



## Wiltshire Dyslexia Association 2025 - Issue 3

Welcome to the  
latest edition of  
our WDA  
newsletters.

11 April 2025

### WILTSHIRE NEWS

You are cordially invited to join us online for our next WDA AGM

#### WDA AGM + WDA Members in Conversation

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm

Following the usual agenda items (which usually last less than 30 mins) we plan to hold a discussion on a variety of topics. Hopefully we will be able to share with you our new WDA logo and provide an update on our new website.

As there are numerous opportunities to join free webinars online, which I promote in these newsletters, we thought that on this occasion we would have a panel of speakers who will share their news and answer questions.

So far, the panel would include Dr Helen Ross and David Williams - and Alison Szalay, who will be able to update us on Wiltshire's programme to provide training for schools to acquire the BDA's Dyslexia Friendly Schools Quality Mark. Also, Dawn Crowle will talk about her new book (details on page 38).

#### What would you like to hear discussed?

Please do let me know if you have any ideas for a particular topic or would like to submit a question in advance: [caroline.fowke@btinternet.com](mailto:caroline.fowke@btinternet.com)

I'll provide the meeting link, agenda and documentation later next week.



**THANK YOU TO MYLES PILLING FOR HIS  
EXCELLENT WORKSHOP . . . and thanks  
to the many teachers who attended.**



Last week the WDA funded an assistive technology workshop for Wiltshire teachers from thirty schools and the SEN Service. We are grateful to Myles Pilling, Specialist SEND ICT-AT Consultant, AccessAbility Solutions, who was our speaker.

The aims of the session were to show and demonstrate some new technologies that have appeared in the last year. Also to look at established assistive technologies and their updates and understand how AT can be implemented in schools.

The presentation slides and links to resources discussed are available here:

<https://aas123.com>

## Online Dyslexia Workshop for Wiltshire Parents and Carers



Find out about dyslexia and the support available in Wiltshire from Wiltshire Council's Specialist SEN Service for Wiltshire Primary and Secondary School parents and carers.

**Thursday 15th May 2025 at 4:00pm - 5:30pm Online**

This online, live session will allow parents and carers to find out what dyslexia is, how schools and other agencies in Wiltshire identify and support literacy difficulties, and ways to help at home.

### **Booking Information:**

You can join on the day on Microsoft Teams (no need to book).

Click [here](#) for the direct link to the meeting on **Thursday 15th May 2025**.

See the meeting ID and passcode below if you need them.

Meeting ID:- 358 132 947 13

Passcode:- 3h4jaF

This session is only available to join live; no recording will be available after the event. You can find further information and links to previous dyslexia webinars, Wiltshire's Dyslexia-Friendly Schools, and Wiltshire Council's Dyslexia Leaflet by taking a look at this [article](#) on the WPCCC website.



## Wiltshire SEND Transformation Programme

If you missed the recent webinar on support available in schools and educational settings, you can now watch the full session on YouTube!

The webinar explored the support available in early years, mainstream schools, and post-16 settings in Wiltshire, known as Ordinarily Available Provision. It covered the strategies and resources that schools should provide to help all learners thrive.

We also discussed Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, including support for children experiencing anxiety, depression, social difficulties, and challenging behaviours that may affect their learning.

Don't miss this valuable information—watch now and learn about the support available for your child!

Available to watch -

[Support available in educational settings for all children webinar: YouTube](#)

Read the follow up answers download -

[Answers from 26 February 2025 SEND Transformation Webinar \(OpenDocument text format, 24 KB\)](#)

Thank you to all the parents who recently took part in our Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) consultation. Based on the feedback we received we are reviewing our approach and we're grateful to everyone who was involved.

The government is poised to make changes to SEND nationally and while we wait for more detail on that, the funding of EHCPs isn't changing.

We'll keep you updated but meanwhile for wider information on SEND support, please visit our [Support for SEND - Local Offer](#)

## Library strategy published

A strategy that outlines our library service's vision, purpose and key areas of focus for the next five years has been published following its approval late last year.

The Wiltshire Council Library Strategy 2025-2030 was agreed at our Cabinet meeting in December 2024 and was developed following extensive dialogue with communities and partners across the county.

[Read the Library Strategy now](#)



**Wiltshire SENDIASS**

## INTRODUCING Wiltshire SENDIASS Drop In Hubs

These hubs are designed to create space for families, professionals, young people and parents/carers to come and access SEND advice and information in person, with a very warm welcome.

- Warminster library - Every second Monday of the month between 12 and 2pm; BA12 9BT
- Trowbridge County Hall Family Hub - Every third Monday of the month between 11:30 and 1:30; BA14 8 JQ
- Chippenham library - Every fourth Tuesday of the month between 11-1pm; SN15 3EJ
- Salisbury library- Every first Thursday of the month between 10:30-12:30pm; SP1 1BL

**For more information, get in touch:**

- 📞 01225 255266
- ✉️ [wiltshire.sendiass@family-action.org.uk](mailto:wiltshire.sendiass@family-action.org.uk)

**family action**

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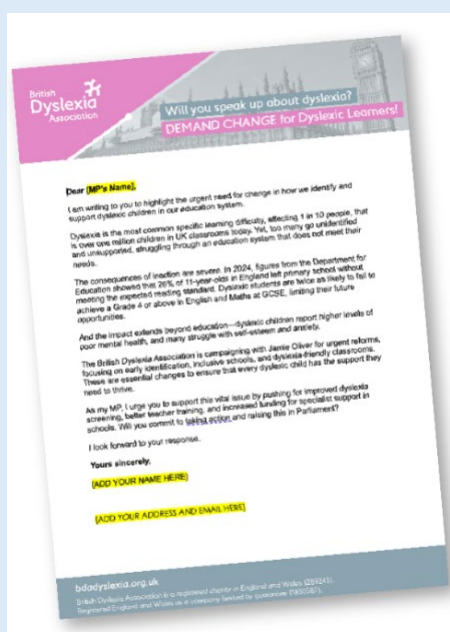


### Demand Change for Dyslexic Learners

On 11 March, representatives from the BDA and Local Dyslexia Associations stood outside the Houses of Parliament with an incredible crowd of parents, educators, and young people – calling for urgent change in our schools. We're proud to be campaigning alongside Jamie Oliver to ensure every child receives the support they need to thrive.

If you believe in equal opportunities for dyslexic children, [get involved and let's make some noise!](#)

Ellen Broomé, BDA CEO, wrote that she was proud to be there “campaigning alongside Jamie Oliver to make sure every child gets the support they need to thrive. Right now, too many children with dyslexia are slipping through the cracks, not because they lack ability, but because they aren't being identified and supported early enough. It's time for the government to take action! We need more training for teachers, early identification and early intervention, and a real commitment to making education accessible for all.”



#### Writing to your MP

It is really important that your MP hears from you about how issues relating to dyslexia affect you.

Here's a template you can use. You can also find out who your MP is and how to contact them [here](#) - or see list on next page.

We are working on a video template for you to use so you can share your experience of dyslexia with us, and we will share more about this in upcoming updates.

[Download template](#)

## Contact details for Wiltshire MPs:

Heidi Alexander	Labour	Swindon South	heidi.alexander.mp@parliament.uk
Sarah Gibson	Liberal Democrat	Chippenham	sarah.gibson.mp@parliament.uk
John Glen	Conservative	Salisbury	john.glen.mp@parliament.uk
Danny Kruger	Conservative	East Wiltshire	danny.kruger.mp@parliament.uk
Brian Mathew	Liberal Democrat	Melksham and Devizes	brian.mathew.mp@parliament.uk
Dr Andrew Murrison	Conservative	Southwest Wiltshire	murrisona@parliament.uk
Dr Roz Savage	Liberal Democrat	South Cotswolds	roz.savage.mp@parliament.uk
Will Stone	Labour	Swindon North	will.stone.mp@parliament.uk

## Fix The System, Not The Kids

Too many kids are being let down by an education system that just isn't built for them. Bright, creative, brilliant minds are being written off – not because they aren't smart, but because they don't learn the "right" way.

And I was one of them. Like three kids in every classroom, I have dyslexia. I struggled at school, felt rubbish and thought I wasn't clever, just because my brain worked differently.

Of all the things that should work for every child, surely it's education?!

I don't have all the answers, but here's where we start:

- **Spot the signs early.** How can we help kids if we don't even know they need support? Early screening means we catch it fast – before they're left to struggle.
- **Back our teachers.** Of course, they want to help every child, so let's make sure they get the training and support to do it.

Education isn't a luxury – it should work for every child. But a system that only works for some kids is just broken. **So let's fix it.**

Big love,

Jamie O x



Alison Szalay – Wiltshire Specialist Advisory Teacher for SEND (Cognition and Learning) SSENS - met Jamie Oliver and was filmed for his documentary.

Watch:

[Jamie Oliver calls for more government support for dyslexic children - BBC News](#)



Link to March Newsletter : <https://joom.ag/jfMd>

See past issues by signing up for a free registration: <https://www.dyslexicadvantage.org/newsletter-archives/>

Read and listen to more articles in our [DYSLEXIA LIBRARY](#).

## Narrowing the digital divide consultation

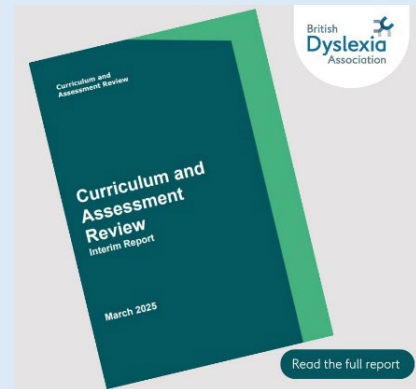
The Department for Education (DfE) has launched a public consultation on narrowing the digital divide in schools and colleges, to inform future policy decisions.

Our response to [the consultation](#) will focus on questions around using technology to improve inclusion for SEND students.

