

Making Sense: Education for Children and Young People with Dyslexia in Scotland

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Foreword



In the introduction to our first Education Scotland [corporate plan](#) I emphasised that our ambition is for excellence for all which lives up fully to the aspirations of Curriculum for Excellence. That ambition applies to learners with additional support needs such as dyslexia just as much as it applies to others.

In 2008 the then, HM Inspectorate of Education published a report on provision and outcomes for children and young people with dyslexia. That report concluded that the approaches which are adopted to support learning more generally in the most effective classrooms are broadly the same sort of approaches needed to support children and young people with dyslexia, albeit applied with skill and customisation to meet the individual needs of the learners concerned. The report highlighted examples of good practice and made recommendations for moving forward.

Six years on, we are aware that a great deal of work has gone into taking forward this agenda in schools and other educational services across Scotland, but we know a major challenge still remains. That's why we agreed that undertaking a further review of educational provision for children and young people with dyslexia should be an early priority for Education Scotland, after we came into being in 2011.

Through the review and this report we are aiming to apply our commitment to building a 'learning education system' which drives a virtuous cycle of evidence-based improvements, to the improvement of provision in the specific area of meeting the needs of dyslexic learners. This means that we are seeking to:

- **ensure practitioners have broad, enabling national guidance** with clear expected outcomes;
- **encourage local interpretation and application in practice**, with incentives for well-managed innovation;
- **ensure evaluation of the effectiveness of practice takes place at appropriate levels**, ranging from internal to external and from the local level to national evaluations such as this report;
- **bring in external evidence** from high-quality research; and
- **vigorously identify and share evidence** about what works in ways which are well-suited to informing decision-making by practitioners at the front line.

In addressing this issue, the review builds explicitly on number of other current developments such as the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit, the revised GTCS Standards and the amended Additional Support for Learning Act.

The report presents a positive picture of progress overall. Whilst there is still work to be done, we have found in many aspects of education, including initial teacher education, that provision and practice relating to meeting the additional support needs of children and young people, including dyslexia, is improving across the country. The 'presumption of mainstreaming', which was brought in through the first act of the new Scottish Parliament, the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, continues to have a positive impact on the education of children and young people with additional support needs. More than ever they are being educated in their own local school rather than going to a specialist facility or special school, and teachers are increasingly well equipped to plan for and meet their additional needs, including dyslexia, in the classroom.

In other words, we have increasingly inclusive schools. We now need to ensure that we are making sense of education for every child and young person with additional support needs, including dyslexia, wherever they are educated in Scotland.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Maxwell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bill Maxwell
Chief Executive, Education Scotland

1. Background

Purpose of the review

This Education Scotland report is the outcome of an independent review of education for children and young people who have dyslexia which has been carried out on behalf of the Scottish Government. The review covered the experiences of learners in primary, secondary and special schools. It also looked into the provision made by local authorities and at the programmes of initial teacher education currently offered by universities in Scotland.

A previous report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), [Education for Learners with Dyslexia](#) (2008), looked at services provided by local authorities, colleges and schools for learners with literacy and language skills difficulties. This is referred to as "the 2008 report". HMIE found that the range and quality of learning and teaching approaches were appropriate in the majority of schools and in a few schools, were considered to be highly effective. In approximately half of the education authorities surveyed, there were no specialist facilities offered, however, effective support was often provided by educational psychologists, learning assistants or network support staff.

The main aspects of effective learning and teaching of students with dyslexia were identified in the 2008 report as multi-sensory in nature, well-structured and interactive. Although most parents had the opportunity to attend reviews of their children's progress and contribute to targets, very few parents or pupils were provided with sufficient information regarding the authority's or school's policy regarding dyslexia. The extent of involvement available to parents varied and some parents criticised delays in accessing specialist support.

This report draws on information which has been collected from a range of sources by Education Scotland staff:

- Information from primary, secondary and special school inspections (Easter-October 2013);
- Information about provision for trainee teachers in initial teacher education (ITE) institutions, provided by these institutions;
- Information about local authority provision across Scotland, provided by local authorities;
- Focus groups of parents;
- Focused visits to a sample of primary, secondary and special schools by Education Scotland staff, including discussions with pupils, parents, school staff and local authority officers;
- Discussion with the Scottish Government Cross Party Group on Dyslexia; and
- Discussions with Scottish Government, GTCS and Dyslexia Scotland.

Definition of Dyslexia

The following working definition of dyslexia has been developed by the Scottish Government, Dyslexia Scotland and the Cross Party Group on Dyslexia in the Scottish Parliament. This is one of many definitions available.

The aim of this particular definition is to provide a description of the range of indicators and characteristics of dyslexia as helpful guidance for educational practitioners, learners, parents/carers and others.

