



Wiltshire Dyslexia Association

2024 - Issue 2



NEWS and ARTICLES

Welcome to the latest edition of our WDA newsletters



Exclusive BDA Members Discount

Using code **BDAMEM10**

Book Today

As a Local Dyslexia Association or/and a member of the British Dyslexia Association you can take advantage of a **10% discount** when you pre-book workshops at the **Dyslexia Show 2024**.

Use code **BDAMEM10** at checkout to claim your discount. There's an extensive range of workshops available, you will be required to [register](#) to view the full agenda and pre-book your choice of workshops..

We're exhibiting! So come and say hello - you can find us on **Stand C101**, we look forward to meeting you there!

Dyslexia Show is the UK's national exhibition dedicated to dyslexia and neurodiversity. On the 15th & 16th March 2024, Dyslexia Show at the NEC, Birmingham will attract a wide range of visitors seeking to connect with the community, find support, learn from experts, and meet the best suppliers of products and services to help them make informed choices.

It strives to foster a deeper insight into the various ways in which [education](#), [parents](#), the [workplace](#), and [individuals](#) themselves can offer support and awareness to those with dyslexia and neurodiversity.



Announcement ...

Dyslexia Awareness Week 2024 will take place **Monday 7th October - Sunday 13th October** and the theme will be #DAW24: What's your story?

We all need help sometimes.



Are you a parent or carer needing support? Are you a young person needing some advice?

For information on things to do, places to go, practical tips or who to talk to, All Together is a website with information and advice for you.



wiltshiretogether.org.uk/AllTogether



For anyone starting university this year . . .

Wiltshire Community Foundation offers grants to young people in Wiltshire and Swindon who need support with the costs of studying an undergraduate degree at university. The One Degree More bursary is £1,600 for each year of the course to help with general living expenses, course costs, books and equipment. It is now open for applications for those stating university this year.

Who is eligible to apply – young people can apply for a university bursary if they:

- are under 24 years old
- have lived in Wiltshire or Swindon for at least 2 years
- parents or guardians receive 2 means-tested benefits (2 elements of Universal Credit)
- eligible for funding through Student Finance England
- studying for first undergraduate degree at a UK university or college

Or

- are a young person in the care of Wiltshire or Swindon Borough Council (LAC)

Applications close on 5 April 2024. Download a flyer [here](#).



In some areas young people have been waiting more than two years for plan detailing help they require, Fol reveals

Hundreds of children with special educational needs have been waiting for a year or longer to access support, as local authorities across [England](#) buckle under the strain of the demands placed on them, the Guardian has learned.

Freedom of information requests found that in some local authorities, children and young people have been waiting more than two years to be issued with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) that details the support they require.

The Fol results suggest that across England more than 20,000 cases were waiting longer than the 20-week limit, and as many as 3,000 for a year or more.

Council leaders say that requests for EHCPs have surged in recent years while funding to meet the children's needs has not kept pace. Since 2019 the number of plans issued has risen by 72%, so that in 2023 more than 500,000 children and young people had EHCPs, but dedicated funding from central government for special education needs and disabilities (Send) has only risen by 42%.

Read full article and charts at:

[Hundreds of children with special needs wait a year for support in England | Special educational needs | The Guardian](#)



University of
Reading



**What are the research priorities for the dyslexia community?
Please help us find out!**

Researchers at the University of Reading and the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity are asking people with dyslexia and family members or caregivers about what their research priorities are, so that future research efforts can be guided towards the areas that matter most to the dyslexia community.

Who can take part?

People who are aged 18 years or over in the UK who:

- Have a diagnosis of dyslexia or self-identify as having dyslexia
OR
- Are a parent/caregiver/other family member of a person with a dyslexia diagnosis

What will I do if I take part?

You will complete a brief online survey which will take around 15 minutes. You will be asked to rate the importance of a range of research questions about dyslexia.

Find the survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YVR T3C9>



CONTACT

If you want to find out more please contact:

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[Lynn Greenwold](#) commented:

“Ofsted are planning new visits between spring and summer 2024 to understand how well children with SEND are prepared for adulthood. Let us hope they put some considerable focus on their support for developing literacy and numeracy. It is shocking the number of children leaving primary education unable to read well enough to access the secondary curriculum, much less be prepared for adult life thereafter. Numeracy must be underpinned with more concrete establishing of foundational skills before moving forward. Innumeracy is as disabling if not more so than illiteracy in adulthood.”

[New visits to understand how well children with SEND are prepared for adulthood](#)

Ofsted and the CQC have published guidance for the next series of thematic visits looking at how children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are being prepared for adulthood.

As part of the area SEND inspection arrangements, Ofsted and the CQC will carry out a series of in-depth reviews to explore a particular aspect of the SEND system between spring and summer 2024.

The visits will consider all phases of a child with SEND's transition to adulthood, from early years settings through to post-16 education, to get an in-depth picture of how preparation for adulthood (PFA) arrangements are working. These arrangements include any support delivered by local area partners across education, health and social care that focuses on the 4 key pathways for preparation for adulthood based on the '[SEND code of practice](#)' - employment, independent living, community inclusion and health.

Ofsted and the CQC will explore how local area partners work together to make sure their decisions are focused on young people's interests and aspirations. Evidence will be gathered from key stakeholders, including children and young people with SEND and their families.

Read on to see what topics inspectors will consider

Findings from the visits will be shared in a single national report in autumn 2024. This report will list all the areas visited but won't attribute findings to individual areas unless the area agrees to be identified.

The visits will not result in judgements about local areas. The overarching report will highlight examples of good practice and identify any systemic concerns. Where good practice is identified, this will be shared with the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care to support their development of policy for the SEND and alternative provision improvement plan.

European Dyslexia Group

We are very pleased to share our new website: <https://dyslexia-europe.org/>

The focus of the group is around dyslexia in adults.

We have just concluded our research into the lived experiences of dyslexic people in the workplace. We had over 1,000 participants. This data will be analysed at universities across Europe. If you know of any UK universities that would like to share this with their students to use in a dissertation, please let me know.

Roger Broadbent

Director - Dyslexia Institute UK

07711 070533 www.dyslexiainstituteuk.com

Email either: info@dyslexia-europe.org or DyslexiaInstituteUK@gmail.com



[Prof. Amanda Kirby](#) commented:

Interesting read about do EHCP plans reducing risk of child being excluded:

Bottom line:

Pupils with EHC plans were less likely than pupils with SEN met by SEN support to be excluded or experience repeat suspension.

They were also marginally less likely than pupils not identified as having SEN to be excluded although more likely to experience repeat suspension.

Do EHC Plans prevent exclusions?

By [Dave Thomson](#) | 1st February 2024 | [Pupil demographics](#)

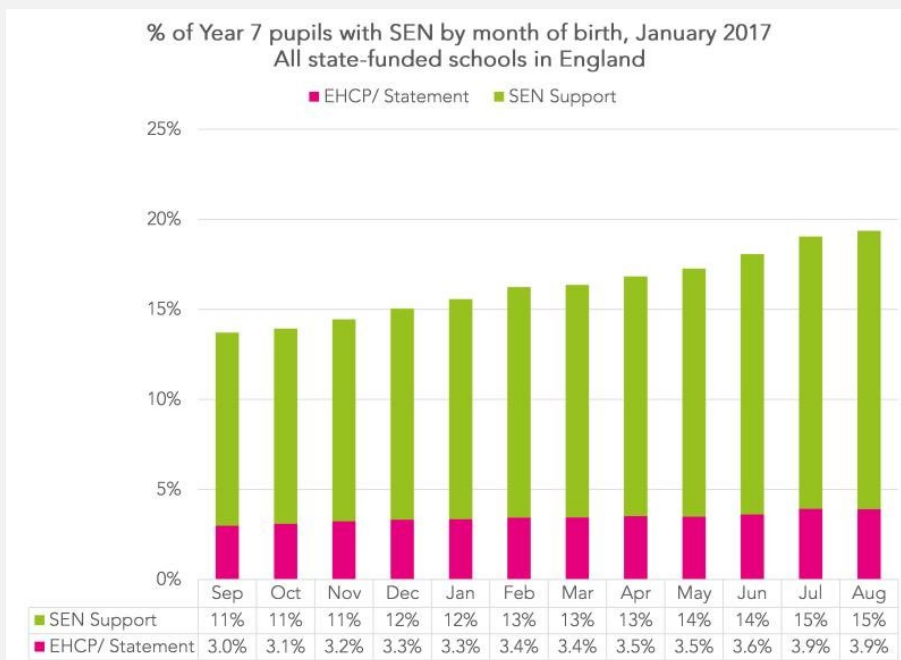
In this blogpost we're going to tackle a difficult question ^[1]: whether having an EHC plan can prevent exclusion and repeat suspension.

The challenge in answering it is one of what economists call selection. The factors that lead to some pupils having EHC plans and others not may be related to the propensity to be excluded. If EHC plans were handed out at random, as they would be in a randomized controlled trial, for example, this would not be a problem. But an RCT of EHC plans is never going to happen.

So what we have to do is try our best with existing data. We do this using an approach known as Instrumental Variables (IV).

This involves finding another variable which increases the probability of receiving an EHC plan but should not otherwise affect the outcome of interest, in this case exclusion.

The variable we use for this is month of birth.



Full article at: [Do EHC Plans prevent exclusions? - FFT Education Datalab](#)



New framework to support trainee and early career teachers

Thursday 15 February 2024

The Department for Education (DfE) have published a new framework to support trainee and early career teachers. The [Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework \(ITTECF\)](#) combines the initial teacher training (ITT) core content framework (CCF) and the early career framework (ECF). This new framework covers the training and induction periods at the start of a teacher's career and sets a minimum entitlement to three years of training for most trainee and early career teachers (ECT) from September 2025.

The publication of this new framework follows a Call for Evidence in Spring 2023 as one of the commitments made by the Government in the [SEND and alternative provision improvement plan](#), with the aim of ensuring that teachers are better prepared to support children with SEND.

The BDA responded to the Department for Education (DfE) call for evidence (22 March – 21 April) which aimed to gather evidence from research, experts, and professionals to inform the amendments to these frameworks.

BDA Recommendations

The BDA submitted the following recommendations for additions to the published standards in teacher training. Our recommendations are based upon recent, relevant, and high-quality research and aim to promote excellent teaching practice:

Standard 2 – How Pupils Learn

Teachers should learn that...

- A typical classroom will include learners with dyslexia and/or other specific learning difficulties.
- These learners will need more explicit teaching.
- They will benefit from learning methods which reduce the burden on their working memory.
- All learners will benefit from the reduction of stress.