Get in touch with [policy@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:policy@bdadyslexia.org.uk) if you have any experiences you would like to share with us and inform our response.

## Curriculum and Assessment Review – Interim report 18 March 2025

In July 2024, the Government commissioned Professor Becky Francis CBE to chair a panel of experts to conduct a Curriculum and Assessment Review.



We submitted a response to the review calling for:

- The introduction of mandatory training on dyslexia and dyscalculia in Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for classroom teachers, support staff and Senior Leadership Teams.
- All teachers to be trained in how to use adaptive teaching techniques to support dyslexic and dyscalculic children.
- Flexibility for schools to use other methods than systematic synthetic phonics to teach reading and spelling.
- School performance data recognising schools that are welcoming and supportive of those with special educational needs.
- Explicit teaching of assistive technology such as screen reading in Key Stage 2 to help reading and spelling.
- Schools to have timely access to specialist resources to help identify and support dyslexic learners.
- Widening the scope of the curriculum and assessment at Key Stage 4 to provide earlier access to vocational pathways and functional skills alongside or in place of GCSE examinations.
- Allowing flexibility to enable dyslexic and dyscalculic students to progress to Level 3 qualifications without a pass in GCSE maths and English where they meet the other entry requirements for a course.
- Revision of T Level content and offering this qualification alongside, not instead of other vocational and technical qualifications pathways.
- Rethinking the assessment techniques used in GCSE to better meet the needs of all learners.
- Removing spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) marks in GCSE exams that are not testing English language skills or enable learners to use assistive technology to gain these marks.

The panel has now published an interim report of the findings which set out four key areas of focus for further investigation.

While there are some positive steps outlined, we believe that the review falls short of the changes we need for dyslexic learners to thrive.

Read more about what we are calling for: [Curriculum and Assessment Review – Interim report 18 March 2025 - British Dyslexia Association](#) [Read the full report](#)



## Here are the latest updates from Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity!

All their latest news including upcoming events and workshops. You can download this e-newsletter as a PDF [here](#).

We are offering **20% off ALL shop items\*** when you use code **'SPRING20'** at checkout! This offer is valid until 20<sup>th</sup> of April so don't miss out, now is the time to stock up on books, resources, and stationery!

[Shop now](#)

\*Offer does not apply to live or on-demand courses.



### £30 off Dyslexia Assessments!

If you make a booking enquiry for an online assessment before 30<sup>th</sup> April, we will be able to offer you a £30 discount on the price of the assessment.

[Book an Assessment now!](#)



Thanks to the **Theo Paphitis Dyslexia Bursary** we are thrilled to be able to offer more teachers and teaching assistants from the state school sector **free places** in the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity's six-week online [Supporting Learners with Dyslexia](#) course.

The course comprises **six three-hour sessions on Fridays from 9.30 am, starting on 25 April 2025**. Recordings of each session are sent out after the live session for anyone who is unable to attend.

**To apply for a bursary-funded place on this course**, simply complete a short application form [here](#).

Please note, if you have already received a free place for this course, you will not be eligible for another free place. If your team found this course helpful you can book a paid-for place.

**Non bursary places** are still available for anyone supporting learners with dyslexia who wishes to attend, but the normal fee will apply.

Here's what one of our past attendees had to say about the course:

"I would like to say what an amazing course this has been!! I am a literacy practitioner at a secondary school, and the course was everything I was looking for and more! It has given me so much confidence delivering my literacy sessions, and I have gained so many tips and ideas. The presenters' wealth of knowledge and information has been amazing, and I've thoroughly enjoyed every week."

**Book your place [here!](#)**

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or need further information. We would love to see your staff benefit from this valuable training opportunity.

Warm regards,

*Claire*

Claire Harvey - Head of Education



**32 years after founding [Crossbow Education](#) Bob and Anne Hext are retiring from all executive involvement at the company and handing over the reins to Ionë, their daughter.**

Bob Hext, founder and (formerly) CEO recently wrote:

“Those of you who know us well might think that we would have mixed feelings about handing over our baby, but actually that’s not the case at all: we are really excited about the next phase of our lives, and fully confident in Ionë’s ability to take Crossbow to new heights. We will still rock up at the odd conference, Anne will carry on with Aravis, her wonderful Dyslexia friendly font, and I will probably do a bit of product development and marketing; but we won’t be making any decisions and I will not be answering any business related emails! And I will be spending more time birdwatching than coming anywhere near the office.

If you want to read a bit of a reflection on my time with Crossbow, I’ve posted an article on our blog site called [Watching from the Wings – Crossbow Education's Blog](#)

Most of you know us as providers of tinted exercise books and coloured overlays for visual difficulties, and as the inventors of the eye level reading ruler, but did you know that from 1993, when we published our first phonics game, to 2004 when we launched the first reading rulers, we were uniquely publishers and suppliers of multisensory literary resources? Card games, board games, spinners, flashcards and the like were our bread and butter.

We ran the company from our house, with four employees, until 2009 when we finally moved into commercial premises (which we had outgrown again by 2018, when we moved to our current location).



Practically every corner was loaded with boxes, files, and computer equipment. The garden was full of sheds and the garage was the print room. The picture above was one end of our living room. That’s a much younger version of Pelle, now our general manager, sitting in the foreground on the left. Some of our card games were printed on the A3 printer on the right before going off to be laminated and guillotined. The beautiful cat sitting on Anne’s desk was Bubbles, stone deaf, and now just a fond memory. As you can see, we’ve come a long way since those days, and that is thanks to you, our customers.


Thank you for buying from us and staying with us. And now this is “Au revoir,” from Anne and me on my last day as CEO. The good ship Crossbow sails on, but we are off on a cruise. Bye!!!”



**Naomi Ashman**

I am conducting research with UCL into the impact of professional development for SENCOs, both in terms of their development and subsequent career trajectory. If you hold the NASENCo qualification (whether or not you currently work as a SENCO), please consider completing a ten-minute survey here: [Where Have All the SENCOs Gone? SENCOs' \(and previous SENCOs'\) experience of the NASENCO](#)

Thank you!

**Where have all the SENCOs gone?**  
Research participants needed... 

We want your help to understand the professional and personal impact of the NASENCO qualification.


Has it impacted your career trajectory and professional development?

It is hoped this research will provide insight into factors that could improve professional development for SENCOs and help mitigate the SENCO retention crisis.


Do you hold the NASENCO qualification? If so, you're eligible!


We want to hear from you, whether you:

- Currently work as a SENCO,
- Work in another role in education,
- Have left the education sector,
- Have retired.




What does participation involve?

 Online questionnaire completion at your convenience (approximately 10 minutes)

 Optional online follow-up interview (maximum 45 minutes)

Scan the QR code to complete the survey online or click the link in the LinkedIn post:

THANK YOU



For further information, contact Naomi Ashman on: [naomi.ashman.23@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:naomi.ashman.23@ucl.ac.uk)



**Lack of SEN support leads to a sharp rise in school absence and EHC plan requests**

There is not enough SEN support in mainstream schools for children with special education needs (SEN) in England, [our new research finds](#).

**Our new research in NeuroDiversity Week**

Last week was Neurodiversity Week (17-23 March) and we wanted to [share some new research we have published](#).



I spy members of the WDA speaking at this year's show . . . Dr Helen Ross and David Williams!

**NEC Birmingham**  
**Full details now available at:**  
**[Book Your Tickets](#)**



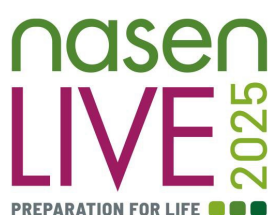
**Annual Dyslexia Guild  
Online Conference  
Wednesday 2 July 2025**

Join us [online](#) on Wednesday, **2 July 2025** for a chance to hear expert views and examine current topical issues relating to dyslexia and other SpLDs.

You'll have the chance to listen to our four keynote speakers, who will be providing presentations about morphology, understanding and supporting dyslexia and ADHD, assessing language in adults, and guidance about gathering and interpreting qualitative data during assessments! You will also have the opportunity to attend some add-on sessions, including a talk from a behavioural optometrist, [Dyslexia Action's Shop](#) 30th anniversary, new products for 2025 and funded apprenticeships!

Why not benefit from taking time out of your daily schedule to learn and reflect on cutting-edge practice.

Gain a 5-hour CPD attendance certificate ([2.5 hours of which is SASC accredited](#)) when you attend this event.



**4th July 2025**

**08:30 - 16:30**

**The Vox, Resorts World, Birmingham**

Unlock a world of innovation, inclusion, and inspiration at nasen LIVE 2025! Join leading specialists, educators, and advocates as we come together to shape the future of SEND. Be part of this unmissable in-person CPD conference, gain invaluable insights, and contribute to meaningful change in the sector. Don't miss your chance to connect, learn, and lead the way in 2025!

[Book your place today!](#)

**EARLY BIRD SPECIAL**

**Positive Dyslexia Presents**

Positive Dyslexia Conferences  
2025  
Edge Hill/Twickenham/Liverpool

# Dyscalculia Conference, Edge Hill University

Opened by Dr Steve Chinn  
Key note speakers include Dr Giannis Karagiannakis

*For further information on speakers etc click on the QR code*

**26th June 2025**      **Start at 9:30am**

Go to our webshop to book [www.positivedyslexia.co.uk](http://www.positivedyslexia.co.uk)

Use the code **SEN** at checkout for your special discount.

This works for all three conferences:

Dyscalculia Conference  
Edge Hill  
26th June

Dyslexia Conference  
Twickenham  
18th September

Dyslexia Conference  
Liverpool  
20th November

**SHOP NOW**



## Discover our self-paced e-learning courses

Our e-learning provides a deep dive into SEND law for all experience levels. Each course includes downloadable resources and online tasks, guiding you step-by-step through essential topics in SEND law.

