can, or should, be given, recognising that it has a major impact on the costs to parents and on the motivation of pupils to become independent learners.

The main objective of the Special Educational Needs or Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (SEN/LDD) Policy is to make provision for those children who have difficulty in progressing and learning within the ordinary arrangements of the school, and therefore require their curriculum provision to be additional to, or otherwise different from, that generally made for other children of their age.

This policy has been written to take into account the SEN provisions of the Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA).

Definition of Special Educational Needs in the Education Act of 1996 state:

A child has Special Educational Needs only if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child has a learning difficulty if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind provide for children of the same age in schools within the area of the Local Education Authority;
- c) are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at a) or b) above or would do if special educational provision was not made for them.

However, the phrase 'pupils with special educational needs' should now only be used to refer to pupils aged 5 to 16 who have statements.

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of communication at home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Definitions in the Children Act 1989 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 state:

- a) A child is disabled if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed. (Children Act 1989)
- b) A person has a disability for the purpose of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (Disability Discrimination Act 1995)

SEN Co-ordinator (SENCo)

The SEN Co-ordinator at Hall Grove School is Mrs Sue Symons.

Co-ordination of Provision

The role of the SENCo is to:-

- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN/LDD policy
- Liaise with and advise fellow teachers
- Manage SEN/LDD teachers and some learning support assistants including timetabling
- Oversee the records of all children with learning difficulties or disabilities including Individual Education Plans (IEP.s)
- Contribute to the in-service training of the staff
- Chair and take minutes for any SEN/LDD meetings including Annual Reviews for Statemented pupils
- Liaise with any external agencies e.g. Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, LEA's SEN/LDD Department etc.
- Update and circulate the SEN/LDD register
- Attend relevant training courses and conferences
- Track pupils to identify any new pupils at risk
- Track SEN/LDD pupils to ensure progress is being made

Admission Arrangements for Pupils with LDD

The Pre-Prep section (Reception – Year 2) is largely non selective, although children with substantial learning or behavioural difficulties would not be admitted if it were deemed to be in their best interests to go elsewhere. The main additional resource comes from the employment of a team of support staff who underpin the work of the classroom teachers.

Children are normally accepted into the Middle School (Years 3 – 6) on the clear understanding that they may reasonably aspire to a minimum of Level 4 attainment aged 11 within an academic environment. In practice a very high proportion of pupils achieve Level 5, representing attainment of some eighteen months ahead of their age. Weaker children are sometimes admitted if they can demonstrate that they have other strengths (sport, music, art etc) and show that they can apply themselves without disruption to the academic ethos of the school. Very occasionally parents

may be advised that Hall Grove is not an appropriate setting for a child and he/she will move to a school with a specialist SEN/LDD unit.

Our experience is that children of this age are best helped by splitting teaching groups for some or all of the Core Subjects (Maths, English and Science) into graded sets according to ability and need. We also provide specialist tuition for Music, P.E./Games and French, together with technical support for ICT lessons, which takes pressure off the classroom teacher in delivering the full curriculum.

Some children will receive regular individual tuition (in or outside of school) with a dyslexia trained specialist, Speech and Language or Occupational Therapist for which the parents pay.

Children are accepted into the Upper School (Years 6 – 8) on the basis of clear evidence that they will find a course of study leading to Common Entrance at 13 to be satisfying and achievable, at the level of attainment that is appropriate to them. Parents are advised carefully about the suitability of senior schools, bearing in mind that the Independent Senior School sector provides for the full academic range, and families are encouraged to set realistic targets. Occasionally the study of French or Latin is deemed to be of less value to the child and the time devoted to these subjects can be used to work at other topics. The school provides, at no cost to the parents, additional study classes for potential scholars and CE candidates, and there are special tutorials in study skills in preparation of final exams.

Some children will also receive individual specialist tuition for which the parents pay. Occasionally pupils in Upper School will also receive extra reading practice or support in lessons provided by the school.