Standard 3- Subject and Curriculum

- Learning to read requires the contextualised teaching of reading: 'balanced instruction'.
- Learners with dyslexia have a specific difficulty learning to decode using systematic synthetic phonics (SSP)

Standard 5 – Adaptive Teaching

- Early identification of learning difficulties is critical.
- Poor language is an indicator that a learner may be at risk of dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties.
- Targeted intervention can support learning and prevent secondary issues from arising.
- Learners with dyslexia have a specific difficulty learning to read and spell.
- Learners with a specific learning difficulty are at higher risk of stress which must be reduced to enable learning.
- Access to appropriate assistive technology improves educational outcomes.

You can read our full submission here: [BDA response to ITT Call for Evidence](#)

Analysis of the new ITTECF

We welcome the new single framework and acknowledge that some of the language has been updated to be more inclusive of children with SEND, and there is a specific section referencing SEND

within the introduction. Although the framework has taken some statements on adapting teaching from the new NPQ SENCo qualification, we are concerned that the new framework does not go far enough to achieve one of its stated intentions “... to equip all trainees and ECT with a shared knowledge and skills...”[1]

Specifically:

There is a strong focus on mentors and other colleagues supporting ECT to adapt their teaching for SEND. Yet we know that many existing teachers have little training on identifying and supporting learners with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties (SpLD) If they are likely to require support to adapt their own teaching – how then can they guide new teachers?

The ITTECF sets out two types of content: ‘Learn that...’ and ‘Learn how to...’ statements and explains that ‘Learn that’ statements are based on the best educational research, whereas ‘Learn how to’ statements are from a wider evidence base that includes guidance from expert practitioners.

It is notable that there is no mention that teachers should “learn that” a typical classroom will include learners with SEND – even though we know dyslexic learners alone represent 10% of all learners in the classroom. In fact there is no direct mention of dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties anywhere in the framework. Our view is that every trainee and ECT should be given explicit teaching on dyslexia and specific learning difficulties.

The addition of a specific “learn that” related to working memory and learners with SEND is a positive step. But the “learn how to” does not adequately show teachers how to adapt their teaching to reduce the burden on working memory, and importantly fails to acknowledge the impact of stress on working memory.

The evidence we submitted to the DfE in the Spring 2023 clearly evidenced that a single focus on teaching reading and spelling by decoding via Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) is not supported by research evidence, and that since teaching methods in the UK have followed a SSP first and only approach, improvements in reading by the end of KS1 have not been seen.[2] It is concerning therefore to see within standard 3 – subject and curriculum, that SSP is still promoted as the most effective way to decode. We believe that ITT must include other more explicit ways to teach reading alongside SSP, so that teachers have a toolkit to support learners who cannot learn to read when SSP is used as the sole method.

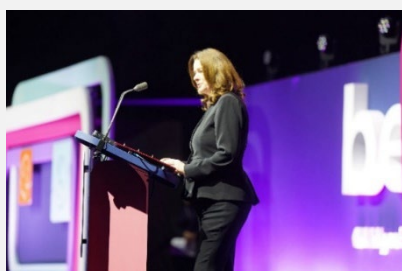
There are some welcome additions to the combined framework, but given the significant and robust evidence submitted to the DfE as part of their call for evidence, the final framework is disappointing. It still puts the onus on individual ITT and ECF providers to design their own training curriculum and this leads to wide variation in what trainees are taught.

[1] Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework p4 published by DfE January 2024

[2] National Statistics. (2019). Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments: England 2019. [https://www.gov.uk/government/...](https://www.gov.uk/government/)

Bowers, J. S. (2020). ‘Reconsidering the Evidence That Systematic Phonics Is More Effective Than Alternative Methods of Reading. *Educational Psychology Review*. 32:681–705 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648...>

Education Secretary addresses BETT 2024 24 January



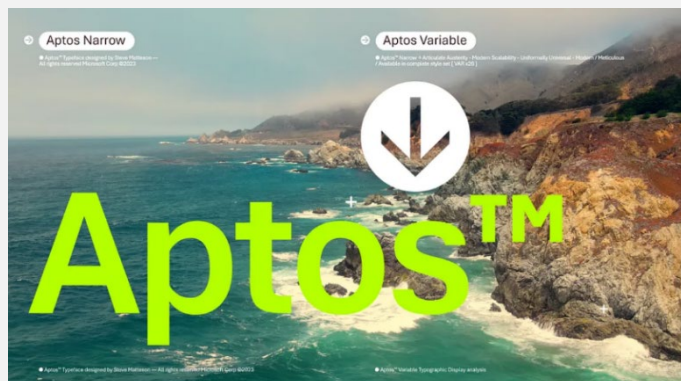
Gillian Keegan sets out importance of evidence and innovation in approach to AI at Bett 2024.

Transcript of the speech, exactly as it was delivered:

[Education Secretary addresses BETT 2024 24 January](#)

A change of typeface: Microsoft's new default font has arrived

Dear every human on earth that's ever typed text . . .



For 15 years, our beloved Calibri was Microsoft's default font and crown keeper of office communications, but as you know, our relationship has come to a natural end. We changed. The technology we use every day has changed. And so, our search of the perfect font for higher resolution screens began. The font needed to have sharpness, uniformity, and be great for display type. It was exciting at times, but also intimidating. How do you replace Calibri? How do you find that one true font that can take its place as the rightful default?

As we shared before, Microsoft commissioned five new fonts: Bierstadt, Grandview, Seaford, Skeena, and Tenorite. It was our hope that one of them would be our next default font for Microsoft 365. All of them were added to the drop-down font picker. From there, as you got a chance to use them, we listened to your impassioned feedback and chose the one that resonated most which was Bierstadt. But as there was a change of guard so too the name. Bierstadt is now known as Aptos.

[A change of typeface: Microsoft's new default font has arrived | by Microsoft Design | Microsoft Design | Medium](#)



To mark the end of our 40th anniversary year, we have published a new report, titled "[IPSEA at 40: reflecting on the past and looking to the future](#)", which tells our story, from our beginnings as a small group of educational psychologists providing free second professional opinions, to our current status as a national charity with a team of staff and an expansive network of dedicated volunteers.

The report also outlines our vision for the future and the action that must be taken to improve the SEND system and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

[Read IPSEA at 40: reflecting on the past and looking to the future](#)

In our latest blog, our Policy Manager shares key extracts from a speech given by our Chief Executive, Ali Fiddy, about the future we want to see for SEND - and the four areas of focus that we consider key to resolving the SEND crisis.

[Read our blog >>](#)



February newsletter link: <https://joom.ag/EZ0d>

Hundreds of articles available in [DYSLEXIA LIBRARY](#)

Newsletters can be downloaded and printed by clicking on issues on our archive page [HERE](#). We posted instructions for reading the newsletter aloud via Reciteme on our blog [here](#). You can use Reciteme to also translate our dyslexia posts into more than 100 different languages. If you've been having any trouble accessing our site, send us a message: at team@dyslexicadvantage.org and we'll help.

Check out all the other free resources at DyslexicAdvantage.org



Prof. Amanda Kirby

Neurodiversity 101: How to tell banter from bullying in the workplace

Sometimes there is a fine line between teasing someone in a warm and friendly manner and making fun of someone's weaknesses.

Teasing behaviours have been seen in great apes for a long time... actually millions of years (listen to this interesting Guardian podcast-

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/audio/2024/feb/15/what-apes-can-tell-us-about-the-origins-of-teasing-podcast>)

Read on at: [Neurodiversity 101: How to tell banter from bullying in the workplace](#)

Some useful links:

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/what-bullying/banter>

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/law.html>

I was talking to someone the other day who was going for an interview and I asked if I thought it was cheating if you asked for the questions before the interview... this was someone neurodivergent. Do not underestimate how stressful it is if you have to ask someone you want a job with to ask for this... by providing it for all... it gives everyone a good chance to be their best self in an interview. What talent could we be missing? Do it for all... and do it always...

5 tips to help – see next page.

For more advice and guidance go to www.doitprofler.com

Asking for Adjustments Before the Interview



#1. Disclose

If you have a disability or health condition and/or require adjustments to the interview process, let the organisation know as soon as possible.



#2. Interview Format

Find out what the format of the interview is and if there will be any assessments being undertaken and the format in case adjustments need to be made for you.



#3. Additional Time

Ask for additional time in tasks if required.



#4. Adjustments

If you need specific adjustments then explain what they are e.g. use of spellchecker if you are dyslexic, additional time to respond to questions if you have a communication challenge, responding to a question in writing, BSL support, or closed captioning(subtitles) if you have a hearing challenge.



#5. Access to Work

Access to Work (through DWP) assistance is available for virtual interviews.

[Can Bimodal Reading Enhance Reading Comprehension? \(aventido.com\)](https://www.aventido.com)

In a recent webinar, we explored bimodal reading.

The topic of discussion was whether bimodal reading, which involves both visual and auditory input, can make a difference in comprehension. In this blog, we explore the key takeaways from the session.

Top 5 Skills Organisations are Looking for (and Dyslexic Learners have)

1. Innovation
2. Lateral thinking
3. Complex problem solving
4. Interpersonal skills
5. Resilience, flexibility and agility

LEARN DYSLEXIA

MADE BY
DYSLEXIA

1 in 5 learners in every classroom are dyslexic, and they are hard-wired to thrive in our new [#AI](#) world. Because while AI is taking over many tasks, it cannot replicate the 'soft' skills or 'power' skills that are vital in our fast-changing workplaces. And these are the skills that dyslexics are hard-wired to have.

That's why it's essential that EVERY school learns how to Empower Dyslexic Thinking, so we can nurture the very minds the future needs.

Ask your school to take our new free training on [Microsoft](#) here:

<https://learn.microsoft.com/.../empower-dyslexic.../>

[Nigel Pugh - MD at Education Advocacy UK Ltd](#)

There is much confusion as to how school funding works and where the various funding streams for children with SEN come from.



In this blog post, we highlight the different types of funding that schools receive.

Check it out [👉 https://lnkd.in/d9CXdnHV](https://lnkd.in/d9CXdnHV)



[Dyslexia & Me: Mental Health and Education | Succeed With Dyslexia](#)



Education is key to understanding.  

This Children's Mental Health Week, join us in exploring the relationship between dyslexia, mental health, and education. Let's foster a supportive environment for all learners.

[Dyslexia & Me: Mental Health and Education | Succeed With Dyslexia](#)

succeedwithdyslexia.org



44 Myths About Dyslexia Debunked

The first [FREE ARTICLE](#) in this new series of articles is free for you to download, print out and share with family, friends, clients, schools or other organisations to support a child or student in your care.

[Download](#) - #1 - **44 Myths About Dyslexia Debunked - Part 1**

Written by Neurodiversity experts they are simple and easy to read: [Collect them all](#)

Liz Dunoon & Jillian Zocher

GetintoNeurodiversity.com

44 Myths About Dyslexia Debunked



Prof Amanda Kirby:

If your child is going to secondary school after the Summer you need to start to prepare now.