Explore our e-learning today:

[E-learning for parents and carers](#)

[E-learning for local authorities](#)

[E-learning for parent groups, schools and charities](#)

[E-learning for SEN professionals and private organisations](#)

FREE Webinar

# MAKING SENSE OF NUMBERS

Supporting your child with maths



## WEBINAR RECORDING:

You can watch the session at any time using this [link](#). You can also find other helpful videos on our [YouTube Channel](#).

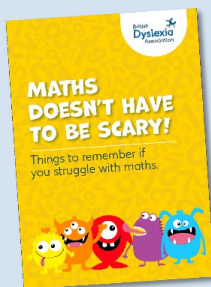
[View presentation slides here](#)



### Top tips for parents

Online booklet with hints and tips to help support a child struggling with maths.

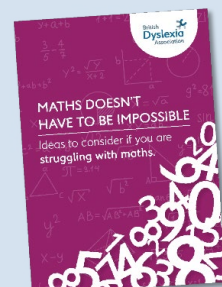
[Maths tips for supporting children](#)



### Maths doesn't have to be scary!

Online booklet with hints and tips to help young children with their maths skills.

[Maths doesn't have to be scary!](#)



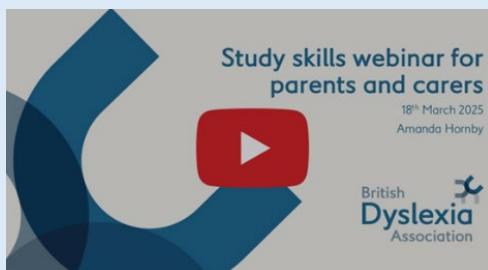
### Maths doesn't have to be impossible!

Online booklet with hints and tips to help a young person that struggles with maths.

[Maths doesn't have to be impossible!](#)

[Dyscalculia Information Sheet \(Child\)](#)

[Dyscalculia Information Sheet \(Adults\)](#)



### Webinar Recording

You can re-watch the session at any time using this [link](#). You can also find other helpful videos on our [YouTube Channel](#).

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

### Additional resources:

[Revision tips for parents.pdf](#)

[Revision tips for parents flowchart.pdf](#)

### Webinar Recording

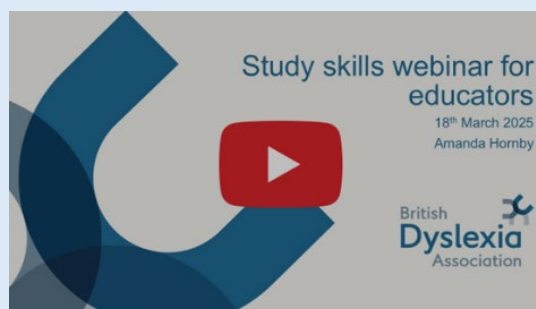
You can re-watch the session at any time using this [link](#). You can also find other helpful videos on our [YouTube Channel](#).

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

### Additional resources:

[Educator - British Dyslexia Association](#)

[Training - British Dyslexia Association](#)





[Ellen Broome](#)

☀️ Reflecting on an Inspiring LinkedIn Live with [neurobox!](#) ☀️

I had the pleasure of joining [neurobox](#) for a fantastic LinkedIn Live session for [hashtag#NeurodiversityCelebrationWeek](#). A huge thank you to the wonderful [Donna Stevenson](#) and [Jessica Faye Mann](#) for hosting and making it happen.

## You can watch it here: [Let's Talk Dyslexia at Work | LinkedIn](#)

Key takeaways from our discussion:

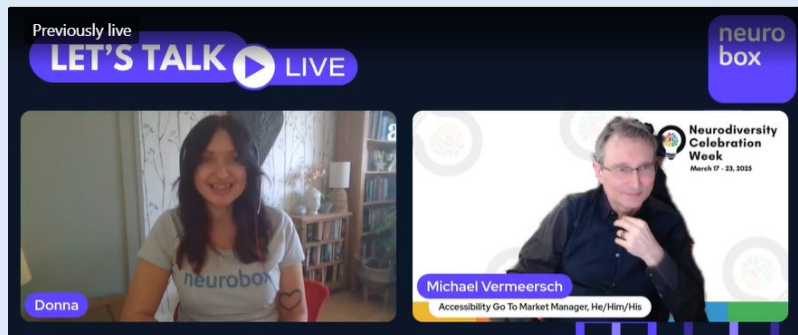
✅ Celebrating different minds! Too many people with dyslexia and neurodiversity feel shame or struggle within systems that don't recognise their strengths, just their weaknesses. But we at [British Dyslexia Association](#) think being different is a good thing, something to be proud of and celebrated.

✅ My own journey. [hashtag#Neurodiversity](#) has always been part of my life and I am really passionate about creating change. I'm proud to lead the [British Dyslexia Association](#), an organisation that has been supporting the [hashtag#dyslexia](#) community for over 50 years.

✅ Support is here. If you or someone you know needs help, our free national helpline ☎️ 0333 405 4567 or ✉️ [helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk) provides confidential information and signposting. You can also reach us via Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, or our website [bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://bdadyslexia.org.uk).

## [Let's Talk Microsoft Copilot](#)

In this Let's Talk session, Donna meets with Microsoft's Accessibility Go To Market Manager, Michael Vermeersch. As well as this, Michael is also the Disability Employee Resource Group UK Chapter Lead.



Michael shares his journey as a neurodifferent professional, what copilot is and how it makes a difference in the neurodifferent community.

Neurobox would love to thank Donna Stevenson and all of our wonderful guests for getting involved in our Let's Talk sessions during NCW! Catch up with all the amazing sessions here:

- [Let's Talk Neurodifferent Entrepreneurs](#) with Elizabeth Takyi
- [Let's Talk Dyslexia at Work](#) with Ellen Broome from BDA
- [Let's Talk Celebrating Different Minds](#) with Sam Rapp
- [Let's Talk Microsoft Copilot](#) with Michael Vermeersch from Microsoft
- [Let's Talk Neuroinclusion](#) with Jenna Kenyani



## SPOTLIGHT ON

Back by popular demand, the How To webinars will continue again this year!

Looking to begin again in June, in these FREE webinars our experts deep dive into the more common questions we get asked! With freedom to come back to the webinar recording at any time, we also provide free resources to work through with each session!

Catch up with last year's webinars by clicking below!

[Catch up](#)

## Online SEND CPD Units



This series of online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) units explore some of the most commonly observed barriers to learning in classrooms and other learning environments, regardless of age, label or area of need.

The units are developed in partnership with leading specialists from the sector to provide clear guidance on adaptations to teaching to help meet the needs of all learners.

As 'short hop' learning journeys, each unit can be completed in under an hour. There's no need to study the units in order, so you can tap into the guidance you need as and when you need it.

Please note, you must be [logged into your free nasen or Whole School SEND account](#) to access these online units.

For anyone who wants to further contextualise learning from the units, the teams involved in their development often feature in our Specialist Spotlight Sessions. These hour-long live discussions are a great place to build on learning, share experiences and seek advice.

[Access online CPD](#)

## Recording of Dyslexia and Home Education Masterclass



Join Jo Rees and Liz Day as they talk about strategies, resources and ideas on how to support your child's dyslexia when home educating.

**Here is the recording:**

[Dyslexia and Home education Liz Day and Jo Rees](#)

**Resources mentioned:** IDL / Touch-type read and Spell / nesy / Stile trays / Hatcher Sound Linkage / Numicon / Active Literacy kit / Units of Sound / Alpha to Omega



Adult Network: Neurodiversity & Dyslexia

## ANND joined together recently to talk all things Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Here is the recording if you would like to take a listen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1SP7nr0CT0>



Big thanks to our experts who shared in an honest, open and at times moving way [Arran Smith](#), [Sue Flohr MBE](#), [Katrina Cochrane](#), [Kay Carter](#), [Pat Payne](#)

ANND is a coalition of like-minded organisations providing a safe, FREE space for our Neurodiversity Community [Succeed With Dyslexia](#), [neurobox](#), [Adult Dyslexia Centre](#), [Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity](#), [The Dyslexia Association](#), Yorkshire Rose Dyslexia Association, and Hampshire Dyslexia Association.

**\*\*Trigger Warning\*\*** This conversation makes reference to baby loss, which some listeners may find distressing.

**Catch up with our webinars on our [Adult Dyslexia Centre \(ADC\) - YouTube](#)**



[Louise Selby](#)

I get so many requests from parents for assessment - far more than I can fulfil.

This OnDemand course is just £24 and offers lots of practical tips.

Follow it in your own time and complete quizzes in between each short lesson.

[Dyslexia - How to support your child - A course for Parents - Louise Selby Dyslexia Specialist](#)

**NEW COURSE FOR PARENTS**

**DYSLEXIA - HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD**

01. THE DYSLEXIC EXPERIENCE
02. READING - HOW IS IT TAUGHT? HOW TO SUPPORT
03. SPELLING & WRITING STRATEGIES
04. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY
05. MEMORY & PROCESSING
06. LEARNING HOW TO LEARN & STUDY
07. EXAMS
08. CELEBRATING THE POSITIVE

[louiseselbydyslexia.com/courses](https://louiseselbydyslexia.com/courses)



### **Is your child making expected progress at school?**

Are you concerned that your child is struggling at school?

Are you finding he or she is perhaps not developing or progressing in the way that is expected for their age?

Has school advised you that your child might need a bit of extra support in the classroom?

Are you seeing differing behaviours at home than what the school is telling you?

This free pre-recorded webinar with SEN specialist Charlotte Burnell will give you an introduction to Special Educational Needs and some tips and thoughts for you to consider for getting the right support for your child's needs.