Dyslexia can be described as a continuum of difficulties in learning to read, write and/or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities and may not be typical of performance in other areas.

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning and teaching environment, as there are often associated difficulties such as:

- auditory and /or visual processing of language-based information
- phonological awareness
- oral language skills and reading fluency
- short-term and working memory
- sequencing and directionality
- number skills
- organisational ability

Motor skills and co-ordination may also be affected.

Dyslexia exists in all cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. It is a hereditary, life-long, neurodevelopmental condition. Unidentified, dyslexia is likely to result in low self-esteem, high stress, atypical behaviour and low achievement.

Learners with dyslexia will benefit from early identification, appropriate intervention and targeted effective teaching, enabling them to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

Dyslexia and research

In Scotland, research on dyslexia has produced a body of literature which investigates the nature, causes and approaches that can effectively ease the barriers to learning experienced by children and young people with dyslexia. For example, neuroscience research through brain imaging has identified diversity in the brain for adolescents and for those with dyslexia. There is no shortage of understanding of both the cognitive and the biological aspects of dyslexia (Elliot, Davidson & Lewin, 2007). Most sources of evidence lead to the conclusion that dyslexia is rooted in difficulties associated with language, particularly phonological processing. Overall, researchers and professionals are still at an early stage in the journey toward understanding how to meet effectively the needs of learners with dyslexia. This ongoing research should ensure more positive outcomes for children and young people with dyslexia in the future (Sawyer, 2006).

Practical advice for teachers and parents in the form of publications and toolkits providing appropriate strategies to support and assess learners with dyslexia is widely available (Reid, 2004), and Scottish Government (2010). While these are undoubtedly helpful, many researchers believe that, overall, schools themselves

have not changed sufficiently. The way forward lies within inclusive school environments and training for teachers which ensures that they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of a broader range of learners including children and young people with dyslexia (Florian and Rouse, 2012). References and further reading are provided in Appendix 1.

Context

As we consider the educational provision made for learners with dyslexia in Scotland, it is important to acknowledge and consider the legislative and guidance context within which teachers and other educators are working. Further details are given in Appendix 2.

Literacy Action Plan

The Scottish Government's [Literacy Action Plan](#), published on 27 October 2010, sets out the vision to raise standards of literacy for all, from the early years through to adulthood. There is a particular focus on breaking the link between deprivation and poor literacy skills and addressing the issue of early identification of literacy difficulties. The Plan contains a specific commitment to work with Dyslexia Scotland to promote their web-based resource for teachers for the assessment of a range of literacy difficulties and dyslexia. Other commitments include to encourage all local authorities to introduce personalised literacy assessments and diagnosis at P1 and at other appropriate stages, and encourage all local authorities to put in place early identification of support needs.

Dyslexia Scotland

[Dyslexia Scotland](#) is an independent charitable organisation which supports people with dyslexia in Scotland and campaigns on their behalf. A number of its initiatives have been funded by the Scottish Government, including the online [Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit](#) (referred to hereafter as The Toolkit). This resource was launched at the Scottish Learning Festival in September 2012 by Dr Alasdair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages. It provides information for teachers, guiding them through the process of assessing literacy difficulties, which may be dyslexia, and gives details of relevant approaches and strategies, cross-referenced with Curriculum for Excellence. The Toolkit also has sections containing information for parents and carers, and for children and young people. It is continually updated and enhanced by a group which includes practitioners from across the country. This review set out to find out about awareness of this resource, its use and how it is impacting on meeting the needs of children and young people with dyslexia. Schools, local authorities and initial teacher education (ITE) institutions were asked about their use of this freely accessible resource, and this is noted in the appropriate chapters. Dyslexia Scotland is also working with the Scottish Government to look at the possibility of developing a standardised national Dyslexia Friendly School approach.

Other relevant aspects

The revised GTCS Standards for Full Registration and the STEC Framework for Inclusion are outlined and discussed in the relevant sections of this report.

2. National overview



Education Scotland

[Education Scotland](#) is the improvement agency for Scottish education. Its [corporate plan](#) aligns its work with a vision that “*learners in Scotland will progress in one of the most effective education systems in the world, renowned for the ability of national and local partners to work flexibly together to achieve high-quality and equitable outcomes for all.*”

Achieving this vision will mean that education outcomes for all learners will be improving, inequity in educational outcomes will be eradicated and public confidence in education in Scotland will be high. For learners with dyslexia realising Education Scotland’s vision will lead to their outcomes improving, inequalities that affect such learners will be eradicated and learners with dyslexia and their parents and carers will have greater confidence in Scottish education.