As our children step into the new world of secondary school, preparation is key, especially for our neurodivergent kids who may find change a little harder to manage.

Here are 10 strategies to make the journey smoother and more empowering for them:

Visit the School Early 🏠: Familiarise your child with the new environment, layout, and routines to reduce anxiety.

Meet the Teachers 👩‍🏫: Establish a relationship with educators and support staff to ensure they understand your child's unique needs. How will they share information with you.

Develop a routine 🕒: Create a structured daily schedule to help manage expectations and transitions.

Social Skills Practice 🗣️: Engage in role-play or social stories to navigate new social situations they might encounter.

Organizational Skills 📁: Teach them how to organize their schoolwork, timetable, and materials, using tools and apps.

Safety Plan 🛡️: Discuss and plan for situations where they may feel overwhelmed or need assistance.

Advocacy Skills 🗣️: Empower them to understand and communicate their needs effectively.
Self-Care Techniques 🧘: Introduce relaxation and self-soothing strategies for stress management.

Extra-Curricular Activities 🎨: Encourage participation in activities of interest to build confidence and social connections.

Celebrate Strengths 🌟: Focus on their talents and interests to boost self-esteem and motivation.

Survive, Revive, Thrive

Parents



Preparing for secondary school

Plan and prepare independent skills

- Let school know what has been 'good' for your child while at home
- Check your child can manage fastenings, laces, buttons, ties (if required)
- Let your child wear school shoes before they go back to school
- Practice with your child going to the toilet independently
- Get back to a school days routines and regular bed times

Prepare for the school day

- Find out start and finish times to the school day
- Make a timetable with the days your child is at school so they can see this clearly
- Check what happens at lunchtime and break times
- Check your child can open packets (e.g. crisp packets, drink and a straw)

Communicating with school

- Stay in regular contact with school and let them know if there are any specific issues at home with family or friends e.g. death or illness
- If your child is unwell let school know straight away
- If your child becomes anxious and specific things help to lower anxiety let school know

Take care of you and your child's emotional health

- Talk with your children and answer their questions
- Let them voice their fears or worries
- Practice meditation, breathing techniques
- Stick to a schedule

Guidance available on the BDA website:

[Choosing a school - British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](http://bdadyslexia.org.uk)

[Financial literacy: 5 things we wish everyone knew about money and dyslexia](#)

Over the past eighteen months, managing money has gotten harder for many of us. Especially if you're just starting out or you're trying to get on the property ladder, things seem to require a far higher degree of financial literacy than they used to— when every penny counts, we need to know where they're going. But financial literacy often requires confidence in regular literacy too...

So how do you navigate rising prices when you've got dyslexia?

Sometimes it isn't so easy, so today we're thinking about what we know about spending, earning, budgeting and saving with dyslexia... and what we wish everybody else knew, too.

Click on title link to read the following:

1. **Cashless living isn't for everyone**
2. **Can we not just keep paperwork simple?!**
3. **Co-occurring neurodiversities can make saving doubly difficult**
4. **Buying for convenience is valid, actually**
5. **Making money with dyslexia can be tougher**

[This Valentine's Day, we're all about loving our dyslexic selves!](#)

We still live in a world where reading dominates how we communicate, and when reading differences impact your life it can feel isolating and have a huge impact on your self-esteem. It's hard, and it's constant too: you can't just turn it off.

It's an exhausting act to love yourself through it all, sometimes, as much as you might also feel that dyslexia gives you the creativity and the special skills you've needed to succeed. That's why we're focusing on self-love this Valentine's Day: because we deserve it!

We've taken a deep-dive into five of the most common scenarios in which it might feel difficult to love yourself for who you are, dyslexia and all, and created some handy responses for when you start to feel a little down.

Click on title link to read the following:

It's results day, and you're disappointed in yourself.

You've burned your mum's birthday dinner.

You didn't get the job or the promotion you applied for.

There's a successful dyslexic person on TV talking about how dyslexia helped them create a multi-million dollar business.

Your friends think it's hilarious how you misspelled a word in your last WhatsApp message.



[Morphology: Why and How it Works for Learners with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties - Louise Selby Dyslexia Specialist](#)

Our language is morphophonemic; in other words it is based on both morphological and phonological structure (units of sound). Approximately 80% of English words contain more than one morpheme. These morphemes are used across a number of words, and therefore can be generalised. They have been described by Rastle (2018) as "islands of regularity in the mapping between printed words and their meaning". Morphology is not a whole word approach, nor is it an alternative to phonics. Morphemes literally make sense of language and they are entirely necessary as part of cracking the code of English spelling.

Read full blog in title link.

EVENTS & RECORDINGS



[The one question we should ask about inclusivity \(youtube.com\)](#)

January 28, 2024

Join us for an inspiring talk with Dr Martin Bloomfield.

Martin Bloomfield is a trainer, teacher, facilitator, teacher trainer, and consultant in international communication skills, dyslexia awareness, autism awareness, ethics, and language training. He has run his own business and worked in Great Britain, Germany, Switzerland, Peru, and Australia; and has taught at universities government institutions, and private organisations in Britain, in Thailand, in the United States, and throughout the European Union.

Join us as we embark on a journey to discover how being different is seen across the globe. Hear stories from a world traveller who's lived in various places, sharing experiences of being neurodiverse in different countries. Explore how people in diverse cultures think about and support those with unique brains. Learn about schools, rules, and how societies welcome (or sometimes don't) those who think differently.

This is a simple look at a big idea - that we're all different in our ways, no matter where we're from.

My goal is to continue to educate, inspire and motivate people to see a different side to Neurodiversity.

BDA FREE WEBINARS - links to latest recordings

Recording link to [Dyslexia Awareness For Early Years Foundations Stage EYFS](#)

View slides: [16th January 2024 EYFS](#)

Recording link to [Dyslexia Awareness For Primary-Aged Children](#)

View slides: [PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Recording link to [Dyslexia Awareness For Secondary Aged students](#)

View slides: [PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Resources and Approaches for Teachers - recording [here](#).

[You can find the slides here](#)

How you can support your child with reading - recording [here](#).

[You can find the slides here](#)

Recording link to [Supporting Spelling and Times Tables](#)

Recording link to [Exam Access Arrangements Sept 2023](#)

Recording link to [Study Skills At Home For Older Students With Dyslexia](#)

Recording link to [Exam Study Skills](#)

Recording link to [Times tables and Maths Support for SATS](#)

Recording link to [Top Tips for Supporting Learners with Dyscalculia and Maths Learning Difficulties](#)

Recording link to [Why are fractions so hard](#)

Getting support with your dyslexia at work - recording [here](#).

[You can find the slides here](#)

Workplace support for employers – recording [here](#).

[You can find the slides here.](#)

Recording link to [Assessments - All you need to know](#)

New – click link to register to attend:

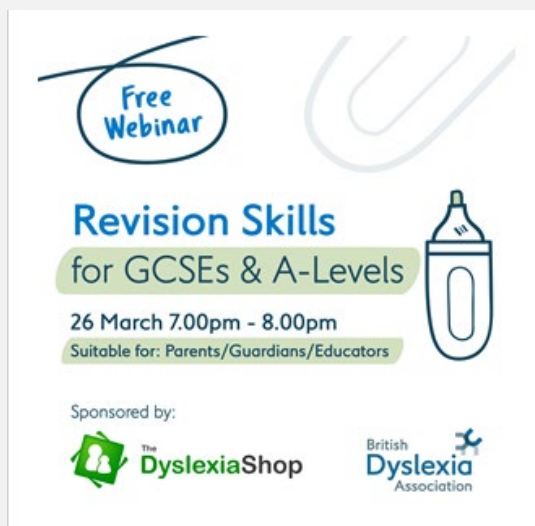
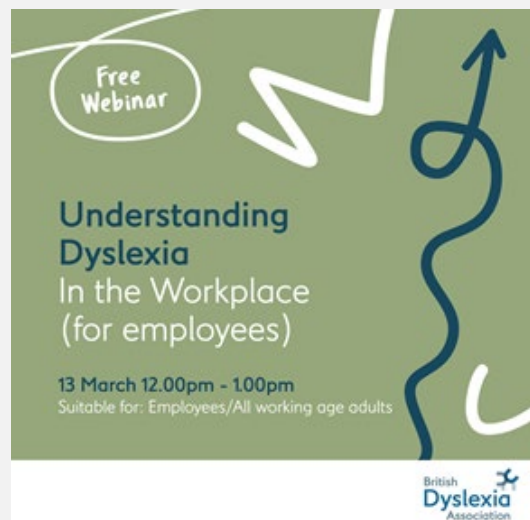


Free Webinar - SAT's Revision Skills

- 5 March, 7 - 8 pm

Free Webinar - Dyslexia Awareness for Workplace - understanding dyslexia (employees)

- 13 March, 12 - 1 pm



Free Webinar - Revisions Skills for GCSE's & A-Levels

- 26 March, 7 - 8 pm

If you click on a link to register to attend, following the webinar you will be sent a link to the recording, and hopefully the presentation slides.

See [Events](#) for future webinars.

Look for webinar recordings on BDA [YouTube](#) channel.



CENMAC's Thursday Thirty Spring Term 2024

Live Online Training & Information sessions

Our 30-minute online Thursday Thirty information and training sessions continue throughout the spring and summer terms on Thursday afternoons from 15.30-16.00 (GMT).

These sessions are designed to give you a brief overview of some of the assistive technologies we use to support learning and communication in special educational settings. They are suitable for teachers, SENCOs, Teaching Assistants, Speech and Language Therapists, parents and carers and assistive technology users.

Thursday 14 March

The Power of Assistive Technology and the Assistive Technology Miniguide

The British Assistive Technology Association have produced a series of 3 films for schools to use to stimulate discussion and to increase the use of assistive technology in primary and secondary as well as special schools. Join Myles Pilling, Specialist SEND ICT-AT Consultant, AccessAbility Solutions for this session. [> Reserve your spot](#)

Thursday 14 March

Special Schools Eye Care: do you know understand your students' visual abilities & needs?