[ACCESS THE WEBINAR AND HANDOUT HERE FOR FREE](#)

## **ARTICLES & BLOGS**

**SPECIAL NEEDS JUNGLE**  
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ♦ DISABILITY ♦ HEALTH CONDITIONS ♦ RARE DISEASE  
Parent-led information, resources and informed opinion about children and young people 0-25

### [Will 10,000 new places for SEND pupils really mean “more inclusive classrooms in mainstream schools”? - Special Needs Jungle](#)



#### **Our evidence to parliamentary inquiry on 'solving the SEND crisis'**

Our evidence to the House of Commons Education Committee inquiry on 'solving the SEND crisis' has now been published.

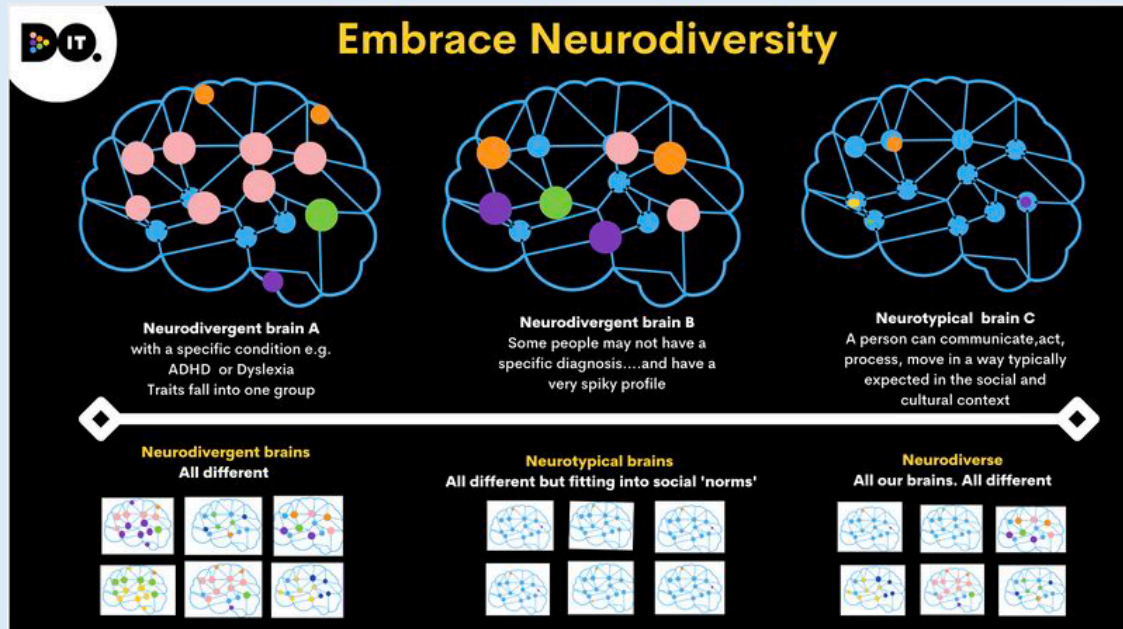
We told MPs there is no magic solution: the law is clear and should be applied for every child and young person.

[Read our submission >>](#)



## Neurodiversity 101

These newsletters by Prof. Amanda Kirby MBBS MRCGP PhD FCGI discuss all things relating to neurodiversity and provide practical strategies to help all.



## Rethinking Labels: Can We Really Clump Neurotypes?

The way we talk about neurodiversity shapes how we think about it. Language changes over time...

### We often hear:

"Neurodiverse"—but all brains are different, so isn't everyone neurodiverse?

"Neurodivergent"—but no two neurodivergent people are the same.

"Neurotypical"—but is anyone truly 'typical' across all areas of thinking, feeling, and behaving? Is this a social construct and dependent on where you live, are educated and work?

### The reality?

Co-occurrence is the rule, not the exception. Many people experience overlapping traits across what we call 'neurotypes'—ADHD, autism, dyslexia, DCD, DLD, and more.

Even within these labels, no two individuals experience the world in exactly the same way.

So, does categorising people into neat boxes help or limit our understanding?

Maybe it's time to shift the conversation from rigid labels to recognising the complexity and fluidity of human cognition.

What do you think—are traditional labels still useful, or do they oversimplify? Let's discuss.

[\(21\) Post](#) | [Feed](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

## Neurodiversity 101: Preparing yourself for workplaces

5 practical job-seeking tips if you're neurodivergent

### 1. Know your strengths and what support you need

Take time to reflect on what you're good at and where you may need specific help. Being clear about this builds your confidence and helps you explain what makes you thrive at work.

### 2. Look for jobs that match how you work best

Think about the kind of environment you prefer—quiet or busy, working alone or in a team, clear routines or varied tasks. Try to match job roles with your preferred ways of working.

### 3. Prepare for interviews in your own way

Practise answering common interview questions. Write down examples of things you've done well. If you want to, plan how to talk about being neurodivergent and the positives it brings. It's okay to ask for interview adjustments, like extra time or questions in advance. Taking in notes into an interview can be helpful if you need this for reassurance if nervous.

### 4. Don't be afraid to ask for adjustments

If something at work or during recruitment might be difficult for you, you can ask for changes—like having written instructions, a quiet workspace, or clarifying your schedule and what is expected. These are reasonable and often easy to put in place. Remember that a diagnosis does not equal an automatic set of adjustments. Different jobs and work settings may require different adjustments and what is deemed to be 'reasonable'.

### 5. Use support that's out there

Look for inclusive employers and job sites that welcome neurodivergent applicants. Talking to others with similar experiences can also give you useful tips and confidence. Is there an Employee Resource Group or a Champion in your workplace where you can ask questions?

See [www.doitprofiler.com](http://www.doitprofiler.com)

## Keeping older kids hooked on books when school's out

### Scanning Pens

March 26, 2025



When you're little, summer or Easter reading can feel like an adventure: a midweek trip to the library is a quest, and scurrying away with treasures to be shared with your stuffed animals at bedtime? That's the best reward.

It's a time of relaxation and discovery for many children, even if they need a little support to read with confidence... but things can change as they get older.

### Why do so many older students stop reading in the holidays?

- Learning isn't blended with play anymore, so these breaks represent more of an opportunity to kick back away from books.
- Competing hobbies emerge, especially social media—some children spend [up to eight hours a day on platforms like TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat](#).
- [Fear Of Missing Out \(FOMO\) can come into effect too](#), and especially now that social spaces have gone digital, it can lead to a huge uptick in passive screen time.
- [Reading differences have become more widespread due to pandemic learning loss](#), and some learners simply lack the confidence to read independently.
- And some just don't have access to books at home: in 2022, [1 in 15 children reported not having a book of their own at home](#). A further 1 in 5 reported [having less than 10 in the house](#).

## Why are we so concerned?

Because reading skills deteriorate when they're not used. Students [lose up to 20% of the previous school year's reading and learning gains over the long summer break](#), with additional losses happening across the shorter holidays. When skills slide, it makes the return to class a steeper learning curve—which puts end-of-stage students, like those heading into GCSEs and finals, at a real disadvantage.

So what can we do?

### 1. We've said it before, we'll say it again: use your library.

Books are expensive. That's where libraries come in: although they're not 100% free (you still have to travel there and pay late fees), joining a library unlocks so much choice it's unlikely young readers won't find at least one book to pique their interest. Getting them started is the important part. Roll library trips into journeys into town and use the service yourself—providing a good reading model is important and can make kids of all ages more likely to read in their leisure time.

### 2. Don't force it, or get caught up in the 'worthy' reading debate

Nothing puts older kids off like being nagged to read, especially when it comes to dry, dusty volumes that just don't engage them. Let their interest and their agency lead the way: whether they choose graphic novels in the evening, beachside biographies or gaming magazines with dinner, it's all good! Want to try a sneaky reading boost? Turn on the subtitles on the TV to increase daily reading. Head to [Turn on the Subs](#) to find out more!

### 3. Make reading a social act

Encourage them to join an online book club or participate in social media challenges and communities where they can discuss books with people their own age. Joining a local book club full of older people might be a hard sell to a fifteen-year-old, and difficult to maintain when they go back to class, but a world of reading discussion is at their fingertips on social media. If you're worried about online safety, you can join in too!

### 4. Think about accessibility

Finally, we know that some readers need more support in order to develop their confidence and read for pleasure. ['High-Low' books](#) can be key: they blend age-appropriate topics with more accessible language to unlock reading for students with additional needs, those with learning loss, and English Learners. Want to tackle non-adaptive books? Try a [reading pen](#). Text-to-speech supports comprehension, and many come with built-in translation and definition features too.

For older readers, it's all about choice, and flexibility—and when we make reading accessible, interactive and engaging, that's when we see them make that all-important reading return.

If personal ambition carries you forward, or if you march to the beat of your own drum, you might find having a role model doesn't feel that vital to you. And that's fine!

But many dyslexic folks spend our lives being told that dyslexia limits our potential: *you'll never get a good job if you can't read confidently* and *oh, you'd be better off going into something simple* are heard so often. It's hurtful (and untrue!), but it takes a lot to hear the same thing from different people, day after day, and not internalise at least some of it.

...That's where role models come in. When the world tries to tell us no, they stand as proof of what's possible. They remind us that if they could do it, so can we. And you can find them anywhere these days, especially inside your phone!

## **But the trouble with celebrity role models...**

...is that their circumstances don't always mirror our own. It's always empowering to see a celeb candidly discuss their dyslexia, but how relatable is the success of an award-winning actor with equally famous parents?

Not every dyslexic celeb has had an easy path. Far from it: some have truly inspirational stories. But the journeys of those with privileges we may never have can leave us kind of disheartened. It's easy to think *well, I don't have those connections or resources. Will I ever get anywhere?*

And even worse: *is it pointless to try?*

## **Everyday role models are a little different, though.**

Having a real-life role model like a parent, friend, teacher or community figure who's been able to — say it with us! — *succeed with dyslexia* can...