HM Inspectors published the 2008 report based on inspection evidence and evaluative work across Scotland. At the same time they showcased the very best practice in Scottish schools and centres in the Journey to Excellence professional development pack on [Meeting the needs of learners with dyslexia](#). As part of this range of resources for professional development, Sir Jackie Stewart reflects on his experiences in school and in his later life. He discusses the challenges he faced from having dyslexia, his achievements and his views on education today and in the future the aim of making Scotland a landmark in the educational world for its provision for dyslexia. In the Journey to Excellence resources children and young people reflect on their experiences as learners with dyslexia.

Education Scotland, in its [Quality and Improvement in Scottish Education](#) (2011), noted progress with previous priorities in success for all as:

- identifying and tackling barriers to learning before they become entrenched;
- finding new ways to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse population of learners; and
- personalising learning and support to take account of individual needs, choices and circumstances while relentlessly reinforcing high expectations.

Education Scotland summarised progress as overall there was still much to be done to close the gap in achievement in Scottish education.

Education Scotland's Inclusion Team covers all aspects of the gaps in achievement across the improvement agency. New posts, approaches and methods are being deployed to deliver on its ambitious vision. The Education Scotland [website](#) is Scotland's 'one-stop-shop' for information about educational matters and is currently being redesigned.

Education Scotland provides support for practitioners in implementing Curriculum for Excellence which promotes building the curriculum around individual learners. This inclusive approach to the curriculum and provision of entitlements aims to ensure that every child and young person is supported to attain and achieve the best they possibly can. Further advice is available in [CfE Briefing 5: personalised learning](#) and [CfE Briefing 13: Planning for learning Part 3-Individualised educational programmes \(IEPs\)](#).

Education Scotland has developed a Dyslexia Learning Trail (Appendix 3) that may be used as part of a school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement in relation to how well the school meets the needs of children and young people with dyslexia.

Implementation of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) Report to Parliament.

Scottish Ministers must report to the Scottish Parliament annually on what progress has been made to ensure that sufficient information relating to children and young people with additional support needs is available to effectively monitor the implementation of this act. [The Report to Parliament 2013](#) was published in April 2014. Further information on relevant legislation and policy is given in Appendix 2.

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

[SQA](#) is the national accreditation and awarding body in Scotland. As the awarding body, they work with schools, colleges, universities, industry and government, to provide high quality, flexible and relevant qualifications. SQA ensures that their qualifications are inclusive and accessible to all, that they recognise the achievements of learners and that they provide clear pathways to further learning or employment.

In delivering accessible approaches the SQA offers flexible assessment arrangements which allow candidates who are disabled and/or who have been identified as having additional support needs appropriate arrangements to access the assessment without compromising its integrity. Candidates are individuals with a diverse range of needs and it is important that centres consider the individual assessment needs of their candidates when considering the most appropriate assessment arrangements. Candidates with dyslexia have a range of arrangements that allow them to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding required for the award. About 10% of candidates use assessment arrangements across SQA's qualifications and examinations. More and more solutions to assessment arrangements are being made through developments in software and technology such as [digital question papers](#).

CALL Scotland

[CALL](#) (Communication, Access, Literacy and Learning) Scotland is a small unit within The University of Edinburgh. It is mainly funded by Scottish Government providing a national resource and works to help people with disabilities (and their families, carers and professional helpers) get the most from new technology. CALL specialises in helping learners in education to access the curriculum and to participate and be included alongside their classmates. CALL Scotland provide a range of courses to support career-long professional learning for practitioners working with children and young people with dyslexia. As well as an extensive set of approaches using technology CALL Scotland has extended the ways to provide access to literacy for learners including those with dyslexia through their [Books For All](#) approaches.

3. Local authority provision



The nature of the duties on education authorities under the [Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000](#) is "to secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential".

Identification of need

All local authorities have a staged intervention and assessment process in place which enables practitioners to assess and meet learners' needs, including dyslexia. Educational psychologists often feature in this assessment process. Beyond this, there are several differences in how local authorities identify children and young people with dyslexia.

In a few authorities, issues related to the identification of dyslexia are helpfully embedded within the local authority Literacy Strategy rather than being dealt with separately.

"Identification of literacy difficulties/dyslexia is firmly embedded within our Active Literacy Strategy and framework of Staged Intervention. This ensures the most timely, appropriate and effective support is planned for children and young people, and their families, who may have literacy difficulties/dyslexia".

North Lanarkshire Council

Additionally, a small number of authorities have a specific dyslexia "pathway" which assists staff to make appropriate provision for children and young people with dyslexia. The pathway is generally linked to the [Additional Support for Learning Act](#)'s requirements for dealing with parental requests for assessment.

Most local authorities have some form of dyslexia policy or practice guidelines for schools to encourage a consistency of approach in dealing with this need. Not all local authorities have adopted the definition used by the Scottish Government and a few authority working groups are still debating what their definition of dyslexia should be.