From April 2024 the NHS have committed to having an eye care service in every special school, responding to research which showed around 43% of special school students have never had any eye care, despite the incredibly high level of need. SeeABILITY will tell you a bit more about the service, the goal of which is to ensure everyone supporting a student who attends special school understands their visual abilities and needs. [> Reserve your spot](#)



Delivery: Online Discussion

Suitable for: Assistant Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Head Teacher, Teacher, Tutor

27th February 2024 - 16:00 - 17:00

Specialist Spotlight: Understanding executive functioning (Primary)

[Find out more](#)

29th February 2024 - 16:00 - 17:00

Specialist Spotlight: Memory for Learning (Secondary/FE)

[Find out more](#)

4th March 2024 - 16:00 - 17:00

Specialist Spotlight: Memory for Learning (Primary)

[Book for FREE](#)

5th March 2024 - 16:00 - 17:00

Specialist Spotlight: Understanding executive functioning (Secondary/FE)

[Book for FREE](#)

Gloucestershire
PATOSS

www.patoss-wix.com/patoss

Dr Georgia Niolaki is a Senior Lecturer in SpLD/Dyslexia and Inclusion at Bath Spa University and Visiting Research Associate at the Institute of Education, University of London. She is a Trustee of the British Dyslexia Association, a member of the SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) and of Gloucestershire Patoss. Georgia has published papers in national and international journals and presented her work at many conferences. She started her career working with primary age pupils and assessing and supporting children with special needs. She recently led a pilot project in local schools, in conjunction with the Gloucestershire Dyslexia Association and funded by Bath Spa University, that provided information to teachers and teaching assistants about spotting and supporting dyslexic pupils.

Dr Georgia Niolaki

Bilingualism/Multilingualism and Dyslexia

TUESDAY 12TH MARCH 2024

Talk starts @ 7.00pm

via ZOOM

This talk will be suitable for those working with primary, secondary and adult learners. Georgia co-authored the chapter: 'Bilingualism, Second Language Learning and Developmental Differences' [Terzopoulos, A, Niolaki, G.Z and Masterson, J.], in the book 'Psychology and Educational Inclusion: Identifying and Supporting Learners with SEN' [Niolaki, G.Z, Carr-Fanning, K and Terzopoulos, A.], 2023, Open University Press.

Open to PATOSS members and SpLD/SEN/Educational professionals

Payment by BACS transfer please

£5 Local Group Members; £10 National Members; £15 Non-members

To book a place contact us by email at patossglosevents@yahoo.co.uk

7 MARCH @ 1:00 PM GMT

DEMISTIFYING ACCESS TO WORK



Mark Woodward
Head Of Occupational Delivery
Neurobox

BOOK NOW

Demystifying Access to Work

Join us at the next [CareScribe Skills Session](#) to take a deep dive into all things Access to Work.

We're delighted to be sharing the knowledge, experience and expertise of Mark Woodward (Head of Occupational Delivery at neurobox).

Book for free at link above.



Free Virtual Neurodiversity Conference: Supporting You & Your Child

WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH 2024 : 10AM – 3PM

We are delighted to be hosting a free Virtual Conference: '**Celebrating, Embracing and Empowering Our Children**', providing advice and support for parents and carers of neurodiverse children and young people.

Conference Agenda:

10am-11am:

Unlocking Potential: Empowering Children Through Speech & Communication

Presented by Caroline Vincent, Senior Speech and Language Therapist for our Group.

11.15am - 12.15pm:

Embracing Brilliance In Primary School Pupils

Presented by Claire Traynor, Headteacher, Hall Cliffe Primary School.

12:45pm - 1:45pm:

Radiant Beginnings: Celebrating Neurodiverse Journeys In Early Childhood

Presented by Tracy Bowyer, Parenting Coordinator, The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity.

2pm - 3pm:

Unlocking Opportunities For A Bright Future

Presented by Meg Vaughn, Partner and Care Experienced Specialist, John Lewis

[Register Your Free Place](https://witherslackgroup.co.uk/virtual-conference-spring24)

Each presentation will hold a live Q&A at the end of each session, meaning you will have the chance to submit your questions and have them answered by our panel of expert speakers.

You are welcome to join and leave the conference as you please throughout the day.

If you register to the event, you will automatically receive copies of each presentation recording, direct to your inbox - even if you don't attend!

RESOURCES and OFFERS

Dyslexia In the Classroom
What Every Teacher Needs to Know

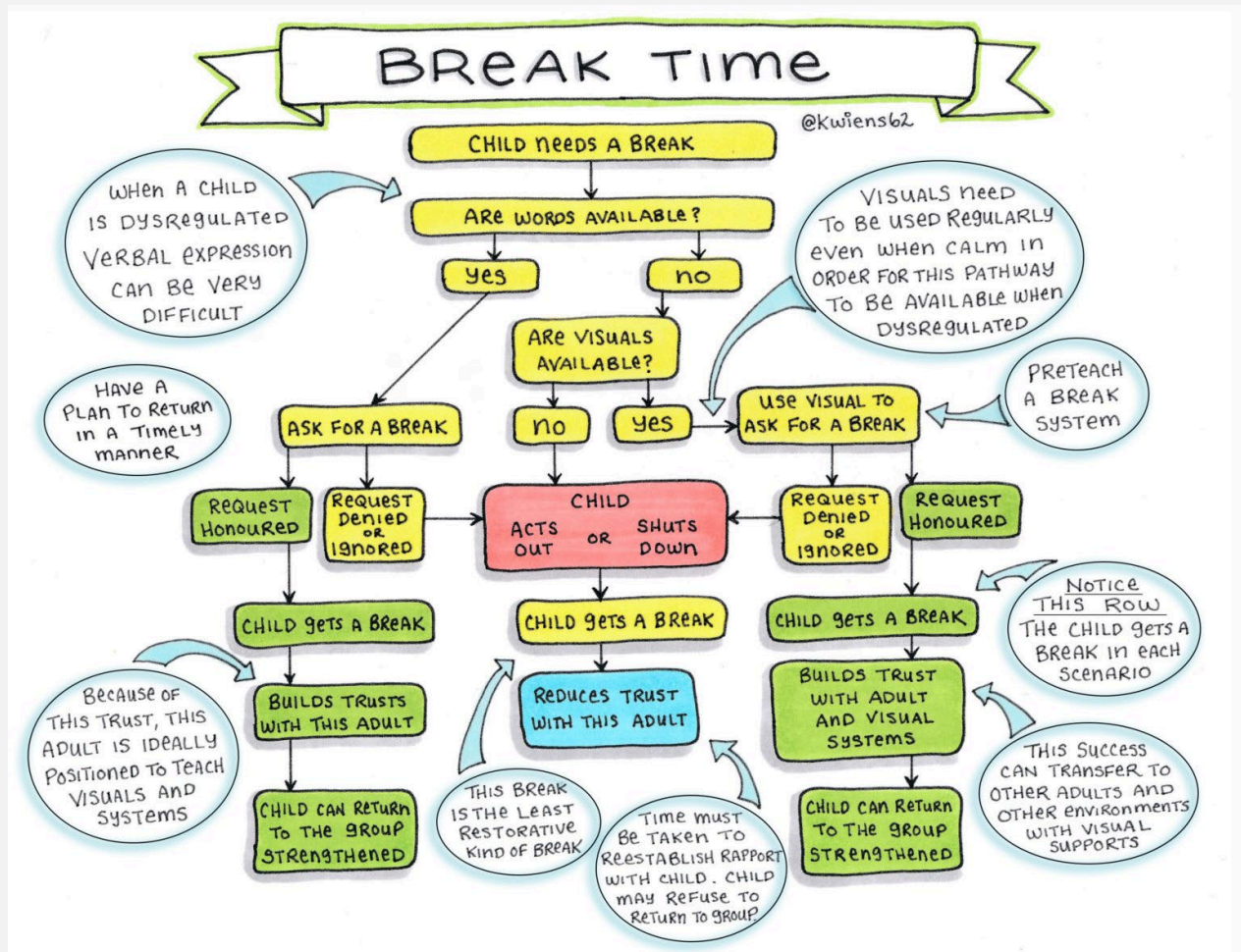
International
DYSLEXIA
Association

Looking to develop your background knowledge or to spread helpful information for others?

Check out the IDA's "Dyslexia in the Classroom: What Every Teacher Needs to Know"

Guide at this link:

<https://dyslexiaida.org/.../upl.../2015/01/DITC-Handbook.pdf>



The OT Toolbox

This is a great visual on brain breaks as a self-regulation tool.

To teach this concept and put break time strategies in place, here are some helpful resources:

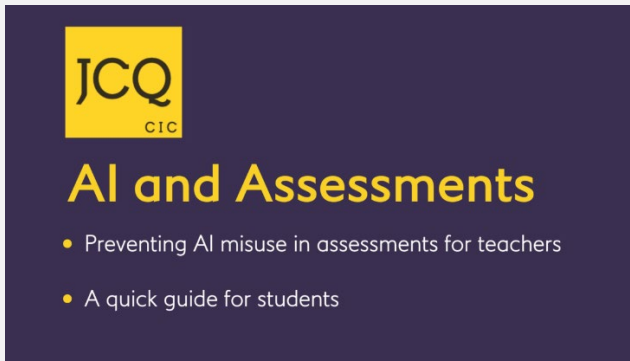
Brain Breaks: <https://www.theottoolbox.com/brain-breaks/>

Self-Regulation: <https://www.theottoolbox.com/zones-of-regulation-activities/>

Visual Supports: <https://www.theottoolbox.com/visual-schedules/>

How to Create Scheduled Breaks: <https://www.theottoolbox.com/how-to-create-sensory-diet/>

Visual from here: <https://northstarpats.com/graphics-free-downloads/>



The Joint Council for Qualifications' [JCQ AI Use in Assessments](#) guidance has been updated.

They have produced a great visual Poster for Students and an Information Sheet for Teachers to help everyone clearly understand the rules for the use of AI in assessments.

What is AI? and how can it be misused in assessments?

AI for Students

AI stands for artificial intelligence and using it is like having a computer that thinks.

AI tools like ChatGPT or Snapchat My AI can write text, make art and create music by learning from data from the internet, but watch out – they can also make things up and be biased.

AI misuse is when you take something made using AI and say it's your own work - THIS IS CHEATING!

[View the JCQ poster explaining do's and don't when using AI in Assessments](#)

AI for Teachers

Know your school or college's approach to managing AI in assessments. Be clear about when and if students can use AI tools, make sure students know how to reference clearly and remind students that any content produced using AI must be referenced and cannot be given marks.

[View the JCQ information sheet for teachers on AI in the classroom.](#)

Joint Council for Qualifications has produced a great visual Poster for Students and an Information Sheet for Teachers to help them clearly understand the rules for the use of AI in assessments. Read more here: <https://bit.ly/3SPzACH>



[Help in exams for children and young people with SEND \(ipsea.org.uk\)](#)

Pupils who have [learning difficulties](#) and [disabilities](#) may qualify for help (known as access arrangements) in public exams.

The Joint Council for Qualifications describes why these arrangements exist: They allow [pupils and students] with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

The most common arrangements are for:

- extra time, or
- provision of a computer, or a person to read or write for the pupil (except for exams that specifically test these skills, such as English).

There is a range of other possible arrangements for pupils with visual or hearing impairments, or other difficulties.