- **Remind us our dreams are totally possible!** Imagine your mum has a dyslexic mate who's built a successful small business doing something he loves or got a degree later in life. Maybe he's just really happy! People like this remind us we can do something similar if we want to, which is especially important if we ever find ourselves in a slump.
- **Be a vital resource.** Imagine you're just starting out on your dyslexia journey, and maybe you've never thought about your career, strengths, or even held a [reading pen](#) before. A role model gives us access to a source of guidance that *gets it*, and can help us overcome challenges and find solutions.
- **Remind us everyone's success looks different.** It's not just about the money and mansions that accompany stories of celebrity dyslexic successes. [These stories can actually have the opposite effect on children and young people—it's a lot of pressure!](#) But having role models where we can see their whole lives, not just the insta-perfect parts, helps us recognise that success looks different for everyone. Little victories have meaning, and what matters is being happy.

## ...So what do I do if I grew up without a dyslexic role model?

It's easy to dwell on it and question the impact it could have had. Would it have helped boost your grades, shape your career, or just made the path a little bit easier?

We can't change the past. But what we can do is be proof that thriving with dyslexia is possible... and *personal*. You don't have to be a billionaire to have something important to share! If you're comfortable with socials, have you thought about putting your story out there? Or it could be as simple as checking in with the dyslexic teens in your own family. How are they feeling?

Everyone's story is different, but having access to these real-world experiences is vital for dyslexic children and young people. Even if the achievements we've made feel pretty run-of-the-mill to us—they might be *huge* to somebody who's just starting out.

Could we be the role models we needed? Of course we can—and that's pretty inspiring, in and of itself. ❤️

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## ...What was that we were saying about dyslexia and working memory, again?

### [Succeed With Dyslexia](#)

March 5, 2025

Some dyslexic people have working memory challenges. This can—

### **Hold up, hold up! Working memory?**

Working memory is the small amount of information that can be 'held in your head', and used in the execution of cognitive tasks. It allows you to draw conclusions, solve problems, and make connections. Think of your brain as a juggler: the beanbags are the different pieces of information you're trying to keep in your mind. Like a juggler, the amount of information (or beanbags) you can juggle is finite—too many enter the rotation, and you'll likely end up dropping a few. For folks with dyslexia, they may find themselves able to juggle fewer beanbags than their peers.

### **Why?**

Dyslexic brains can have neurobiological differences in how they do what they do. We could discuss this here, but we'd have to start using words like 'temporoparietal', 'corticothalamic', and nobody has time for that.

### [...You do? Alright, then.](#)

### **But it's just about the little things, right?**

No. Working memory is used to retrieve previously-learned information and transfer new skills to long-term memory, too. So the differences can go deep, and impact skill growth in a long-term way. Have you ever learned something new on a Monday, got good at it, felt confident, then forgot how to do half of it by Tuesday?

That may be a working memory hiccup.

### ...Do I have working memory challenges?

Not everyone with dyslexia does (and you can have them without having dyslexia). But you may, and they're hard to spot, even if they're impacting us at work. Most of us just assume we have the same working memory capacity as other people until we're faced with a direct comparison.

Think of it as identifying your dyslexic workplace challenges... but on stealth mode. Done any of these, recently?

- Forgetting instructions. But you *just* had the meeting..?
- Losing your train of thought when presenting
- Meandering off-topic in conversations
- You had to ask the new hire to remind you of his name... *again*.
- Slipping on workplace admin. You've been meaning to update your bank details with HR for weeks now...
- Struggling to keep track of competing projects and deadlines, or mixing them up
- Flicking between browser tabs and forgetting what you're doing. We call this '[doorway effect](#)'.
- Finding it challenging to get to grips with new software or processes
- Finding any of these get more prevalent when environments are distracting!
- And stress or anxiety, due to any of the above.

### So what can I do about it?

We didn't write this article just to point out that some dyslexic folks have working memory challenges. Loads of you already know that— but what you might *not* know is that you can ask for [reasonable adjustments](#) for them, just the same as you can for reading and writing support.

This might look like...

- Follow-up emails after meetings, going over the key points and your tasks.
- Extra monitors, to avoid doorway effect.
- Project management tools, especially those that can send you task reminders or distil tasks into [kanban boards](#).
- Using graphics and diagrams in presentations. Many dyslexic folks with working memory issues find visually-presented information way easier to hold onto.
- Keeping your workplace free of distractions and excess noise.
- Extended periods for training and onboarding when you start a new job.

...Or anything else, too— if it helps you and it's reasonable to expect your employer to provide it, then go ahead and start the conversation.

Dyslexia doesn't look the same for everyone, and needs can go beyond reading and writing support. Sometimes, people just need a little extra to thrive in their role, and to get that all-important work-life balance back on track. ❤️



### Nessy's Home School Bulk Buy has now EXTENDED!

We are happy to announce home users can get a HUGE 60% off on our yearly subscriptions of home programs and ALL Nessy home packs!

Your discount code:

**PARENTS60**

*Sale extended until April 14th 2025*

*\*Home users only*

[Home and Home Educators | Nessy](#)

### Don't forget to download your FREE Home School Resource Pack!

This free digital pack includes our favourite free resources to help your child develop skills in literacy and mathematics.

[Parent Resource Pack - UK](#)



### British Dyslexia

Yes, you can request reasonable adjustments, but you will need to provide evidence of dyslexia. This evidence can be in the form of an email, letter, or report from a teacher, educational professional, doctor, medical professional, or occupational therapist. However, we recommend you contact the DVLA directly for the most up-to-date requirements.

The DVLA does accept reports from online assessments, but since not all online assessments provide the necessary evidence, it's important to confirm that the specific assessment you use will be accepted.

For information about special requirements: <https://bit.ly/3RASjk2>





Use Code "Easter20" at checkout

Hurry offer ends Monday 21st April

Click here for full details:

[Dyslexia Friendly Reading Rulers & Overlays | Visual Stress / Irlen Relief | Improve reading speed and comprehension](#)



Plain Window and Duo Window Reading Rulers are designed to help individuals with Visual Stress when reading. This Dyslexia friendly resource help by removing the harsh contrast of black text on a white background.

The original reading rulers from Crossbow Education! Created for visual stress sufferers to combine page tinting with tracking support, Eye Level Reading Rulers are the original low-cost solution for visual stress, and have been helping children, especially those with dyslexia, discover the joy of reading since 2005.

Buy a pack now to see if reading through colour will help you or your child to read more fluently!

SEN product of the year winner 2014 The benefits of Crossbow reading rulers and overlays have been validated by independent peer-reviewed research (Vision Research March 2019).

For a summary of the article, [click here](#).



[Convert an audio recording or dictated speech into a mind map with ivi Notes](#)

Ivvi combines audio recording, real-time transcription, and mind mapping into a seamless tool. Notes are synchronised to branches in the mind map, which can be colour-coded to mark and highlight important information.

## What Is the Male-to-Female Ratio of Dysgraphia?

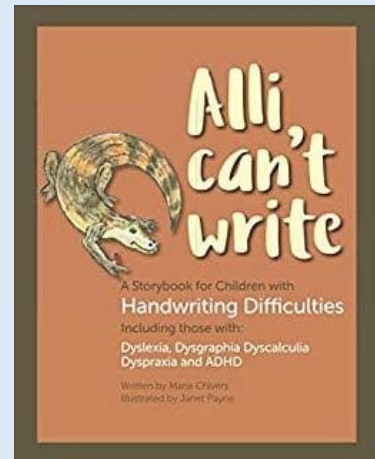
Dysgraphia is a neurological condition that makes writing difficult. It affects fine motor skills and handwriting, making it more challenging for individuals to express themselves through writing. Approximately 7-15% of school-aged children experience dysgraphia (1,2), making it a relatively common learning challenge.

Studies show that dysgraphia is diagnosed more often in boys than in girls (1,2), though it can affect anyone.

Dysgraphia can occur independently, but it often co-occurs with other learning difficulties. Many people with dysgraphia also have dyslexia, which affects reading, or ADHD, which impacts focus and organisation. When these conditions overlap, schoolwork can become even more challenging. However, with the proper support and strategies, individuals with dysgraphia can succeed.

### References:

- (1) Dohla and Heim, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2016.
- (2) Katusic SK et al., *Pediatrics*, 2009.



[Dysgraphia is a Specific Learning Difficulty with Handwriting](#)

["Alli Can't Write - A Children's Storybook with Dysgraphia"](#)



[Jo Rees](#)

Here are my top tips for learners with dyslexia...

**Our top dyslexic revision tips.**

**Ensure you have a schedule.**  
This way you can make sure you plan in advance and cover all subjects

**Use a range of strategies.**  
Mindmaps, flashcards, past papers, TikTok, YouTube, notes, revision guides.

**Build in breaks for info to sink in.**  
Our brains get easily overloaded so little and often and building in breaks is really effective.

**Prioritise the important subjects**  
What are the important subjects for your next step. Which subjects do you want to do well in, which ones don't matter.

**Secure subject specific vocabulary**  
A good understanding of key vocabulary supports slower processing, taking strain away from working memory.

## April is World Autism Acceptance Month

It's an opportunity for everyone to come together and raise awareness to help create a society where autistic people are supported, understood and empowered. We have compiled some case studies, blogs and resources to help. Advisory Teacher Maureen De Longhi shares a case study about Student E and the ways Maureen has adapted his technology to support his individual strengths to motivate learning.

### > Access the resources

#### **Innovative Solutions: Embracing Assistive Technology for exam success.**

The 2025 GCSE Exams series are rapidly approaching and if you have learners with special educational needs, you will be in the process of applying for and establishing exams access arrangements.