Assessments of need

Local authorities encourage the use of a wide range of assessments, in line with their assessment and intervention principles. These include:

- Teacher observation;
- Formative assessment;
- Classroom assessment of writing;
- Local authority literacy consultation process;
- Baseline literacy assessment;
- Standardised spelling assessments;
- Listening comprehension tests;
- Reading comprehension tests;
- Phonological awareness tests; and
- Standardised dyslexia screening packages.

Local authorities acknowledge the importance of a number of individuals and agencies being involved in ongoing assessment of need, including the child or young person, their parents or carers, class teachers, support for learning teachers, educational psychologists and speech and language therapists.

Number of children and young people with dyslexia

Whilst a minority of local authorities were able to provide up to date numbers of children and young people with dyslexia, most did not. Reasons given included:

- The numbers are not known;
- The authority does not record the number of pupils with dyslexia;
- The authority asks schools to identify needs but not to categorise them;
- The authority does not collate this information centrally;
- Numbers are not tracked unless the extent of the dyslexia and other needs demands a high level of intervention; and
- The numbers are held on the management information system (MIS).

Planning to meet identified needs

Almost all local authorities indicated that their staged intervention model is the basis for the planning which takes place after the initial assessment of the child's or young person's needs. All of those involved in the initial assessment contribute to planning to meet the identified needs of the child or young person.

“At levels 1 and 2 in Moray’s staged intervention model, responsibility for planning lies primarily with the classroom teacher. Pupils’ needs will be taken into account and reflected in forward plans for the class, groups and individuals. This planning process will, where necessary, be informed by discussions with support for learning colleagues. Where a more significant level of support is required, individualised educational programmes (IEPs) can be drawn up”.

Moray Council

As some authorities directly acknowledge, the classroom teacher has the main responsibility for meeting needs in their class and therefore they should build these needs into their curriculum planning. Beyond this level of planning, authorities will use individualised educational programmes¹ (IEPs) for children and young people who require aspects of the curriculum to be individualised for them and would benefit from specific, frequently reviewed planning to support this.

If several agencies are involved in meeting the needs of a child or young person, local authorities may, in conjunction with partners, consider setting up a Child’s Plan or a coordinated support plan (CSP) if the child or young person meets the criteria.

Teaching approaches to meet identified needs

Local authorities encourage schools to use a wide range of teaching approaches depending on the profile of the child’s or young person’s needs, their capabilities, interests and motivators as well as their age and stage. Some of the more significant approaches to differentiating lessons for children and young people are:

- Multi-sensory approaches
- Use of the Dyslexia Friendly Schools framework
- Specific phonological awareness activities
- Structured spelling programmes and strategies
- Alternative methodology
- Adaptations to the classroom environment
- ‘Scaffolding’ tools to give structure to writing
- Adaptation to text
- Use of graded readers with age-appropriate content
- Direct support from other children and young people, including paired reading
- Direct support from other adults
- SQA’s [Additional assessment arrangements](#)

¹ Education Scotland’s national advice on IEPs in relation to Curriculum for Excellence is available in [CfE Briefing 13](#) (2013).

“The key features of effective learning and teaching for children and young people with dyslexia should be that it is multi-sensory, well-structured and interactive, and that it should raise self-esteem and be relevant and meaningful. These approaches include meta-cognition, small group and one-to-one teaching, reciprocal teaching, scaffolding, reading recovery, synthetic phonics and structured phonics programmes as well as senior pupils acting as peer tutors for younger pupils. Children and young people respond well to self-help strategies when these are offered.”

Inverclyde Council

It should be noted that these approaches are not necessarily dyslexia-specific and can also be used beneficially with children and young people who have literacy difficulties but have not been identified as having dyslexia.

Some local authorities have specialist support services which work with children and young people with dyslexia. [Glasgow Dyslexia Support Service](#) directly supports children and young people individually and in small groups and works with both school and home. They also run strategy workshops for parents, work with teachers in the classroom and are involved in partnership working with other agencies. The [Dyslexia Support Service](#) in Edinburgh is part of Supporting Learning Services and provides outreach support for children and young people in schools as well as running authority courses to increase the capacity of teachers to meet additional support needs.

Assistive technology

Some local authorities place a particular focus on information and communications technology (ICT)-related interventions for children and young people with dyslexia, as they feel these promote feelings of confidence and empowerment, giving children and young people access to coping strategies which will allow them to work more independently. It is increasingly rare for local authorities to employ officers who can advise schools on appropriate ICT solutions for children and young people with additional support needs and lend them equipment. Many authorities now work with CALL (Communication, Access, Literacy and Learning) Scotland, a specialist agency which is part-funded by the Scottish Government and based in the University of Edinburgh. [CALL Scotland](#) works to help people with disabilities, their families, carers and professional helpers, get the most from new technology. It specialises in helping children and young people to access the curriculum and to participate and be included alongside their classmates.