When a pupil is 'disabled' under the Equality Act, then:

- the responsible body of a school (so the board of governors, or the proprietor in the case of an Academy) has a duty not to discriminate against that pupil, and
- the examination board has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate for that pupil's disability.

These are legal duties set out in sections 85 and 96 of the Equality Act 2010. Exam access arrangements are there to meet the duties set out in the Equality Act 2010.

How will the school or college decide who qualifies for help?

The school decides whether this support is needed. It does this by looking at the rules laid down by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) on behalf of the exam boards, overseen by Ofqual. For Key Stage 1 and 2 assessments, the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) oversees access arrangements.

For each type of access arrangement, there are particular evidence requirements the JCQ/STA sets which must be met for the pupil to qualify. The JCQ/STA inspects schools to check that the evidence requirements are strictly followed.

The JCQ/STA rules are detailed and are updated every year. For full information, the rules can be accessed on the [JCQ website](#) and [STA website](#).

When a school or college is aware that a pupil or student may need access arrangements, it should gather the necessary evidence of need from class teachers and others (such as parents, the pupil and any other staff and external professionals involved). The school may need to carry out assessment tests (for example of reading, spelling, comprehension, writing or processing speed).

Documents such as an [education, health and care \(EHC\) plan](#) or a report from a professional such as an educational psychologist may be supportive but do not automatically entitle a pupil to access arrangements without additional supportive evidence from the school.

Applying for permission – JCQ deadlines

The school should apply for permission to put the access arrangements in place for all assessed parts of the course (not just the final exam).

It is best if the school applies before the pupil begins the exam course. For [exams in June 2024](#), the deadline for applying for modified papers is 31 January 2024 and the deadline for all other arrangements is 21 March 2024.

The [JCQ guidance](#) also sets out the process and deadlines for applying for access arrangements in vocational courses.

The first step

The first step is to speak to the class teacher and SENCO. If you have already done this, approach the head teacher or other relevant member of the senior management team for a meeting about the kind and amount of help which you believe is necessary.

Be prepared to show evidence that the help is needed. The best evidence will be the fact that your child has, or as a young person you have, needed and received help of this kind in the past. For example, previously receiving help reading exam papers, or extra time for independently reading exam papers, in internal exams.

If you have any other evidence from reports that set out your child's difficulties, or your own challenges as a young person (for example with reading, spelling or writing) and the requirement for help in class or with tests, this is important supporting evidence.

Having an EHC plan may strengthen your request, but it doesn't create a legal obligation on the school to arrange this extra help with exams. However, if the EHC plan specifies help with reading texts (for example, in the form of support from a teaching assistant) then this will be important evidence that this is how your child normally works or how you, as a young person, usually work, and the same kind of support is going to be needed in order to do their best in public exams.

It may be that there is not enough evidence that an access arrangement is your child's 'normal way of working', perhaps because they have only recently arrived at the school, or because this need has only recently become apparent. But if your child's experience (or your experience) is that they are, or you are, only able to show full potential when given the necessary support, you should insist that the school carries out the relevant assessment tests so that they can make an application for the access arrangement.

Exam access arrangements and Key Stage 2 SATS

There is different guidance for adjustments for the [Key Stage 1](#) and [2 SATS](#).

Schools will need to read the relevant guidance carefully and, where required, organise any adjustments that are needed with the STA.

Schools will need to apply for certain adjustments in advance by submitting an application form - the school SENCO should be able to explain this process to you.

For some adjustments for Key Stage 2 SATS, there will be certain deadlines by which applications must be made by schools for assessments in 2024 :

- Applications for additional time must be made from Monday 12 February to Monday 2 April 2024.
- Applications for early opening of papers must be made from Monday 12 February to Friday 8 March.

Applications for compensatory marks for spelling must be made from Monday 12 February to Monday 22 April. In addition, there are certain other adjustments that schools won't need to apply for in advance, but they must notify the STA about their use once all tests have been taken. These adjustments typically include things like the use of a scribe, making a transcript of the child's work and using word processors or other electronic aids.

You will need to discuss what adjustments your child might need with school staff (such as the class teacher and SENCO).

If that doesn't work

If the head refuses to agree to arrange support for your child, or you as a young person, with public exams or assessments, or even to agree to assess for support, then you will need to put your request in writing and send it to the school governors. You can use [our model letter](#) as a template for making this request.

The outcome you are seeking is for the school to agree to put the arrangements in place (or make the necessary assessments and application for permission). However, if the governors will not take action then you may have to consider making a formal complaint under the school's complaints policy or a claim of disability discrimination against them on the basis of the failure to make 'reasonable adjustments'. You can find out more about this on our page about [making complaints](#).

Study leave

The [Working together to improve school attendance](#) guidance makes clear that study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise, and as study leave is unsupervised it must be recorded as absence (paragraphs 228 and 229).

If your child's school says they must take study leave it is likely to be failing in its duty to do [all that it can to secure special educational provision](#) for your child.

Additionally, children and young people with EHC [plans must continue to receive the special educational provision set out in their EHC plan](#). It is the LA's duty to secure this, even during study leave periods.

Exam access arrangements for pupils not attending a school/college

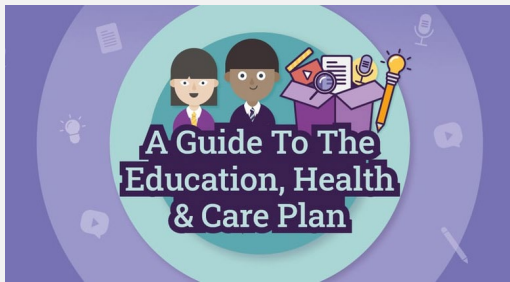
Children and young people who are home educated and wanting to take exams such as GCSEs or A-Levels may choose to do correspondence courses (such as IGCSEs) or enrol at a college or adult education centre. Any adjustments would need to be discussed with the exam centre or tutor/course provider.

Children or young people who receive education otherwise than at school or college through an EHC plan (sometimes called EOTAS) may have similar arrangements.

Access arrangements and EHC plans

Although the access arrangements themselves aren't special educational provision that can be secured through an EHC plan (because it's the awarding body that has the power to make an access arrangement and not the LA) the usual way someone needs to be supported to work, or being able to undertake courses such as GCSEs or A-Levels (if someone is receiving EOTAS), may be things that need to be thought about when specifying special educational needs and provision in an EHC plan.

If you haven't been able to find the answer to your question on this page, see our [FAQs](#).



Bursting with articles, videos and podcasts created with SEN professionals, we want to empower you with knowledge and understanding to navigate this journey confidently to help you make informed and positive decisions regarding your child's education.

[Access Your Pack Here](#)

[Top 5 Books for SENDCos](#)

[THE SEN RESOURCES BLOG](#) Georgina Durrant



If you're new to the SENDCO role or an experienced SENDCO looking for further reading/CPD then here are our top 5 books for SENDCos at [Top 5 Books for SENDCos – The SEN Resources Blog](#)

A SENDCO or Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator is a member of staff in the school who coordinates the provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). They are often also a classroom teacher and may be on the school's Senior Leadership Team. SENDCos work closely with teachers, the leadership team, families and external agencies to ensure children and young people with SEND get the best support.



Early Years Guide

Effective strategies designed to help Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) teachers and practitioners support young children with key aspects of their development.

[Get your free copy](#)

Created by our education specialist team, the guide highlights the barriers to learning that may exist for some children, and how symbols can help alleviate them by:

Helping children navigate their day

From the daily routine to making meaningful choices.

Promoting social and emotional development

From cooperating with others to controlling anxiety.

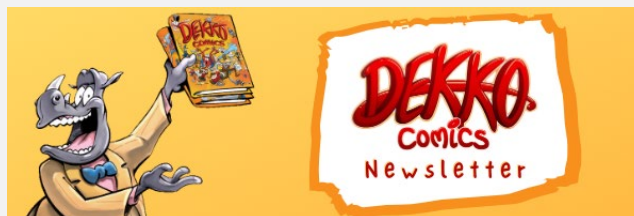
Supporting understanding and communication

From attention and listening to vocabulary development.

Creating a positive learning environment

From signposting spaces to getting families involved.





The long wait is over, **DEKKO HOME VIDEO COURSES** are here.

Learners can now practice all kinds of fun activities from Rossie's popular Dekko Workshops in the comfort of their own homes.

Dekko's new subscription service provides access to all of Dekko's digital resources, old and new, including...

- A 10-video course on creative learning & study skills.
- Library of additional video material, showing fun ways to learn school-related topics.
- Access to an online library of 140+ wacky comic stories teaching subjects from the KS2 curriculum.

You can check out some of what **Dekko Home Video Courses** has to offer for **FREE**.

As a special thank you to our loyal newsletter readers, we're offering:


15% OFF Dekko Learners for the first month with the code: **DK0LRN**

20% OFF Dekko Stars for the first month with the code: **DK0ST4R**

Enjoy the discount, let us know what you think, and we look forward to welcoming your young learners onboard.

For full details on **Dekko Home Video Courses** and how to subscribe, visit:

<https://dekkocomics.com/video-courses>



Dyslexia Home Education Pack

Get it for only £77 for an entire year!

30% off!

for home ages 5-16

Here is your **30% OFF** coupon code to redeem at checkout!

TOMYFRIEND

Valid for all Nessy for [Home programs](#) and packs at checkout!

Code expires February 29th 2024

CALLScotland

[How to make choices about technology tools - the CALL assessment approach](#)

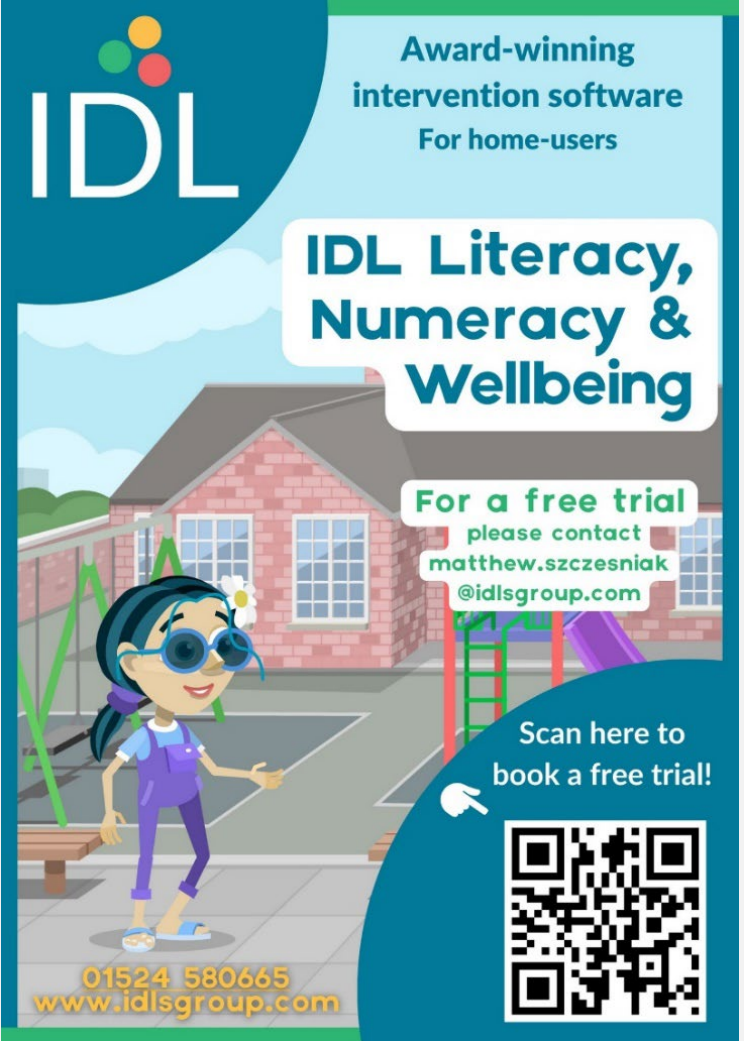
This article explains the process of a CALL technology assessment with the focus of a resulting report in the form of a video screen recording.