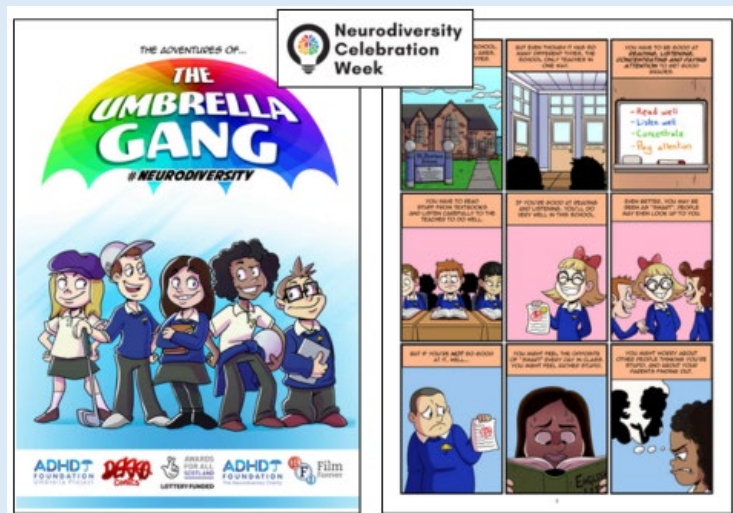
At this time of year, one of the most common questions we get is “What is a good writing platform for students to use in exams?” To help answer this, CENMAC Advisory Teacher, Maureen De Longhi explores some innovative solutions for exams and assessments including ExamWritePad, a secure writing platform specifically designed for use in exams and controlled assessments and compliant with JCQ regulations.

### > Find out more

#### > Download the Umbrella Gang comic

Neurodiversity Celebration Week was founded by Siena Castellon in 2018. It has become a worldwide initiative to help challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about neurological differences.

The week aims to transform how neurodivergent individuals are perceived and supported by providing schools, universities, and organisations with the opportunity to recognise the many skills and talents of neurodivergent individuals, while creating more inclusive and equitable cultures that celebrate differences and empower every individual.



There are some great resources to access including a great new comic adventure called '[The Adventures of The Umbrella Gang](#)'.

### > Access the resources

# Supporting autistic pupils in school

Five small changes that make  
a **BIG** difference:



Quiet rooms



Fidget toys  
and spinners



Understanding  
of autism



Noise cancelling  
headphones



Extra time  
for tasks



Check out our website for more tips on how to  
make school more inclusive for autistic pupils.

[ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](https://ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)



Ambitious about Autism is a registered charity in England and Wales: 1063184 and a registered company: 3375255

## Download our World Autism Acceptance Month resources

We have resources on our website for you to download, use and share with your friends, family or professional networks. This includes posters, email signatures and virtual backgrounds. [Learn more](#)

**At school** - Hear insights from young people and learn more about increasing autism acceptance in schools: [Find out more](#)

**At work** - Find out how your workplace can become a more inclusive place for autistic young people: [Find out more](#)

**In everyday life** - Hear young people explain how small changes can help them feel accepted in their everyday lives: [Find out more](#)

**Our Seasons Pack** helps learners keep pace with the year as it spins by. It covers everything from counting spring flowers and reading sunny poems, to sorting autumn leaves and drawing snowmen. With posters, worksheets, haikus (ever written one?) and even a dash of science to explain the seasons, it's a perfect companion to explore the year from start to finish.

### [Download Free](#)

For children who feel more at ease with a bit of routine, the unpredictability of the holidays can be overwhelming. Our **Easter Holiday Planner** brings a little structure to the season, helping children see what's coming up and feel more in control. Add your own symbols, photos, and text to plan everything from quiet mornings to egg hunts, then pop it on the fridge or wall for an easy visual guide. A simple way to make the month of April feel a little more predictable – and a whole lot more fun.



### [Download Free](#)

Did somebody say biscuits? Time to get mixing, rolling, and – most importantly – taste-testing. This simple **Easter symbol-supported recipe** is a great way to get kids involved in the kitchen, building valuable life skills along the way. Each step is easy to follow, so everyone can join in, whether it's measuring the ingredients or stirring the dough. For a little something extra, why not add a drizzle of icing and some magic sprinkles? Just don't expect these to last long!

### [Download Free](#)

Nothing says 'Happy Easter!' like a **handmade card** – especially one covered in colour, glitter, and a few gluey fingerprints. Whether it's colouring in bunnies, decorating patterned eggs, or adding crafty touches, these templates make it easy for kids to create something special. A thoughtful surprise for family and friends this Easter.

### [Download Free](#)



**Neurodiversity Celebration Week is a worldwide initiative that challenges stereotypes and misconceptions about neurological differences.**

Discover free resources, valuable insights, and ways to get involved in this amazing movement.

👉 <https://www.neurodiversityweek.com/>

With a growing number of neurodiverse and disabled students navigating university with complex and overlapping needs, it's essential for needs assessors and study tutors to stay informed about the latest assistive technology and its ability to support a range of challenges.

That's why we created the [DSA Resource Hub](#), where you'll be able to see what solutions support different needs and common tasks students face daily at university and on placements. The resource hub will provide you with a catalogue of solution recommendation guides and videos.

[Explore and favourite the DSA Resource Hub](#)

[Join us for live training and demos this month](#)



## **Ignite your pupils' reading inspiration with these engaging World Book Day 2025 resources**

Encourage your EYFS, primary and secondary pupils' to read for pleasure with these engaging World Book Day® 2025 resources: [Celebrate World Book Day® | Tes](#)

World Book Day – when learners of all ages come together to celebrate their favourite authors, illustrators, books and, of course, reading!

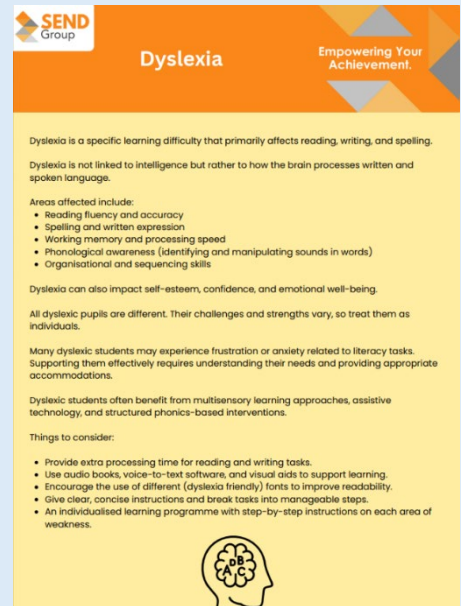
This year, we're celebrating with World Book Day who have developed 6 principles that encourage children to read for pleasure, these include: being read to regularly, having books at home and school, finding time to read, having trusted help to find and book, having choice in what to read and making reading FUN!



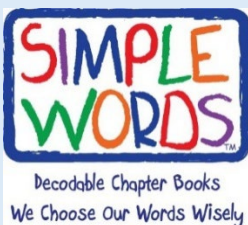
We are offering **free** downloadable information guides on various areas of neurodiversity, including dyslexia, dyscalculia, PDA, ADHD, autism, and FASD. These resources aim to support educators in their efforts to provide the best possible learning environment for neurodiverse students. With an estimated 20% of students in a typical classroom exhibiting neurodiverse traits, understanding and applying this knowledge is critical.

To help, we are offering free downloadable guides that are simple, understandable, and packed with valuable insights.

[Visit this page to access your guides today!](#)



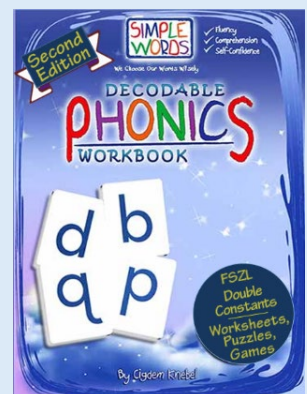
	<h3><u>Supporting Dyslexia Guide: Understanding Dyslexia</u></h3> <p><b>Guide highlights you don't want to miss:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn to <b>recognise the signs of dyslexia</b></li> <li>• <b>Download your checklist</b> for designing dyslexia-friendly lessons</li> <li>• <b>Get insights</b> from speech pathologists, dyslexia specialists and teachers</li> <li>• Discover <b>effective EdTech tools</b> and see them in action</li> </ul> <p>And much more!</p>
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### FREE Phonics Workbook - FLSZ worksheets, games & puzzles

- **WB #1 - CVC - Short Vowels** (120 pages)
- **WB #2 - Blends** (160 pages)
- **WB #3 - Digraphs** (140 pages)
- **WB #4 - FSZL & Blends** (140 pages)

[DOWNLOAD NOW](#)



## NEW BOOKS WRITTEN BY WDA MEMBERS

Our WDA Chair, Dr Helen Ross, has just published her first book!

### Literacy Learning Journeys: An Educator's Guide to Dyslexia, Ages 0-18



Reporting on the launch event, [Dr Andrew Ross](#) said:

“What a weekend we had! It was the launch of [Dr Helen Ross'](#) book! We had a lovely event in Bath with lots of friends, family and contacts from across Helen's various worlds of work.

It was lovely to see how many people came to support Helen and her first work. We raised a decent amount of money for charity too by selling off some of the original artworks that Helen drew for the book.”



Helen later reported:

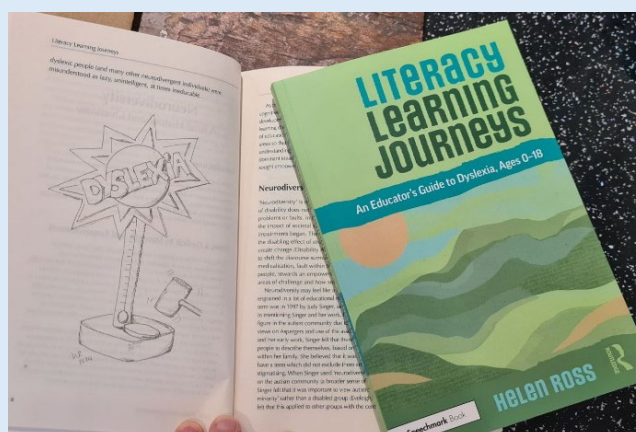
“So, after a lovely book launch do and a really generous silent auction, we raised getting on for £300. I've just popped over £200 to SENDIAS towards their work. This stuff matters. Thank you to all the kind supporters.”