The following action is taken to ensure that the needs of a child with LDD joining Hall Grove are met:

- SENCo and/or Headmaster meet the parents and pupil
- If appropriate the SENCo and/or class teacher may contact the previous setting to discuss the child's LDD with previous teachers/practitioners/others
- Written information is requested from the past setting/school and acted upon
- All relevant information is shared with the new class teacher so that he/she is aware of the child's needs
- SENCo advises class teacher of any assessments that may need to be carried out
- IEP written and shared with parents
- Child is added to LDD register

Specialist Provision

The SEN/LDD Co-ordinator has many years of experience in class teaching and coordinating Learning Support. Relevant courses and conferences designed to develop knowledge and understanding of special needs, new legislation and current good practice will be attended by the SENCo. All teachers and Learning Support Assistants will be advised and guided by the SENCo and will also attend any relevant out of school courses if it will be of benefit to the pupils they are supporting. The school employs a trained Special Needs Teacher to provide individual remedial teaching for some pupils, the cost of which is borne by the parents. This teacher

liaises closely with form teachers, parents and the SENCo and contributes to the writing of IEPs. Individual tuition is at the recommendation of the SENCo or parents, after discussion with the form teacher.

As part of our commitment to helping all the children in the most appropriate way, in-service Staff training has recently covered Learning Styles, Autism, Mind Mapping, Multiple Intelligence and the use of Brain Gym exercises. Staff are aware of differentiation techniques and are encouraged to employ a variety of methods within the classroom to address the needs of all of the children.

Facilities for SEN/LDD Pupils

There is a small teaching room next to the Science Laboratory but other than that there are no facilities at Hall Grove that are specifically for pupils with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities or Special Educational Needs.

Allocation of SEN/LDD Resources

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs

The funding which accompanies a Statement of Special Educational Needs is used as specified in Section 3 of the Statement. This may involve the employment of a Specialist Practitioner or Learning Support Assistant for a given number of hours per week, to work solely with that child.

Children with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities.

There are no specific resources or funding available for pupils with LDD who do not have a Statement. However, small classes and sets, and full-time Teaching Assistants in Key Stage 1 enables individual children, who have been identified as having a Learning Difficulties and/or Disability to be provided with an appropriate amount of support. The Middle School is able to utilise an additional teacher to provide in-class support for individuals or small groups in Literacy and Numeracy lessons. If parents request it, the SENCo can organise individual tuition for some pupils by a Specialist Teacher, but funding for this is provided by the parents of the pupils involved.

Section 2: Policies for Identification, Assessment and Review

Identification of Pupils with Special Needs or Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities.

The early identification of pupils with special educational needs is of the utmost importance. Action can then be taken immediately, when a child is likely to be most responsive, and when special provision is less likely to cause disruption to the child's learning and to that of other members of the class.

A list of the areas in which a child may be initially identified as having Special Educational Needs is given below. It is followed by more specific checkpoints that may disclose particular learning difficulties.

Areas for Consideration

Cognition and Learning Difficulties

General learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia or dyspraxia.

Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties

Children who are withdrawn or isolated, disruptive and disturbing, hyperactive and lacking concentration; those with immature social skills; and those presenting challenging behaviours arising from other complex special needs.

Physical Disability (as defined by The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001)

The sensory range extends from profound and permanent deafness or visual impairment through to lesser levels of loss, which may be only temporary. Physical impairments may arise from physical, neurological or metabolic causes that only require appropriate access to educational facilities and equipment; others may lead to more complex learning and social needs; a few children will have multi-sensory difficulties some with associated physical difficulties.

Communication and Interaction Difficulties

Speech and language delay, impairments or disorders, dyslexia, dyspraxia, hearing impairment and those demonstrating features within the autistic spectrum.

Checkpoints for the Identification of Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

Early Years:

- New admission form
- Information from parents
- Information/records from Playgroups/Nurseries/Pre-Schools
- Information from outside agencies
- Class teacher concern
- Termly class teacher assessments/on-going teacher observations
- Portfolio of work/Assessment folder: Rec-Year 2
- Foundation Stage Profile
- Annual school reports
- PIPS

Key Stage 1, 2 and 3

- Information from parents
- New admission form
- Information/records from previous school/class teacher
- Information from outside agencies
- Class teacher concern
- Termly class teacher assessments/on-going teacher observations
- Portfolio of work/Assessment folder: Rec-Year 2
- School report
- Standardised Reading Test and Spelling Test results:
- Year 2 and 6 SAT results
- CATs/PIPs scores

Class teachers inform the SENCo of any children who are identified as having a need. Following discussions between the class teacher and the SENCo, the level of intervention required to support a child's identified need is agreed and the child is then placed on the SEN/LDD register at the appropriate level and the relevant action is taken.