Whilst there are many proprietary pieces of software used with children and young people with dyslexia, the basic functions which they fulfil are:

- Voice to text (“voice recognition”)
- Text to voice
- Word processing, including predictive spelling
- Mindmapping
- Coloured overlays

- Spelling mastery games
- Dyslexia assessment
- SQA [Additional assessment arrangements](#) – [digital question papers](#)

A range of hardware is used including basic word-processing devices, netbooks, laptops, spell-checkers and tablet computers.

Sectoral transitions

Almost all local authorities have well-planned pastoral transition procedures in place for children and young people with additional support needs, including those with dyslexia. These processes should take account of the requirements of the [Additional Support for Learning Act 2004](#) (as amended [2009](#)). Where necessary, these transitions can be enhanced to meet more complex needs. When moving from primary to secondary, the receiving school's support for learning staff are aware of the support plans which have been put in place and share this information with secondary staff as appropriate. Transition needs to involve effective monitoring and tracking processes to ensure that children and young people continue to make appropriate progress in their learning. This is an area that requires further development across authorities.

When making the transition from secondary provision to post-school, a few local authorities indicate that they draw up a transition plan and make sure that young people are given relevant information regarding dyslexia support available in college, university and the workplace.

Career-long professional learning

Most local authorities provide in-school professional learning for staff according to need or by direct request from the schools. It is often provided by the educational psychology service.

“Recent in-school professional learning provided by the authority has included:

- Training on The Toolkit
- Dyslexia in the Mainstream Classroom
- Individual staff training on meeting the needs of children and young people with a high level of dyslexic difficulty
- ICT to aid inclusion, focusing on literacy skills

Support for learning staff are also sent email updates on meeting the needs of children and young people with dyslexia, including new ICT developments, the Journey to Excellence personal development pack and relevant case studies.”

Shetland Islands Council

In schools which are involved with the Dyslexia Friendly School initiative, a wide range of in-school professional learning opportunities is offered, including presentations from children and young people with dyslexia, opportunities to share

best practice and opportunities to explore The Toolkit. There is significant variation in professional learning which is organised at authority level. In a few local authorities, the only professional learning of this type is given as part of the programme for newly qualified teachers (NQTs). In others, there is a considerable programme of learning opportunities for staff, often led by educational psychologists or education officers, covering ICT solutions for children and young people with dyslexia, appropriate methodology and introductions to The Toolkit. In a few authorities, professional learning is available for support for learning teachers, who are then expected to cascade their learning to teachers in the schools where they work. In other authorities, professional learning opportunities related to dyslexia is part of professional learning for literacy. Some local authorities also have online modules on dyslexia which are available to teaching and support staff.

Support from local authorities for staff to attend accredited professional learning varies across the country. Some local authorities do not currently pay fees for individual postgraduate study, although others indicate that they have a regular pattern of supporting staff pursuing postgraduate certificates and diplomas. Very few authorities are able to supply numbers of staff who have been involved in accredited courses. Most authorities will support staff to attend national conferences such as those run by Dyslexia Scotland.

Use of The Toolkit

Almost all local authorities indicate that staff are aware of The Toolkit. However, the level of knowledge about it varies within authorities, and most are not able to say how well it is used. Most authorities have either raised awareness of The Toolkit across schools or have included references or hyperlinks to it in their dyslexia practice guidelines for staff. A few authorities also direct parents towards it.

“We advise staff at all levels to use The Toolkit and also direct parents towards it for information about dyslexia and good practice in meeting needs. Support for Learning teams and educational psychologists are aware of and use The Toolkit and would refer other staff to it. It is referred to in our dyslexia policy and also within the Highland ASN Manual.”

Highland Council

Local authority websites

The first action of a parent who wants to find out about local authority provision for children and young people with dyslexia is likely to be to look at their website. Education authorities are required by section 26 of the [Additional Support for Learning Act](#) (ASL Act) to publish information about support for learning, including their policy and arrangements for the identification of children and young people with additional support needs.

Out of 32 local authority websites surveyed in July 2013:

- 11 had dyslexia policy or guidelines documents;

- three had parents' guides to dyslexia;
- three had relevant literacy strategies taking account of dyslexia;
- two made reference to guidelines used in schools but not available online;
- 13 had none of the above; and
- one did not have any reference to dyslexia.