### Literacy Learning Journeys: An Educator's Guide to Dyslexia, Ages 0-18

As educators, we want to help our learners flourish during their time with us, both academically and socially. However, many dyslexic children and young people experience substantial barriers to accessing the curriculum which can impact both their academic progress and overall wellbeing.

This easy-to-read book equips educators with essential knowledge and practical guidance to ensure that all dyslexic students can access the curriculum effectively and fully express their ideas, creativity and understanding. Drawing on research and the author's extensive experience, the book includes:

- A comprehensive introduction to dyslexia and an overview of what it can look like at different stages of education, from the Early Years to Year 11 and beyond
- Practical, evidence-based strategies to help students with dyslexia and specific literacy difficulties engage with the curriculum, make progress and enjoy learning across their entire educational journey



- A wealth of case studies and interview excerpts from students, parents and teachers to contextualise their experience
- Reflection prompts and exercises to help you consider your own learners so that you can draw on strategies presented in this book as part of your own practice

*Literacy Learning Journeys* champions kindness and empathy and takes a positive approach to dyslexia to help children and young people thrive in the mainstream classroom.

With easy to dip in and out chapters and signposting to further reading and resources, it is essential reading for teachers, teaching assistants and anyone working with learners with dyslexia.

## Introducing Sophie's Superpower: A Heartwarming Story for Parents and Children to Understand Dyslexia

The author, Dawn Crowl, was diagnosed with dyslexia at 14, and her daughter Sophie was diagnosed at 7. Dawn has worked as a project manager for 12 years and decided to write *Sophie's Superpower* to help her daughter understand dyslexia better.

Dawn has always had a passion for creativity, studying Art and Fine Art at De Montfort University in Leicester. After a successful career shift to project management, she partnered with illustrator Rhiannon Jones to bring her vision for *Sophie's Superpower* to life.

Dawn writes:

*"I have dyslexia, and my daughter Sophie was diagnosed at 7 years old. When we received her diagnosis, I struggled to find a book that would help her understand what was happening. As a dyslexic myself, I thought I could help, but I soon realised it wasn't that simple. I searched high and low for a suitable book for Sophie, but nothing felt quite right. That's when I decided to write one. I hope Sophie's Superpower can help children, parents, and teachers understand dyslexia in a way that is accessible and engaging. The journey has been incredible, and Sophie's growth has been my inspiration."*

*Sophie's Superpower* tells the story of Sophie, a young girl who struggles with reading and writing, but after being diagnosed with dyslexia, everything begins to make sense. While the diagnosis brings its own challenges, Sophie learns to embrace dyslexia as a superpower, gaining confidence and resilience with the help and support of those around her.

**[Read the full article about the book and its journey here](https://www.sophiessuperpower.com/)**

**<https://www.sophiessuperpower.com/>**



**Book Launch: Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May - 2.30pm, at the Wine Monkey, Chippenham.**



I was diagnosed with dyslexia in 2010, during my first few weeks at university. I vividly remember a lecturer pulling me aside and asking if I had dyslexia or experienced any other learning challenges. At the time, I had no idea what dyslexia was, and I remember thinking, "What is dyslexia, and why does he think I might have it?" I had never heard of it before that moment. After undergoing an assessment, I received my results, and everything about my past struggles in education began to make sense. For years, I had faced difficulties in school, from trouble reading to struggling with organisation and processing information. When I received the diagnosis, I had this moment of realisation, thinking, this is why so many things were so hard for me in school. The diagnosis helped me understand that my challenges weren't a result of a lack of effort, but rather a different way of processing information.

It took some time to fully grasp what dyslexia was and how it affected my learning. Initially, it was overwhelming, but over time, I learned strategies to manage it, particularly in the educational environment. Understanding the condition allowed me to focus on adapting to different learning methods and finding tools that worked for me. Now, I see my dyslexia not as something that limits me, but as part of who I am. It shaped the way I approach challenges, and I've learned to use it as an advantage in many aspects of life, especially in creative problem-solving.

### **My brain works differently**

Having dyslexia allows me to think differently and approach tasks in ways that work better for me. Through working with my dyslexia, I've realised that when I am organised and plan ahead, things run much more smoothly, and this is crucial for my role. I've also become very open to seeking help when needed, which I know can be challenging for others. Many see asking for help as a sign of weakness, but I've learned it's not, so I'm never afraid to ask if I don't understand something. The challenges I face are daily, such as writing texts or reading aloud. To overcome these, I often read my texts out loud, as it helps me process what I've written. The biggest ongoing challenge, though, is the lack of understanding from others about how I work and process information. It's hard to explain why my brain works this way, as it's just how I've always been, and others may never fully understand it.

**"The support I've received for my dyslexia has evolved over time, becoming more personalised and focused, particularly in my employment."**

When I was first diagnosed, I was given academic adjustments to help with my studies, such as extended time for assignments and exams.

I was also provided with software aids, but I found these tools difficult to use and didn't find them as helpful as I had hoped. Throughout school, there was no support in place because I wasn't diagnosed until I reached university. Looking back, school was quite challenging, and I now realise that my dyslexia was never recognised, which meant there were no accommodations or support to help me navigate my learning difficulties.

### **You CAN do it!**

My biggest achievement, and one I'm extremely proud of, is everything I've accomplished since leaving school. In 2008, I left with no qualifications, my highest grade being a D- in maths. I didn't know what to do next, but I was passionate about coaching children in sports. I applied for a college diploma in Sport and Exercise Science and, after being initially turned down, I was accepted on the condition that I retake my GCSEs alongside my studies. Two years later, I passed my diploma and went on to earn a Joint Honours degree in Sport Science Coaching and Sport Development. Achieving a degree seemed impossible leaving school, and to be honest I didn't know anything about university until my second year at college.

This was a huge achievement, as I was the first of 11 siblings to attend university and earn a degree. Understanding and working with dyslexia made things harder at first, but I persevered. Then, four years ago, I decided to follow my dream of becoming a Police Officer, despite worrying that my dyslexia would hold me back. To my surprise, I was accepted, passed all the necessary training, and started a new career while pursuing my second degree. Just last week, I learned that I passed my Research project and will graduate with a degree in Professional Policing. My research project explored the challenge faced by neurodiversity Police Officers within my force, neurodiversity within policing is a huge passion of mine and there is a large gap in the research, so I wanted to help increase the awareness and hopefully start filling this research gap.

From leaving school with no qualifications to earning two degrees and fulfilling my career dreams, this journey shows that with determination, no matter the challenges, you can achieve anything you set your mind to.

### **My advice to others**

My advice would be to embrace your uniqueness, focus on your strengths, and find strategies that help you manage the challenges. Don't view dyslexia as a disadvantage. Instead, see it as your brain processing information differently than others. Treat the diagnosis as something positive, and celebrate the fact that you think and learn differently. Its these differences that can bring new perspectives and strengths to things that others don't see.

I would want the world to know that having dyslexia is not a hindrance to achieving anything you set out to do. We simply approach things in our own way, which may seem different to others, but it's the right way for us. Embrace it. And finally, if you have dyslexia or any style of neurodiversity and you want to achieve your dream job, then please don't let this set you back or stop you from doing what you want. I never thought in a million years a police force would accept me but how wrong I was, work hard and you will be successful.

**More stories at: [Your Stories - British Dyslexia Association](#)**

MP Adam Dance's campaign is being backed by TV chef Jamie Oliver

Clara Bullock, BBC News, Somerset

## 'Teachers said I'd fail but dyslexia gave me drive'

Feeling "different", struggling to put pen to paper, and being told he would "fail" were all part of Adam Dance's experience growing up with dyslexia.



But he says having the condition also gave him drive, eventually inspiring him to become an MP to help others in similar situations.

Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty that mainly causes problems with reading, writing and spelling. Dance, who is the MP for Yeovil, in Somerset, was diagnosed with the condition aged seven.

Two years after opening up about his dyslexia on BBC Breakfast, TV chef [Jamie Oliver has joined Dance to call on the government to make changes](#) to education for children with the condition.



Liberal Democrat MP Adam Dance is calling for more support for dyslexic students. Dance said dyslexia meant he faced many challenges growing up, with teachers telling him he would "fail at life" because of his disability.

Oliver said recently he believed the system was "too slim" for dyslexic and neurodivergent children, and there were "too many kids falling through the cracks". "I just felt different," Dance said. "What I found really difficult was getting my words onto paper. "If there was a word I wanted to use and didn't know how to get it on paper, I'd use a word that was less good."

Dance is now calling on the government to support teachers by giving them training in dyslexia and providing accessible technology. "This is something so close to my heart and one of the reasons I got involved in politics," he said.

Dance says teachers are "brilliant" but "overworked, underpaid and need more support". Part of his campaign is to get students access to technology that could help them, which is something both he and Oliver have benefitted from.

"I couldn't do my job without a dictaphone," Dance said. "Jamie Oliver told me he wrote all his books with a dictaphone. That's proof you can do things in different ways, you just need to be given the tools. This is a subject we have to keep going on about."

Dance was bullied at school but now talks to students about his journey with dyslexia. "One boy came up to me and said 'does this mean, because we have dyslexia, we're not going to fail in life?'," he said. "I tell them if I didn't have dyslexia, I wouldn't be where I am in life. Because it gave me drive."