The levels of SENLDD provision are set out below: -

1. To Monitor

At this level children are supported with some differentiated work opportunities and extra in-class support when necessary. These pupils will appear on a 'To Monitor' list kept by the SENCo. In Pre-Prep and Middle School, the class teacher and SENCo regularly review the progress of pupils who are placed on the 'To Monitor' list. The strategies currently being used are reviewed and decisions are taken as to how these can be developed to support the child's learning effectively. The class teacher's concern and the action to be taken are discussed with the parents. In the Upper School, Study Tutors have the academic overview of the progress and attainment of all the tutees in their group. They should be aware of children in their group who are on the 'To Monitor' list and liaise appropriately with staff (individually and at Upper School Meetings) and parents. This list of children is renewed termly at meetings with Form Teachers and the SENCo.

2. Early Years Action and School Action

If despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities and some additional support a child fails to make satisfactory progress, further discussions with the SENCo and parents will take place and the child will be placed on the *Pupils with IEP's* section of the SEN/LDD register. The SENCo and class teacher will consider all the available information about the child and in some cases, with parental consent, will seek additional information from outside agencies. The SENCo may carry out an initial basic assessment to provide additional guidance and advice on the most effective way of supporting the child concerned. This information would be shared with the parents and all relevant teachers.

An IEP will then be drawn up detailing the special provision to be made and targets to be achieved within a specified timescale. This will be shared with the parents. The pupil is then referred to as receiving **Early Years Action** for those in Reception and **School Action** for those in Years 1 and above.

In the Upper School, Study Tutors have the academic overview of the progress and attainment of all the tutees in their group. They should be aware of children in their group who are on the 'School Action' register and liaise appropriately with staff (individually and at Upper School Meetings) and parents. Before an IEP is to be drawn up, parents are informed of the process involved. An IEP is then formulated with key members of staff – usually this will include the teachers of the core subjects, the Study Tutor, the Head of Year and the SENCo. This information is then shared with the parents through the Study Tutor and/or SENCo and a copy of the IEP is sent home. The IEP is discussed between the Study Tutor and the child. The IEP is disseminated to all relevant staff by the SENCo and the contents of the IEP are reviewed by the SENCo twice yearly.

Triggers for Intervention through Early Years Action

Despite receiving appropriate early education experience the child:

- Makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are particularly targeted to improve the child's identified area of weakness;
- Continues working in certain areas at levels significantly below those expected for children of a similar age;
- Presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which have not been improved by behaviour management techniques;
- Has sensory or physical difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment;
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and needs specific intervention in order to access learning.

Triggers for Intervention through School Action

Despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- Makes little or no progress when teaching approaches are targeted to improve the child's identified area of weakness;
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and/or numeracy skills that result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas;
- Presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behavioural management techniques usually employed in the school;

- Has sensory or physical difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment;
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

3. Early Years Action Plus and School Action Plus

If, despite receiving intervention at the Early Years Action or School Action level, a child does not make the progress expected, then the SENCo will call upon advice from outside agencies (e.g. Speech and Language Therapist). Following discussions with parents an Educational Psychologist may also be asked to carry out a formal assessment. The information gathered will then be collated and discussed with the parents and all relevant teachers. A new IEP and/or a change in the educational provision will follow. The pupil is then considered to be receiving **Early Years Action Plus** (Reception) or **School Action Plus** (Years 1- 8) support.

In the Upper School, Study Tutors have the academic overview of the progress and attainment of all the tutees in their group. They should be aware of children in their group who are on the 'School Action Plus' register and liaise appropriately with staff (individually and at Upper School Meetings) and parents.