Special 20% discount for our readers!

Any parent who contacts IDL via the WDA will be eligible for an automatic 20% discount if they choose to trial IDL and purchase a subscription following a successful trial.

Hop over to the website to request A FREE trial of any IDL program before the Easter break!

Why not get next term off to an Egg-citing start with a **FREE** trial of **IDL Literacy**, **IDL Numeracy** or **IDL Wellbeing**?



IDL

Award-winning intervention software
For home-users

IDL Literacy, Numeracy & Wellbeing

For a free trial please contact
matthew.szczesniak
@idlsgroup.com

Scan here to book a free trial!

01524 580665
www.idlsgroup.com

The advertisement features a cartoon illustration of a girl with glasses and a flower in her hair, standing in a schoolyard with a red brick building and playground equipment in the background. The IDL logo is in the top left, and a QR code is in the bottom right.

IDL provides specialist multi-sensory software to schools and parents in the UK and around the world.

Our goal is to provide learning support to those most in need and our software is used by thousands of learners across the globe.

IDL Literacy dramatically increases reading and spelling ages for those with dyslexia or low literacy ability. In addition, research has shown it can also have a hugely positive impact on the confidence and self-esteem of those using the programme.

IDL Numeracy assists those struggling with Maths through Dyscalculia or who are experiencing maths anxiety. It includes a fully graded course to support the National Curriculum for Numeracy, with interactive activities to support pupils and help them progress.

Our new IDL Wellbeing programme has been developed to support pupils aged 7-13 to build the skills needed to maintain good mental wellbeing such as emotional awareness and mindfulness.

Get in touch with Matthew.Szczesniak@idlsgroup.com or call us on 01524 580 665 to try IDL for FREE today.

IDL Literacy

IDL Literacy is an intervention software proven to increase pupils' reading and spelling ages by an average of 11 months after just 26 hours of use. It has been designed to support pupils improve their literacy skills, particularly if they have dyslexia or dyslexic-type difficulties.



IDL Numeracy



IDL Numeracy is an innovative education software that uses a **strand-based** approach to improve ability for low-attaining learners in mathematics. It includes a fully graded course to support the National Curriculum for KS1 and KS2 maths. It is designed with dyscalculic and low level ability pupils in mind.

IDL Wellbeing

IDL Wellbeing is designed to fit alongside your whole school approach to mental health, toughness and behaviour. Developed alongside a psychologist, IDL Wellbeing uses contemporary theories and mindfulness practices to improve mental health, resilience and equip pupils with essential skills for life.



Each
Product
£99
+VAT

2 Product
Bundle
£150
+VAT

3 Product
Bundle
£200
+VAT



Whole School SEND (WSS) launches NEW Edition of The Teacher Handbook: SEND

Our WSS partners at Nasen have published their highly anticipated second edition of the Teacher Handbook: SEND – **a free reference book** designed to improve the educational experience of children and young people by helping education practitioners put inclusion at the heart of their practice, with three completely new subject-specific chapters for History, Geography and Religious Education, it offers a wealth of ideas and information.

[Access the FREE Handbook →](#)

Small changes to the environment can have a BIG impact on autistic pupils.

The Equality Act 2010 states that all schools must make 'reasonable adjustments' for autistic pupils that require them.

For example, autistic pupils may have different sensory experiences and small adjustments to the environment can reduce anxiety and improve their focus on learning tasks. You can take positive steps to ensure you're meeting the needs of autistic pupils by making minor changes to the classroom environment.

The Autism Education Trust has created a checklist to help you to start thinking about these 'reasonable adjustments':

1. Are your surfaces clear and cupboards closed?
2. Do you close the blind when the room is bright?
3. Do you close the window when there's noises outside?
4. Can you put stoppers on chair legs to minimise noise?
5. Are resources/boxes/drawers and cupboards clearly labelled?
6. Could your displays be less busy and less distracting?
7. Do you have a designated area for registration/group work/snack time?
8. Do you dress in clothes without bright colours or busy patterns?
9. Do you refer to visual timetables throughout the day?
10. Is there a quiet area either nearby or within the classroom where pupils can take breaks?



Are there other areas where you can make further adjustments to support autistic pupils?

Click the button below, right-click the image and select 'save as' to download your copy: [Download now →](#)

SpLD teachers, tutors and dyslexia specialists (U.K.)

Mel Davidson

I did this sheet of questions for parents and students to ask prospective secondary schools/colleges about the school's knowledge of dyslexia and support that is given to dyslexic students. Thought it might be useful to share here.

POSSIBLE QUESTION FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS ABOUT DYSLEXIA AND HOW THEY SUPPORT DYSLEXIC STUDENTS	
General Points	
How many students in the school are dyslexic?	
Does the school Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy include detailed information about dyslexia including how it is identified and students are supported?	
Has there been recent training for all staff about dyslexia and other specific learning differences and how to support them best in school?	
Does the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo) have a good level of knowledge about dyslexia, the difficulties a student might have and effects dyslexia can have?	
Do all staff know they are responsible for correctly supporting dyslexic students and that this isn't the sole responsibility of the SEND department?	
Are there any dyslexic members of staff who are open about what adjustments they need?	
Computer Use and Assistive Technologies	
Is computer use as normal way of working encouraged for dyslexic students?	
Are dyslexic students actively encouraged and supported to use assistive functions including read aloud/text-to-speech, speech recognition/dictate and word prediction?	
Can a student have a designated computer and who provides this?	
Do school encourage use of reading pens throughout the school?	
Normal Classroom Practice	
Are notes and PowerPoints (preferably electronic ones) provided by teachers as standard as copying and note-taking can be problematic for dyslexic students?	
Is homework posted on the school's online platform? If not, how are dyslexic students supported in recording homework accurately?	
Are dyslexic students given electronic versions of textbooks via RNIB Bookshare? And audio-versions of set texts?	
Evidenced-based Interventions	
Which evidenced-based interventions are offered to dyslexic students?	

Extracts from the latest:



#TeachersForAT

On 31st January 2024, BATA launched the #TeachersForAT initiative! Hosted by Power of AT Impact Partners, the [SEND Network](#), #TeachersForAT is a dynamic, nationwide initiative created exclusively for teachers, teaching assistants, and all education professionals who share our passion for enhancing access to AT in the classroom. There will be opportunities for BATA members to access the network through select opportunities throughout the year.

The platform hosts resources and information, videos, infographics, enables discussion and community, and allows our internal network of nominated experts to help guide and inform conversations.

We're very excited to see how the network grows and many, many thanks to our friends and colleagues at the SEND Network, the British Dyslexia Association and our sponsors of the Power of AT project. For further information email admin@bataonline.org or see our website under [initiatives](#).

Pro-Study - New DSA approved Assistive Technology - Pro-Revise

What is Pro-Revise?

Pro-Revise is an assistive technology revision study platform which has been purposefully designed to assist disabled students. Students can utilise multiple Revision Methods that have been designed to cater to diverse learning styles and needs, fostering educational equity.

How does it work?

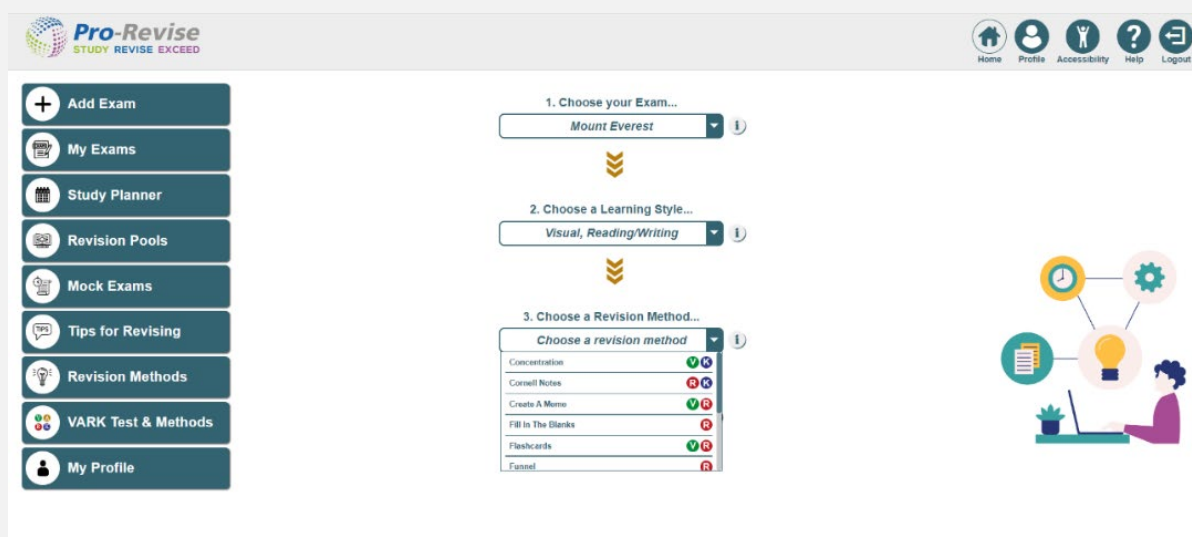
We all learn differently, therefore we need multiple revision methods available to choose from. Pro-Revise offers this by first allowing students to take a test to find out what kind of learner they are, followed by a recommendation of which in-built revision methods suit them best based on their results.