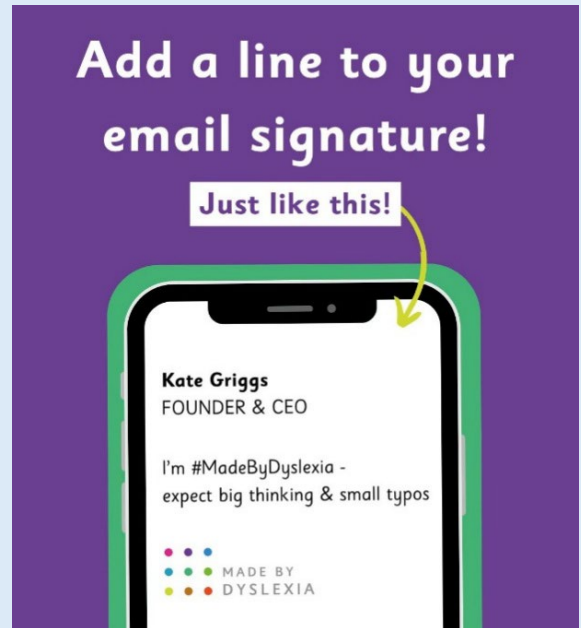
MADE BY  
DYSLEXIA

[Kate Griggs](#)

💡 if you are [hashtag#Dyslexic](#) like me, you will not believe the impact this 1 small action will have on your life.

👉 Since I added this email signature to the bottom of my emails I haven't had one negative comment on my spelling... and it's such a conversation starter ... either people open up about their dyslexia or have loved the idea and added it to their emails too. And lots of you have told me it's had this impact for you as well!

So as [hashtag#DyslexicThinking](#) skills are the most in-demand skills in every job, across all sectors, globally, now is the time to share your sought-after skills with the world 🤗



✉️ Take your pick of these examples or let me know your own version... and please be sure to tell me what happens!

💡 I promise you it will make a difference. And if you add our website as a hyperlink in one click people can learn more.

[Post](#) | [Feed](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

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<p>Option 1:</p> <p>I'm #MadeByDyslexia – expect creative thinking &amp; creative spelling.</p>	<p>Option 2:</p> <p>I'm #MadeByDyslexia – expect big thinking &amp; small typos.</p>	<p>Option 3:</p> <p>I'm #MadeByDyslexia – expect curious ideas &amp; curious spelling.</p>	<p>Or simply...</p> <p>I'm #MadeByDyslexia</p>
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### Brand new Lessons In Dyslexic Thinking!

We're over the moon to be back with Season 3 of our chart-topping podcast, Lessons In Dyslexic Thinking - conversations with the world's most inspiring Dyslexic Thinkers. This season you can hear how Dyslexic Thinking helped:

- **Erin Brockovich** win the biggest direct action lawsuit in US history. We're thrilled she has joined us as a Global Ambassador too!
- **Jean Oelwang** to think BIG to tackle world problems alongside Richard Branson, Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.
- **Josh Turner** to create a business that changes the world with socks – his company Stand4 Socks donated over 700,000 pairs of socks to the homeless.

Plus, you can catch up with Season 1 & 2 starring HRH Princess Beatrice, Lonnie Ali (wife of World Heavyweight Champion, Muhammad Ali), BBC wildlife presenters Hamza Yassin and Megan McCubbin, and the utterly brilliant creator of Tom Gates books, Liz Pichon.

Find all of our Lessons In Dyslexic Thinking on Apple, Spotify or Amazon.

[Watch Season 3](#)

[Listen to Season 3](#)

### Revised edition of Xtraordinary People – OUT NOW!

I am over the moon to announce that the revised edition of my book 'Xtraordinary People' – is out now – and it's available globally on DK. It's perfect for spotting dyslexic strengths in every dyslexic child - and helping them to discover their incredible Dyslexic Thinking.

[Buy your copy](#)

### Meet 11 year old Dyslexic Thinker, Evie.

We were absolutely thrilled to hear about how Evie is helping us with our mission to teach the world the brilliance of Dyslexic Thinking!

She's raised over £750 to buy a copy of Xtraordinary People for EVERY school library in her borough – the borough of Richmond Upon Thames – so every child can understand the xtraordinary powers of Dyslexic Thinkers. That's 48 copies!



Go Evie! You can read all about her xtraordinary fundraising effort in this week's edition of First News, where there's an article from me explaining the 7 Dyslexic Thinking skills in kids, too. Read the article on the First News app.

### Calling all xtraordinary kids!

Could you help us teach the world the brilliance of Dyslexic Thinking – just like Evie? We're looking for xtraordinary dyslexic kids (18 and under) to help us in all sorts of ways. You might be explaining what Dyslexic Thinking is. Or describing what it makes you good at (some dyslexics are xtraordinary at using our empathy and understanding others, others are xtraordinary on the sports pitch or the stage, and some are xtraordinary at making things or solving problems others can't). If this sounds like something you were made for, send us a short clip (1-2 mins long) telling us your name, your age, where you're from, what Dyslexic Thinking is for you and what it makes you xtraordinary at. Don't forget to include your parent or carer's details too. Send them to [info@madebydyslexia.org](mailto:info@madebydyslexia.org) asap but before 1 May.

Kate Griggs  
Founder & CEO of Made By Dyslexia  
I'm #MadeByDyslexia - expect big thinking & small typos

## Kate Griggs

What kind of mind designs something that's so groundbreaking that we can't live without? Yet is made to feel worthless through the education system at school?

Listen to brilliant Dyslexic Thinker, Sir Jony Ive, designer of the iPhone, talking about the type of intelligence the education system values on [BBC's Desert Island Discs](#).

As our Intelligence 5.0 report confirms, the type of intelligence the world needs now is changing. And makers, visualisers and visionary Dyslexic Thinkers like Jony Ive will find themselves in high demand, but short supply. Creativity, adaptability, resilience, problem-solving and interpersonal skills are now the world's most sought after skills.

So for dyslexics - it's our time to shine!

Listen to the full interview with Jony Ive here: <https://lnkd.in/ekfxmNQP>

Read the Intelligence 5.0 report here: [MBD-Intelligence-5.0-Report.pdf](#)

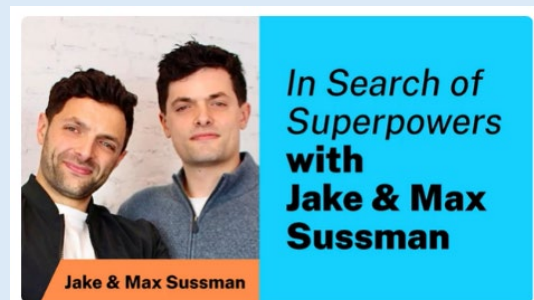


## In Search of Superpowers with Jake & Max Sussman - YouTube

What if your challenges were actually your superpowers?

In this episode, Gil welcomes Jake & Max Sussman, founders of Superpower Mentors, an online mentorship platform for youth with ADHD, dyslexia, autism and other learning differences.

Jake and Max share what it was like growing up together and what "superpower" means to them, then turn the tables on Gil to find out he would have benefited from having a dyslexic mentor.

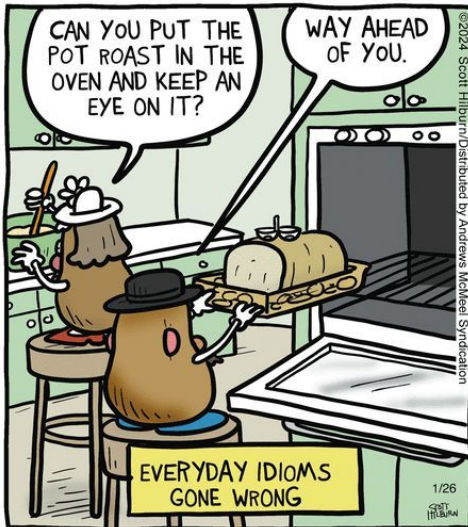


### **Explore More Stories of Dyslexic Excellence**

On [Dyslexic Design Thinking](#), you'll hear from award-winning actors and cinematographers, rocket scientists, political consultants, an ad executive, an expert in inclusive space design and a world-champion kickboxer. All dyslexic, all making big moves throughout the world. You'll also hear from non-dyslexics like the authors of an influential book that's reshaping the way we think about dyslexia.

Join host Gil Gershoni every month for new conversations exploring the intersection of dyslexia and creativity.

And finally . . .

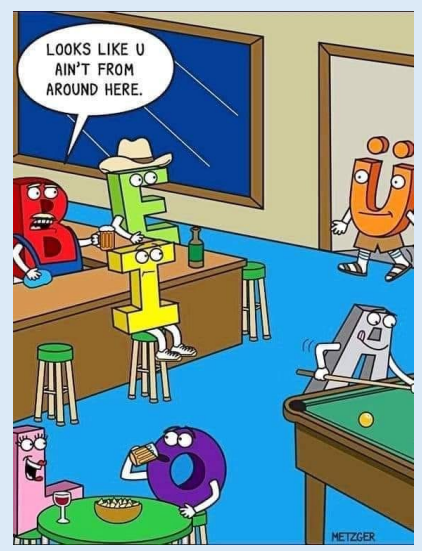
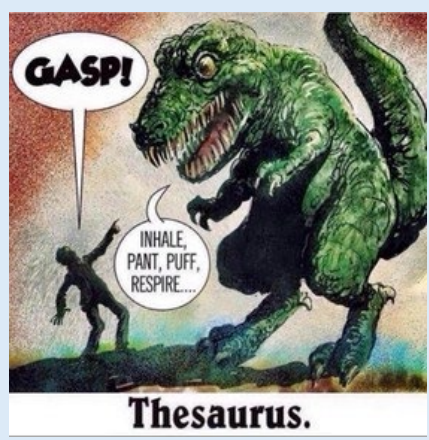


To all the people that always said I'd never amount to anything because of my procrastination:

Just you wait.



15+15 is thirty  
And,  
16+16 is thirty too!



*Caroline Fowke*

Caroline Fowke  
Volunteer Administrator & Helper  
Wiltshire Dyslexia Association

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WDA details - see our [flyer](#)

Helpline: 07394 617917  
[wdahelpline@gmail.com](mailto:wdahelpline@gmail.com)

 [Wiltshire Dyslexia Association](#)



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