Triggers for Intervention through Early Years Action Plus

This is likely to occur following consultation with the SENCo and parents if the child:

- *Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period of time;*
- *Continues to work at an early years curriculum substantially below that expected of children of a similar age;*
- *Has emotional and/or behavioural difficulties that significantly interfere with the child's own learning or the learning of the rest of the group;*
- *Has sensory or physical difficulties and needs additional equipment and/or requires direct support or advice from specialist practitioners;*
- *continues to have communication and/or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.*

Triggers for Intervention through School Action Plus

This is likely to occur following consultation with the SENCo and parents if the child:

- *Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period of time;*
- *Continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age;*
- *Continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and/or numeracy skills;*
- *Has emotional and/or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with their own learning or that of the class, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme;*

- *Has sensory or physical needs and requires additional equipment and/or regular advice/visits providing direct intervention to the pupil or staff, by a specialist service;*
- *Has on-going communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.*

For a very few pupils, the help they receive through Early Years/School Action Plus will not be sufficient to enable the child to make progress. In these cases they will be referred for a statutory assessment. If the LEA considers the need for a Statement of Special Educational Need, the school will discuss the proposals with the parents and if possible, appropriate provision will be made, monitored and reviewed.

Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Register

Children identified as having Special Educational Needs or Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities are listed on the school's SEN/LDD register. This register contains two sections; *Pupils with statements, Pupils with IEP's*. The register includes the pupil's name, year group, form teacher, Stage of Intervention, review date, a brief outline of the area of concern, support received and whether any specialist assessment reports have been carried out. It is updated twice yearly and distributed to all form teachers.

Assessment and Review

Assessment and review are inextricably linked, as the review process follows on from the assessment of provision made during discussions between the class teacher, pupil, SENCo, parents and any outside agencies (if applicable).

In the majority of cases, the assessment indicates success and progress in relation to the number of targets achieved. The class teacher, pupil, SENCo, parents and any outside agencies involved can then decide on new and realistic targets for the child, taking into account his/her age, ability and area/s of concern.

A review of the educational provision will also be made at this stage. If the current provision is not suitable or sufficient to bring about the achievement of the new targets, then arrangements for new provision will need to be discussed and agreed upon by all parties.

Occasionally assessment will indicate a lack of progress, if some or all of the targets have not been met. The class teacher, pupil, SENCo, parents and any outside agencies involved will discuss the possible reasons for this and will use their conclusions as a basis for planning the way forward – perhaps with more realistic targets or a change in the educational provision. Advice from a relevant outside agency may be sought at this, or any stage of the review process.

At the end of the assessment and review process, the SENCo in liaison with formteachers/subject teachers will write an IEP. This will be signed by the class teacher, SENCo and parents. A copy of this IEP will be given to all parties involved.

There will be some children who, when their cases have been assessed and reviewed, will have achieved the targets set for them and are working at a level comparable with

their peers. In such cases, it may be decided that they will no longer require special educational provision. They will remain on the SEN/LDD register for three terms in the *Pupil's to Monitor*. Following this one term, if progress continues to be satisfactorily achieved they will be removed from the SEN/LDD register.

Annual Review of a Statement of Special Educational Need

In addition to the reviews carried out at the end of each term, any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will have that Statement reviewed annually, usually on or around the anniversary of its issue. The Annual Review takes the form of a meeting with the parents, Head or Deputy Head teacher, class teacher, SENCo, and any outside agencies (e.g. Speech and Language Therapist) involved. A representative from the LEA's Special Educational Needs Department is also invited. Invitations to attend the Annual Review along with all the relevant reports are sent to the parents and other involved parties a minimum of two weeks before the date set for the Annual Review.

The Annual Review meeting is an opportunity for all involved parties to discuss the child's progress and to set new targets and action points. The provision detailed in the current Statement is discussed and amended if necessary. Following the meeting, a summary of the discussion, new targets and agreed action points are forwarded to all concerned parties including the LEA's Special Educational Needs representative.

Access to the Curriculum and Integration

All children at Hall Grove, including those with Special Educational Needs, are entitled to, and shall have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Framework alongside the National Curriculum. Teacher's plans should aim to recognise the needs of all children to ensure progression, relevance and differentiation. Most support work is provided within the classroom and is organised in such a way as to ensure that any SEN/LDD child covers, where appropriate, the same work as the rest of the class. In some cases the nature of the support requires a child to be withdrawn from the classroom in order to receive distinct and individual tuition. When this is the case, every effort is made to ensure that the child is given the opportunity to cover work carried out in his/her absence, and that it is not the same subject missed every time.

Care is taken to ensure that children who receive special provision do not feel 'different' from their peers. Pupils with special needs are included in, contribute to and have equal opportunities to join in all school activities in the same way as any other child. This includes all extra curricula activities, sports and school trips.