Key findings

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All local authorities have staged intervention approaches to meeting additional support needs, including dyslexia. • Many local authorities have practitioners' guidelines and policies on dyslexia. • Some local authorities have a specific dyslexia "pathway" to enable staff to make appropriate provision for children and young people with dyslexia. • Almost all local authorities encourage schools to use a wide range of teaching approaches depending on the profile of the child's or young person's needs. • Almost all local authorities have well-planned transition procedures in place for children and young people with additional support needs, including dyslexia. • Some local authorities have specialist dyslexia support services which provide valuable advice and training for teachers.
Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities do not have a shared understanding of the definition of dyslexia. • Local authority websites do not always contain information and contact details relating to provision for children and young people with additional support needs, including dyslexia. • Career-long professional learning related to meeting the needs of children and young people with dyslexia varies in quality and availability. • Almost all local authorities indicate that they are aware of The Toolkit but more needs to be done to encourage schools to make full use of it. • Teachers need better access to local authority Dyslexia Practice Guidelines and would benefit from these being linked to the authority literacy strategy. • Data regarding the number of children and young people who have been identified as having dyslexia is not consistently reliable.

4. Primary schools provision



Identification of need

Primary schools have a number of ways to identify children who may have dyslexia. Some local authorities have their own dyslexia toolkits or checklists and most schools use their authority staged intervention processes for identification, referral and planning to meet additional support needs including dyslexia. Others use particular screening programmes and standardised assessments to identify children with dyslexia. Schools do not use a consistent definition of dyslexia.

Number of children with dyslexia

The levels of dyslexia recorded in primary schools vary widely, from 0% up to 33%. However, all primary schools in the sample with higher percentages of incidence (greater than 10%) have fewer than ten pupils. Overall, 2.7% of the 6,000 children in primary schools visited have been assessed as having dyslexia.

Planning to meet identified needs

Many schools have indicated that planning is a collaborative process and that is almost always between the support for learning teacher and the class teacher. Support for learning teachers are deployed in schools to help to meet the additional support needs of children and young people. Their roles include working cooperatively with class teachers during lessons, consulting with class teachers on meeting the needs of children and young people in the class, tutoring individuals and small groups with additional support needs, liaising with specialist services and providing professional learning opportunities for staff in their establishment. Planning can also include the local authority pupil support or dyslexia support team, senior managers, pupil support assistants, parents and children. Planning documentation such as individualised educational programmes (IEPs) is commonly used. In a few instances specific 'dyslexia support plans' are drawn up. Not all teachers are planning to meet the needs of children with dyslexia in their classes and many lessons are not planned with dyslexia in mind.

Teaching approaches to meet identified needs

Practitioners across the country use a wide range of teaching approaches, strategies and resources to help children who have dyslexia. These include, where appropriate:

- Differentiation of materials, media, flexible means of response, individualised homework
- Multi-sensory approaches
- Visual prompts, including alphabets, number lines, visual timetables
- 'Dyslexia friendly' box of classroom resources
- Cooperative learning
- Peer support and buddying
- Adult support, including reading and scribing
- Small group or individualised learning
- Phonological awareness and 'fresh start phonics'
- Literacy games
- Mind mapping, use of key words
- Use of more accessible fonts on printed materials
- Coloured overlays
- Use of staff dyslexia checklist
- Mastery-learning spelling programmes

In some cases, however, the needs of the child with dyslexia are being met by the support for learning teacher rather than the class teacher and there are issues relating to their capacity to meet a range of additional support needs. In these instances, schools should prioritise enhancing teacher capacity to meet these needs either through workshops or by working with specialist local authority staff.

Assistive technology

The range of computerised assessments, interventions and supports available for children with dyslexia has expanded significantly over the past few years. In primary schools these include:

- Computerised assessment systems
- Phonological awareness programs
- Spelling programs
- Spellcheckers, both standalone and as part of a word-processing program
- Simplified word-processing and desktop publishing programs, including text-to-speech functions
- Touch-typing programs

The use of these approaches does not, of itself, mean that a child's needs are being met appropriately, but they could form part of their individualised learning package.

Sectoral transitions

In most cases, primary schools have effective pastoral transition support in place for children with additional support needs who are about to move to secondary school.

Support for learning teachers, pastoral staff, parents and, sometimes, educational psychologists may be involved with this. In many instances there is an enhanced transition programme for learners who are more vulnerable or have more complex needs. In the best examples, presentations on dyslexia are given to all children moving to secondary school so that they understand these needs better. However, some schools acknowledge that their curriculum transition between primary and secondary is less well developed. Few primary schools consider dyslexia when children are making the transition from nursery to primary school.

“A Dyslexia Friendly School is an Inclusion Friendly School.”

Dounby Community School, Orkney Islands

Career-long professional learning

The availability of professional learning opportunities available to support staff in primary schools to meet the needs of children with dyslexia is varied across Scotland.

Forty percent of primary schools indicate that staff have access to in-school sessions to keep themselves up to date with approaches to meeting the needs of children with dyslexia. This can include input from the school’s support for learning staff and their educational psychologist.