[Pro-Study website link](#)

[App login with free trial](#)

[Watch an overview video](#)

Professionals can contact us for free licences at: pro-revise@pro-atgroup.com



Texthelp

Hold onto your devices and get ready for some exciting new assistive technology updates from Texthelp. We've turned up the innovation dial to bring new features, enhancements and add-ons that are game-changers in supporting every step of the learning journey. From new Amazon Polly Neural voices to updates that make PDF interactions painless and to-do lists more efficient. Our updates are tailored for each student's needs, making their educational experience more enjoyable and engaging.

Get ready to explore new possibilities with our product updates webinars as Texthelp takes learning support to the next level.

[Download the schedule here](#)

AbilityNet - 6 easy ways to boost your digital skills

As technology continues to shape our daily lives, staying connected and tech-savvy at any age is essential.

Join us for a [free webinar with Amazon](#) on Wednesday 28 February at 1pm GMT. Explore the basics of online technology and AI (artificial intelligence), gaining valuable insights to navigate and maximise the digital world.

If you work for an organisation that assists older people, this webinar will also provide valuable support for your clients, so sign up and bring a group along.

[Register your place via Zoom](#)

[Visit our website for more news and events from AbilityNet](#)

More resources to help boost digital skills:

- [Blog: Digital Voice help is coming to a town near you](#)
- [Factsheet: How to boost your online skills](#)
- [Factsheet: Technology for Seniors](#)
- [Free workshops to teach digital skills to older people](#)
- [Download Susie Dent's Digital Dictionary](#)

+++++



If you're wondering when would be the right moment to get a dyslexia assessment for yourself or your child, I would say this is the moment! Post-Covid, we had a waiting time of a couple of months or more for an assessment but we are in the enviable position now that we have slots we can fill as soon as the paperwork is received.

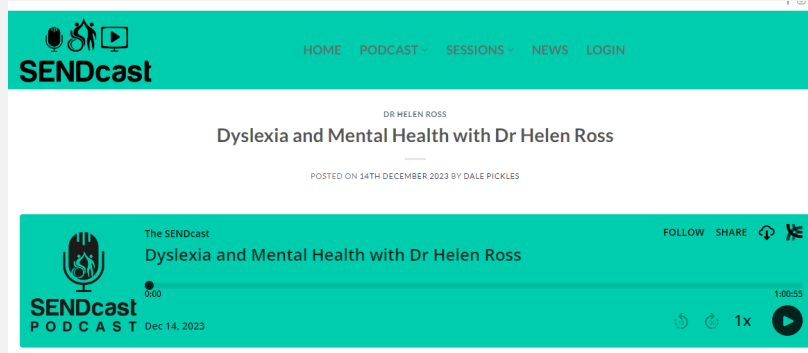
We understand that the decision to book an assessment is often not to be taken lightly and, especially in times like these, you want to make sure your money will be well spent. We have two ways we can help you make a decision:

- If you are unsure whether an assessment is the right choice, why not book a 45-minute [parent consultation](#) to discuss your child's situation with a dyslexia expert? If you go on to book an assessment, the cost of the consultation will be deducted from the assessment fee, so it would effectively have been free initial advice.
- If finances are stopping you from booking an assessment – whether it's for an adult or a child – we can offer bursary funding for low-income families to help with this, as well as the option to pay in instalments.

You can find out more and make an enquiry for a consultation [here](#) or an assessment [here](#).

Do get in touch if we can help you – or anyone you know – by emailing enquiries@helenarkell.org.uk and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

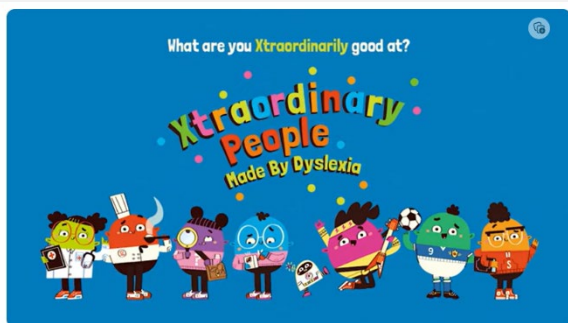
[Dyslexia and Mental Health with Dr Helen Ross \(thesendcast.com\)](https://thesendcast.com)



When was the last time you used a pen? Maybe when completing a form, or writing some Christmas cards, but we certainly don't have pen pals anymore! Everything outside of school is digital and has been replaced with technology – so why do we still expect children at school to write perfectly with no mistakes?

Around 10% of the population are dyslexic and it's a condition that goes beyond difficulties with reading and writing, often leading to profound effects on an individual's well-being.

In today's episode, Dr Helen Ross a dyslexia expert and consultant, joins Dale for a lively discussion on the relationship between 'Dyslexia and Mental Health'. Helen draws upon her personal experience and expertise to emphasise the damaging effects on children and young people of being belittled for their inability to write neatly, spell correctly, or make mistakes in their handwriting. The infamous pen licence can create all-consuming anxiety for some children and young people and the pressure they put on themselves permeates every aspect of their lives!



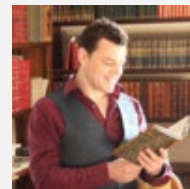
HRH Princess Beatrice reads "Xtraordinary People" Made By Dyslexia children's book

HRH Princess Beatrice reads our brilliant kids book Xtraordinary People which is written to help every dyslexic child discover their #DyslexicSuperpowers!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6f8QVnDXfU>

Richard Branson joins her to read the forward he has written for the book too. *"This brilliant book will help you understand the 'Xtraordinary' strengths that come with dyslexia. I hope it will inspire to you find your talents and chase your dreams."* Richard Branson.

Dyslexic people think differently. This different way of thinking makes us 'Xtraordinarily' good at certain things. This book will help you discover the seven different types of 'Xtraordinary' People and their 'superpowers'... and discover what yours are too!



Allow me to say something controversial for a second.
It might be time to stop the Cult of Dyslexia.

I'm [#dyslexic](#). I admire so many famous and successful [#dyslexics](#). I even argue that one of the reasons they became so successful is that they are (or were) dyslexic. I'd go further: the reason I got my own PhD, and have done some of the amazing things I've been privileged to do, is down to my [#dyslexia](#). There's a connection, albeit a complex and difficult one to prove.

But we have to stop turning people like Einstein and Bill Gates into a cult. Holding them up as role-models is such a great thing to do where we see kids struggling at school because the system just doesn't let them shine. I have no problem with that.

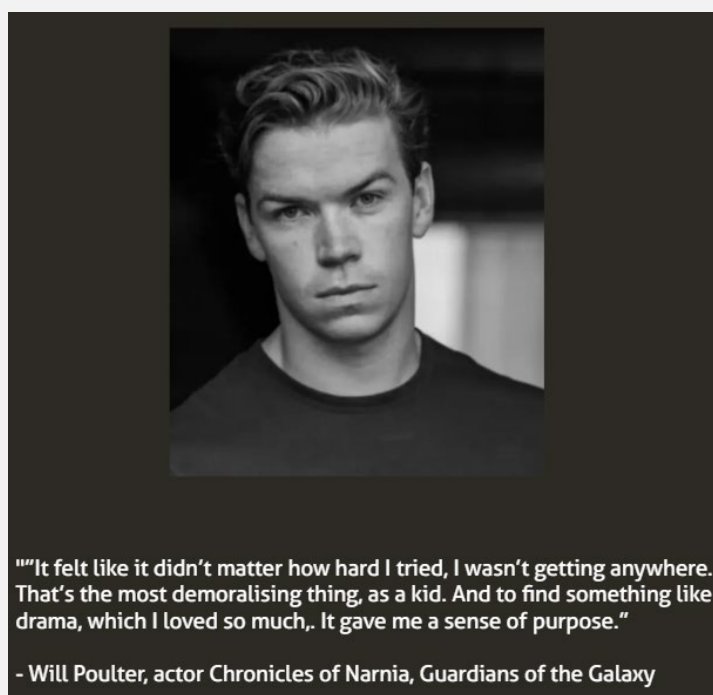
But we, the dyslexic people, are so much more than them. And the complexities of dyslexia are so much more than the positives and successes of some famous businesspeople, actors and scientists.

How often do we see dyslexia associated with one or another famous hero?
Yet there's so much more to dyslexia than Einstein, Picasso, or Steve Jobs.

You are creative
You are intelligent
You are inconsistent
You are frustrating
You are a problem solver
You are visual
You are struggling
You are penalised
You are messy
You are misunderstood
You are unique
You are dyslexic

Dyslexia Bytes

Please, let's not forget the rest of us. It's time to break the oligarchy and democratise dyslexia!



[Dyslexia in the limelight - British Dyslexia Association](#)

It is always fantastic to see people in the public eye openly sharing their lived experience of dyslexia.

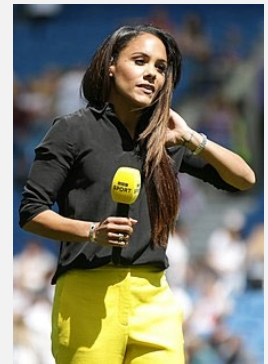
Whether you are an aspiring singer, racing car driver, entrepreneur, TV personality, or sports star - these dyslexic individuals use their influence and following to inspire young people, raise awareness, and challenge the stigma.

Here are a few we have been following on social media:



Paloma Faith

We all know Paloma Faith from her chart-topping hits, but did you know she is also dyslexic? Paloma described how being dyslexic never stopped her loving books, and how she will now encourage children to use their imagination when reading and writing!



Alex Scott

Alex Scott is an ex-England women's football player and now Pundit. Growing up, Alex had a speech impediment, and she is also dyslexic. However, she went on to play for England Women's as well as host and pundit for football!

A few more at: [Dyslexia in the limelight - British Dyslexia Association](#)



ANND was joined by the inspirational and very wise [Keisha Adair Swaby \(BSc First Class Hon\) MSc](#) as we talked about her lived experience, including how and why she wrote her awesome book 'Empowering Dyslexics - Blessed and Gifted' ❤️

Want to listen? Here is the link 🖱️ <https://lnkd.in/ecqiNTKb>

Big thanks as always to Yorkshire Rose Dyslexia Association, Hampshire Dyslexia Association and [Adult Dyslexia Centre](#), together we make a difference ❤️





[Donna Stevenson - Dyslexia Trainer, Consultant and Workplace Needs Assessor](#)

As John Lennon said 'Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans...' ❤️ Being a guest on [Dyslexia Life Hacks](#) really made me reflect on that as [Matthew Head](#) took me right back to the beginning of my journey with dyslexia! ❤️ Link to listen below 🙋

[Episode 71 - How to Change the way Dyslexia is Seen with Donna Stevenson - Dyslexia Life Hacks](#)

Perfect timing too as the conversation enabled me to look back on the wonderful time I've had at [Succeed With Dyslexia](#) and look towards new adventures! ❤️

Back in the 1990's dyslexia was not seen in the same way it is today! A lot has changed in the past 30 years (outside dial up internet, mobile phones, wide screen TVs, DVD's, and interesting haircuts) the way dyslexia is seen in schools and workplace has changed significantly. But there is still more to do!