Evaluation of the Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Policy

Evaluating the success of the SEN/LDD policy:

- the policy has been developed, revised and agreed upon by the staff; everyone is therefore familiar with it and is able to work effectively with it.
- the policy is reviewed regularly (at least annually) and all staff are involved in this process.
- evaluating pupil progress will indicate the need or not for revisions to the policy to be made

- evaluating parental satisfaction will indicate the need or not for revisions to be made to the policy
- Should revisions need to be made, they are discussed with staff and the Head and Deputy Head Teacher and then appropriate action is taken and the policy updated.

Arrangements for Complaints

By following the procedures set out in the SEN/LDD policy, we aim to ensure that a complaint would be rare. Occasionally a particular concern may be raised which would be dealt with as follows:

1. Class teacher – the teacher of the child concerned is the member of staff who retains ultimate responsibility for that child, and it is to him/her that any concerns should be addressed initially. The class teacher will endeavour, with the advice of the SENCo or other members of staff, if deemed appropriate, to resolve the problem.
2. SENCo – if the class teacher is unable to resolve the issues raised, then the SENCo may be called upon to intervene and will attempt to resolve the concerns.
3. Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher – if the class teacher or SENCo are unable to satisfy these concerns, then the Head or Deputy Head Teacher may be called upon to resolve the issue/s.

Section 3: Staffing Policies and Contact with Outside Agencies

In-Service Training

The SEN Co-ordinator will attend any SEN/LDD courses or conferences that are appropriate to further developing SEN/LDD knowledge and skills. Other staff, both teaching and non-teaching will be encouraged to attend SEN/LDD courses where relevant, and will also be involved in SEN/LDD training or guidance from the SENCo in school. If a particular need is identified as requiring training or advice from an outside agency, then training sessions could be arranged with, for example an Occupational Therapist or Speech and Language Therapist.

Partnership with Parents

At Hall Grove we believe we have effective relationships with all our parents. We recognise the important role they play in the education of their children and actively encourage their participation in their children's learning. Because of the nature of SEN/LDD provision, the parents of children with SEN/LDD are often more closely involved in the day-to-day learning of their children and have more regular contact with the class teacher. It is very important that parents are informed at the earliest opportunity that there are concerns about their child, whether it is because of lack of progress due to a learning difficulty or because of behaviour problems. Keeping parents regularly and comprehensively informed about the nature of their child's special educational need and the school-based response for their child, making clear the purpose of intervention and the programme of action to be undertaken, will, initially be the responsibility of the class teacher. Copies of current IEP's are provided to all parents of SEN/LDD children on the SEN/LDD register. It is also policy to ensure that parents are given the opportunity to express their views and knowledge about their child, and how best to support the child's special educational needs.

At each stage of further intervention, the parents and SENCo would be closely involved, and during these discussions the parents would be actively encouraged to work in partnership with the school, under the guidance of the class teacher, to help their child.

An assessment by an Educational Psychologist may, in some cases, be thought necessary and helpful in clarifying a child's specific strengths and weaknesses. This is always discussed fully with the parents and their agreement sought, and advice given, as to how they can go about getting an assessment. If the parents prefer, the SENCo can make the necessary arrangements for an assessment on their behalf. Following an assessment, parents are invited to discuss the contents of the assessment report and the action to be taken with the class teacher and/or SENCo.

Links with Other Schools

The majority of pupils at Key Stage 1 transfer onto Key Stage 2 at Hall Grove. It is therefore policy that the teachers in Year 2 pass on all relevant information about children on the SEN/LDD register to the Year 3 teachers at the end of the Summer

Term. A full history of the children's special educational needs provision or learning difficulties and/or disabilities and progress is provided, along with recommendations for future educational provision and support.

All relevant information in the form of reports, statements and IEP.'s for any SEN/LDD children who leave Hall Grove is forwarded to their new school.

There are no links with any specific 'Special' schools, but should the need arise for advice to be sought on a pupil with a particular area of difficulty, then it would be the responsibility of the SENCo and class teacher to make and develop contact with a relevant Special school.

Links with Outside Agencies

Hall Grove School has links with a number of outside agencies upon whom we are able to call for advice and support. The list below includes the names and telephone numbers of these agencies.