“The school’s educational psychologist presented to all teaching staff last session. Identifying dyslexia was discussed as well as planning how to support a pupil with dyslexia. Effective teaching strategies and resources were highlighted. Awareness was raised of The Toolkit and a small exercise took place to allow staff to become familiar with it. There are plans to invite guest speakers with expertise in dyslexia to talk to the school community this year.

A learning visit to another establishment was carried out by the pupil support coordinator who is currently using this information to enhance the support given to pupils with dyslexia”.

Primary headteacher (Renfrewshire)

Thirty eight percent of primary schools say that staff have access to relevant local authority training. This can take place through specific courses on dyslexia, occasionally run by Dyslexia Scotland, or courses which are more generic and focused on meeting additional support needs or approaches to literacy.

“The authority has provided training for staff on:

- ICT approaches to dyslexia
- ICT to support literacy
- Dyslexia and multi-sensory spelling
- Dyslexia workshop
- Support Teachers’ session on The Toolkit

Staff who support the school and the Depute Head Teacher with a remit for ASN have attained the Diploma in Support for Learning, incorporating two modules on dyslexia”.

Primary headteacher (South Lanarkshire)

Only 3% of primary schools indicate that any of their staff have undertaken award-bearing courses in this area over the past two years. Five percent of primary schools have sent staff to conferences or national meetings related to dyslexia over this period, in most cases the Dyslexia Scotland annual conferences.

However, despite this activity, 30% of primary schools have not had any training at school, authority or national level over the past two years. One school stated that staff “have not been involved in any formal training and are not aware of any training that has been offered by the authority or any other providers”.

Use of The Toolkit

The majority of primary schools are aware of The Toolkit. Seventy six percent of primary schools are aware of The Toolkit although only a minority, 35%, make regular use of it. The remaining 24% of primary schools are unaware of the existence of The Toolkit.

“The additional support for learning teacher regularly uses The Toolkit to support learners with dyslexia. It has been helpful in the process of identification, especially in building a profile with the educational psychologist and also for supporting the learner in meeting their particular needs”.

Primary headteacher (Dumfries & Galloway)

In one example, primary schools of similar size and catchment area, just a few miles apart in the same local authority, had radically differing provision for children with dyslexia. One school had very little in place for these learners and the support for learning teacher was unaware of The Toolkit. In the other school, the support for learning teacher was working closely with the educational psychologist to develop and enhance provision and had made all class teachers aware of The Toolkit and relevant strategies to meet each child’s needs.

Key findings

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff are using an increasing range of assistive supports for children with dyslexia.• Most primary schools have effective pastoral transition support in place for children with additional support needs, including dyslexia, who are about to move to secondary school.• Staff have an increasing awareness of The Toolkit.
Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff in primary schools need to develop a consistent understanding of dyslexia, which may be supported by adoption of the definition of dyslexia used by the Scottish Government• Teachers would benefit from increased professional learning opportunities relating to making appropriate provision for children with dyslexia.• Children would benefit from a greater consistency of approach in the identification of dyslexia.

5. Secondary schools provision



Identification of need

As with primary schools, secondary schools use an increasing number of approaches to identify young people who may have dyslexia. Some local authorities have dyslexia toolkit checklists and many schools use their authority staged intervention processes for identification, referral and planning to meet additional support needs including dyslexia. Others use particular screening programmes and standardised assessments to identify young people with dyslexia. Identification is also a focus for transition procedures (and 'enhanced' transition procedures) from primary to secondary school. Most schools will share this transition information about young people who have additional support needs with staff, either in paper or electronic form. Not every secondary school uses the definition of dyslexia used by the Scottish Government and several schools commented on the difficulties caused by a lack of clarity or consistency within their authority on this issue.

Number of young people with dyslexia

Levels of dyslexia recorded in secondary schools vary from 2.4% up to 13%. The secondary schools with higher percentages of incidence (greater than 10%) are operating as 'dyslexia friendly' schools. Overall, 5.2% of the 7,500 young people in secondary schools visited were formally identified as having dyslexia.

Planning to meet identified needs

In almost all secondary schools, planning to meet identified needs is a collaborative process. As in primary schools, this is almost always between the class teacher and the support for learning teacher, often as a result of a successful 'bid' for their support. It can also include the local authority pupil support or dyslexia support team, senior managers, pupil support assistants, parents and children. Planning documentation such as an individualised educational programme (IEP) is commonly used. Too often, after initial assessment, teachers are left to use the information provided as they see fit and the impact of its use is not monitored. In the best examples, planning includes young people, parents, staff and partner agencies, as appropriate.