This episode's guest [Donna Stevenson](#) tells us and host [Matthew Head](#) how, today companies want to learn more about dyslexia and other neurodiversities and even appoint more into roles within their organisation. Donna tells us that this wasn't quite the case in the 90's when she started working with the [British Dyslexia Association](#) after a short career break from teaching.

Donna started her career as a Nursery Nurse and a Primary School teacher, where she developed a passion for supporting those learners with dyslexia. At this time, the training for teachers to all children with 'specific learning difficulties', which included dyslexia, was crammed into an afternoon. Feeling like it wasn't enough and wanting to do more, Donna decided to pursue her passion to help people with dyslexia.

Over the years at the BDA she worked with children and adults with dyslexia; working within education and workplaces to raise awareness and champion the Dyslexia Friendly approach.

Her passion in the latter part of her career is now supporting adults in the workplace through delivering training and as a Workplace Needs Assessor.

In this episode Donna tells us how sharing lived experience is invaluable to better understanding dyslexia and educating people on how to succeed with dyslexia.

Key Topics:

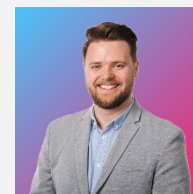
Seeing children with dyslexia as a 'write off' and wanting to do more to help people with dyslexia learn.

Pursuing a passion to help dyslexic people at school and in the workplace.

How dyslexia was seen in the 90s, but there is still more to do!

More conversations at: [Podcast - Dyslexia Life Hacks](#)

Jaye is an experienced Customer Service Manager. After studying motorsport engineering at university, he went into a career centred on problem-solving and helping people, jumping from engineering to customer support. Jaye joined Mind Tools in 2016 and has worked in several roles, always focusing on a customer-first mentality. A published poet and keen hiker, in his spare time Jaye enjoys mountain climbing.



Dyslexia at Work: How I Learned to Live With My Dyslexia

November 2, 2023

Jaye O'Farrell-Stevens

"Please read the letters on the wall," said the optician. "Erm. A, P, H, G," I guessed. "That was a long pause," she said. "Were you struggling with that line?" "I've struggled with lots of the letters," I admitted.

This is a standard example of my life: finding mundane, everyday tasks difficult. Going to the opticians, for most, is a test of your eyesight. But, for me, it's a test of my brain. I struggle to tell the difference between some letters because I'm dyslexic – and now the owner of an unnecessary pair of glasses.

What Is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia was first named by German ophthalmologist Professor Rudolf Berlin in the 18th century. It's a condition that's hereditary and often random. We don't yet fully understand the cause of the condition, but its effects can be broad and diverse.

There isn't a fixed definition of dyslexia, and you'll get a different answer depending on the resource you consult. My favourite definition is the one from [The Rose Report](#):

*"Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that **primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling**. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. **It is best thought of as a continuum**, not a distinct category... Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia."*

I especially like this definition because it makes the point that the key components of dyslexia are words – spoken and written – while a caravan of bonus symptoms tag along, like coordination, mathematics and concentration.

For my part, I struggle with reading, writing, and especially short-term memory. Dates and figures disappear from my mind as quickly as the breeze passes over my forehead. One of my best friends suffers from dyslexia, too, and he is constantly falling over due to poor motor coordination. Whereas I can happily walk a high ropes course without peril.

Dyslexia is diverse, and the familiar trope of, "Well, I can't spell so I'm dyslexic," is reductive and unhelpful. Each person with dyslexia suffers a range of symptoms, which can change over time.

Discovering My Dyslexia

When I was in Year 1 at school, we weren't allowed to go for lunch until we'd put our books away in little trays with our names on them. One of my earliest memories is of sitting and crying while the teacher willed me on to find my name. I couldn't find my name because I couldn't read my name.

I remember being set homework and my dad getting frustrated because I couldn't complete it. It wasn't until I moved schools in Year 4 that things changed. I met the wonderful Mr Bush and he immediately

realised I had dyslexia. As soon as the penny dropped, I was put into specific classes and offered specialist help. My reading and writing quickly improved, and my dad came up with an ingenious way to make me practice reading: half an hour of reading meant half an hour of Gran Turismo 4 on the PlayStation.

But as my reading and writing improved, so did my self-awareness. I realised that dyslexia was going to be a real problem and something that might potentially hold me back in the workplace.

Keeping It a Secret

Dyslexia is conspicuous in its notoriety; everyone thinks they understand it, while most have little grasp of what it is or what it means for the individual with it. But because everyone has heard of it, peers think they're qualified to give advice.

As I entered the workplace, I was warned not to bring it up. When I went for my first interview, I was told by a peer who meant well, "Don't mention you have dyslexia. If it gets down to the final selection, and you're both equally qualified and experienced, they're going to pick the other person as they'll be less of an inconvenience."

At the time, this seemed like sensible advice (and advice I adhered to). It was only much later on that I realized that hiding your condition and being ashamed of it is not positive, not progress, and not helpful to anyone. I carried this shame with me for many years. I spent a long time trying my best to hide my condition, laughing off the spelling mistakes and the figures I kept forgetting. It took a long time to get over that shame.

Dyslexia at Work

Hiding a core aspect of yourself is tiring. Pretending you can disguise your struggles with something as fundamental as reading and writing can only go on so long, especially in a workplace where you do a lot of reading and writing.

I think Teams and Slack strike fear into a lot of dyslexics. Now, not only will your team see your writing, but the entire company can critique your grasp of "though, thought, tough, through, and thorough."

At some point in my career, I decided I wanted to make a change. I didn't want to hide my dyslexia anymore. And the stars aligned in several key areas:

1. I had matured as a person and in my seniority, so I was less afraid.
2. I had a boss I trusted and who supported my personal development.
3. Mind Tools (where I work) asked for anyone with a learning disability to come forward to contribute toward a project.

I offered myself to Mind Tools, and before I knew it I was speaking on webinars, writing blogs, featuring in videos, and being interviewed. I had the opportunity to talk and for people to listen.

How Can Managers Support Dyslexic Employees?

A common question I received was, "What can managers do to support dyslexics?" Here's my answer.

Foster a Supportive Environment

The most important thing anyone can do is to help foster a supportive environment. If you create the right company culture, your employees will feel empowered to come to you with what they need. And that goes far beyond dyslexia.

Talk to Your Team

If you're aware you have dyslexic individuals in your team, talk to them about what they need. Do they feel excluded from team workshops that involve a lot of writing? Are they struggling with the dreaded "timed Miro board"? If so, how can you modify these activities to be more inclusive? Ask them what they need – they'll know best.

Use Technology

We're currently blessed with some astounding AI tools, from autocorrects that actually work to incredibly accurate transcription tools. Think about how you can leverage these tools to support your team. And make it clear where these tools are available – they shouldn't be something employees need to ask for.

I've recently stopped writing instructions for tasks. Now I use free screen-recording software (the [Screencastify](#) Chrome browser plugin) to record myself doing the task while narrating my actions. It's been a game changer.

Conduct a Review of Tasks and Responsibilities

Can roles be shifted around? Or can tasks that were traditionally written instead be recorded, like I now do? Take this as an opportunity to review your legacy tasks and harness the opportunity to renew and improve.

All these changes will not only make your team members more efficient and productive, they will also be happier. Morale is infectious, and it will spread across the team. It'll be a more energized team, working even better together. And when everyone can perform at their best, they're going to race through the team bonding stages of [forming, storming, norming, and performing](#).

"The World Is Not a Wish-Granting Factory"

The author John Green wrote, "The world is not a wish-granting factory." I'm not going to wake up tomorrow and be cured. I will always have dyslexia and there's nothing I can do about it. But there is something that **you** can do about it.

You can make the workplace more inclusive, make the world less judgmental and open, and support equal opportunities for all. When this happens, we all benefit. My one wish you have the power to grant is that you level the playing field as best you can.

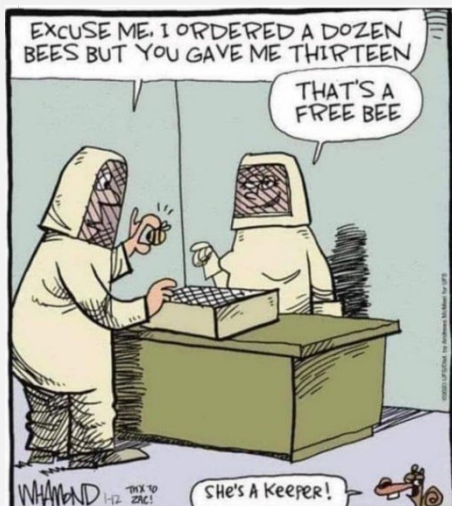
I'll still own a pair of glasses that I don't need and get frustrated trying to reason with an inanimate parking meter, but I'll be happier doing it. And wouldn't that be nice?

Useful Resources on Dyslexia in the Workplace

For more information and useful tips, try these Mind Tools resources. (Some of these will only be available to Mind Tools members.)

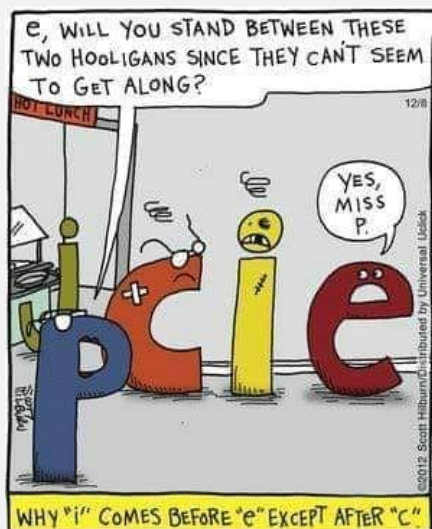
[Dyslexia in the Workplace](#) (Article)
[Neurodiversity in the Workplace](#) (Article)
[Diversity at Work](#) (Animated Video)
[Autism in the Workplace](#) (Article)
[ADHD in the Workplace](#) (Article)
[Improving Group Dynamics](#) (Article)
[Training Needs Assessment](#) (Article)

And finally . . .



Apparently this week it will be constant rane, hele, thundre, litnin and frizzing colde.

Really bad spell of weather.



I have learned two very important things in life.

I don't remember the first one, but the second one is write everything down.



Caroline Fowke

Caroline Fowke
Wiltshire Dyslexia Association

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WDA details - see our [flyer](#)

 [Wiltshire Dyslexia Association](#)

[British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](http://bdadyslexia.org.uk)

[Wiltshire Council Dyslexia Leaflet 2023.pdf](#)

[BDA Guide for Parents](#)

[BDA Employers Guide](#)