Mrs Brenda Sykes
Specific Learning Difficulties teacher
01276 477472

Mrs Catherine Elsey
Occupational Therapist
01276 476738

Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre
01252 792400

Mrs Tanya Tatham
Speech and Language Therapist
01784 740996

Dyslexia Action (Egham)
01784 222325

Surrey County Council Special Educational Needs
01483 518110

Recognising Special Needs/Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

Dyslexia

If a group of the following symptoms persists beyond the time when the average child has grown out of them they *may* indicate dyslexia and the SENCO should be consulted.

Reading and Spelling:

- confusion of letters similar in shape: for example, d,b, or u,n
- confusion of letters similar in sound: for example, v,f,th; also vowels
- reversals: for example, was - saw
- transposals: for example, left - felt; auction - caution
- omission of word or words or insertion of words
- repetition of word
- or phrase
- changing word order: she is - is she; squadron-leader Dicey - squadron-Dicey leader.
- confusion of small words: of, for, from

Reading

- difficulty in keeping correct place on line
- difficulty in switching from end of line to beginning of next line
- difficulty in pronouncing even familiar words: merians - remains
- no expression, or intonation in wrong place
- difficulty in understanding a passage even if correctly read
- if reader looks away from page he will be slow in finding his place again
- faulty auditory sequency: Roman merains
- mispronouncing some words: for example, 'rember' for remember
- over-dependence on picture/context cues

Writing

- foreshortening: rember – remember; fusion of letters; repetition of a word or words
- capitals left out or in wrong places; i's not dotted, t's not crossed, l's crossed
- badly-formed letters or, if shape is correct, formed in unconventional way - even though correct formation has been taught
- difficulty in keeping on the line; each line starting further from the margin
- new paragraph not indented; omission of punctuation
- confusion over punctuation and syntax; errors with syntax
- spells words differently in the same piece of writing

Other Indications

- confusion between right and left; east and west, up and down, etc.
- difficulty in sequencing: alphabet, months of year, numbers, words in a sentence, etc.
- difficulty in learning tables
- slow in looking up words in a dictionary, or names in a telephone book
- poor concentration, tires quickly; holds pen too tightly so whole arm tires
- difficulty in interpreting other symbols: figures, notes in music, morse, etc.
- other bad spellers in the family
- left-handedness or mixed laterality in the child or in members of his family

- particular difficulty copying from blackboard
- difficulty generating/detecting rhyme/rhythm
- difficulty with alliteration

If you identify a cluster of these characteristics in a pupil then discuss the case with the SENCO or with the pupil's English teacher.

Dyspraxia

- Poor organisational skills
- Poor motor skills, eg difficulty balancing, walking on toes, on insides or outsides of feet with arms in a 'natural' position, touching end of nose with index finger with eyes closed, jumping with feet together and arms in 'natural' position
- Poor handwriting skills - slow and laborious; difficulty copying from board
- Speech may be slurred; unable to remember and follow instructions
- Appears to ignore instructions (may not filter out background noise)
- May show behavioural difficulties which can cause own work and others in class to suffer
- Appears bright and verbally articulate; difficulty relating to peers

Reading

Levels are often good, but tone of delivery can be bland and punctuation omitted.

Spelling

Levels are often weaker than chronological age.

Maths

Conceptual understanding may be age-appropriate but exhibits difficulties in recording on paper.

Emotional

Frequently complains of headaches, stomach aches, reluctance to come to school.

If you identify a cluster of these characteristics in a pupil then discuss the case with the SENCO.

AD/HD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)

There are 15 characteristics of AD/HD. According to the AD/HD Family Support Group UK, a child must have at least eight of these to be diagnosed. He must have shown them for at least six months and must have started showing them before the age of seven.

The 15 characteristics of AD/HD are as follows:-

- Often fidgets with hands or feet, or squirms in seat.
- Has difficulty remaining seated when required to do so.
- Is easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.
- Has difficulty awaiting turns, in games or group situations.
- Often blurts out answers to questions before they have been completed.
- Has difficulty following through on instructions from others (not due to oppositional behaviour or failure of comprehension).
- Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
- Often shifts from one uncompleted activity to another.
- Has difficulty playing quietly.
- Often talks excessively.
- Often interrupts or intrudes on others, eg butts into other children's games.

- Often does not seem to listen to what is being said to him or her.
- Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities at school, or at home (eg toys, books).
- Often engages in physically dangerous activities without considering possible consequences (not for the purpose of thrill-seeking), eg running into the street without looking.
- Often has an excellent long-term memory, but a very poor short-term memory.

Possible indicators of Asperger's Impairment

(Adapted from Autistic Triad of Impairment)

NB: The higher the number the more pronounced the handicap.

Social Interaction/Emotional Relationships/Empathy

1. Makes social contact but lacks understanding of subtle rules of social behaviour.
Finds it difficult to sustain friendships.
Lack of cooperation in groups.
2. Makes odd one-sided social approaches paying little or not attention to people they approach; bizarre interests e.g. timetables, electrical switches.
Does not know how to initiate friendships.
3. Passively accepts social contact/ approaches by others.
May seek comfort in a stereotyped way.
May reject physical contact.
Does not respond to adult direction.
4. Actively avoids other children.
Attacks other children when they approach.
Rejects physical contact.
Rarely seeks comfort at times of distress.
Shows physical attachment to well-known adults (often empty clinging) and may approach them for physical needs.
5. Aloof and indifferent to others; uses people or parts of them impersonally.
May be unaware of own identity.

Social Communication

1. Spontaneous but repetitive pedantry, concrete understanding and use of words and gestures.
Finds it hard to join in a conversation or a game.
2. Replies if approached.
Talks regardless of response of listeners and doesn't engage in reciprocal conversation. Makes socially inept remarks.
3. Makes factual comments, not part of social exchange and often irrelevant to the social context.
Poor understanding of gesture, expression, intonation, etc.
Does not respond to questions appropriately.

Uses stereotyped phrases.

4. Communicates to express own needs.
Does not exchange greetings.
Does not use language as a tool to pass information to others.
Can't talk about feelings or thoughts nor recognise feelings from non-verbal cues.
5. No communication.
Absence of any desire to communicate with others (may talk at people).
Lack of non-verbal communication.
Does not respond to own name.

Imagination

1. Appears to be able to recognise others' feelings but this is learnt rather than empathetic.
Always on edge of group.
Limited range of ideas.
2. Repetitive, stereotyped enacting of a rôle, but without variation or empathy.
Lack of understanding of the purpose of social play, social conversation, literature.
Has difficulties with sharing, very possessive of own things.
3. Uses dolls, toys correctly but limited, repetitive, uncreative play.
Play may seem very complex, but careful observation shows its rigidity and stereotyped nature.
Resists attempts to intervene in own play.
4. May copy actions of others mechanically, without real understanding of their meaning and purpose.
Attends to minor or trivial aspects of things in environment rather than the whole, eg one earring instead of whole person.
5. Copying and pretend play are absent.
Actively moves away or responds aggressively to adult-initiated play.

Restricted, Repetitive and Stereotyped Patterns of Activities, Interests and Behaviour (examples are given but the possible variations are endless)

1. Complex verbal or abstract repetitive activities.
Fascination with certain topics (eg timetables, movement of planets, repetitive questioning and demanding standard answers).
2. Complex routines (eg bedtime rituals, repetition of sequences of odd bodily movements).
Some resistance to maintain sameness.

3. Intense attachment to particular objects for no purpose (eg lining up objects, regular repeated patterns of objects, sounds, large collection of objects(eg bottles, pebbles, plastic bags)
4. Simple, object-directed (eg taps, scratches surfaces, spins objects, feels textures, switches lights.)
5. Simple, bodily directed (eg flicking fingers, rocking, head banging, face tapping, teeth grinding, body manipulation, self injury, grunting).

Anxiety when faced with uncertainty or change

1. Frequently asks for reassurance with regularly directed activities.
Seeks out familiar things when faced with a challenge.
Often wants to know what is happening next.
2. Seeks to maintain success.
Upset by minor changes eg detour on route to school.
Shows comfort habits (eg thumb sucking) or benign anxiety response (eg hand flapping during transition times.)
3. Shows distress when faced with minor changes
Resists change
4. Hits or bites if unfamiliar adult intervenes.
Throws tantrum if other than usual helper tries to direct activity.
Distress over small changes.
5. Self-injurious when faced with unexpected change.
Extreme distress over changes in small, non-functional details.

If you identify a cluster of these characteristics in a pupil then discuss the case with the SENCO