Teaching approaches to meet identified needs

A wide range of teaching approaches, strategies and resources are used across secondary schools to help young people who have dyslexia. These include, where appropriate:

- Differentiation of materials, media, flexible means of response, individualised homework
- Multi-sensory approaches and resources
- Graded, high-interest readers
- Reading Recovery and Writing Recovery programmes
- Cooperative learning
- Adult support, including reading and scribing
- Small group or individualised learning
- Phonic dictionaries
- Coloured texts, paper and overlays
- Audio books
- [SQA digital question papers](#)
- Mastery-learning spelling programmes
- Extra time to complete tasks
- Specialist input from support for learning staff

Assistive technology

The range of computerised assessments, interventions and supports available for young people with dyslexia has expanded significantly over the past few years. In secondary schools these include:

- Computerised assessment systems
- Phonological awareness programs
- Use of different methods of non-text presentation in lessons such as video clips
- Digital voice recorders
- Spelling mastery programs
- Spellcheckers, both standalone and as part of a word-processing program
- Simplified word-processing and desktop publishing programs, including text-to-speech functions
- Touch-typing programs
- Tablet computers with specialised applications
- [Books For All](#)
- “Classroom In A Box”
- [Digital question papers](#) as part of [additional assessment arrangements](#)

The use of these approaches does not, of itself, mean that a young person’s needs are being met appropriately, but they could usefully form part of their individualised learning package.

Dyslexia Friendly Schools

Kyle Academy in South Ayrshire is one year into its journey to achieve the [Dyslexia Friendly School](#) (DFS) Bronze Award (South Ayrshire Accreditation Scheme).

A DFS Steering Group was set up, which collected data to provide a benchmark against which improvement is now being measured, and to inform strategic planning for next session and beyond.

There are 99 pupils with dyslexia in the school, which amounts to 13% of the school's population. Traditionally they have received a high number of placing requests for young people with dyslexia. Young people with dyslexia are identified by teaching staff where barriers to learning are detected. They communicate concerns to the Pupil Support Department through Staged Intervention systems. A Dyslexia policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of staff. Dyslexia toolkits are available in every classroom. The Literacy across Learning Group, which supports staff in practical ways to develop literacy skills across all curricular areas, is matching DFS strategies to their literacy frameworks. Staff also have been issued with subject specific guidelines and the dyslexia identification toolkit. Staff, parents and young people receive DFS News Bulletins

Young people with dyslexia have had a significant influence on strategic planning. Each assembly has also been hosted by different members of the DFS Pupil Group resulting in improvements to confidence levels and a strong sense of achievement for the young people involved. All young people in the school are 'dyslexia aware'. Young people in the Champions' Group meet regularly to plan for improvement. A DFS pupil information leaflet has been produced for parents and pupils. Displays are in place in foyer, school library and across the school to raise awareness and celebrate diversity.

The school has parent members who have worked closely with staff and young people to develop their vision. They have also assisted in the production of dyslexia toolkits for all classrooms and shared their strategies to support the learning of their child at home at the Family Network meeting.

The most significant positive impact has been on the health and wellbeing of the members of the Pupil Champions' Group. They now have the confidence to speak to teachers if their needs are not being met. They also report improved understanding and respect from other pupils and many now want badges to say they have dyslexia. Young people with dyslexia achieve positive destinations with many going on to Further Education Colleges or university.

Staff appreciate that if they improve learning for young people with dyslexia, they will improve the learning for everyone.

Sectoral transitions

In most cases, appropriate transition procedures are in place between primary school and secondary school. Enhanced transition procedures are also in place for children who need more support, and this often includes familiarisation visits to the secondary school along with an introduction to particular members of staff who will be supporting them.

In the best cases, planning for secondary school takes place early and involves a range of partners.

“Planning for transition beyond schools takes place at an early stage in partnership with college, Skills Development Scotland, universities and other agencies as appropriate. Transition plans are drawn up and passed on to relevant agencies. Young people with dyslexia achieve positive destinations with many going on to further education or university”.

Secondary headteacher (South Ayrshire)

Career-long professional learning

The amount, type and quality of professional learning which is available for staff in secondary schools varies a great deal. Within some schools, sessions are run by Support for Learning staff to brief class teachers on the needs of young people with dyslexia, either as part of in-service days or as twilight sessions at the end of the school day.

“In school, advice, information and strategies are shared with class teachers for use in their lessons. Local authority training is patchy and courses can be either over-subscribed or cancelled at the last minute. The Principal Teacher of Support for Learning provides support and training for Support for Learning staff. Due to pressure on staffing and budgets there could be a skills gap in the future”.

Secondary headteacher

Some schools have access to local authority professional learning in this area. For example, West Lothian’s Literacy Outreach Service regularly offers professional learning sessions on dyslexia for staff. However, this is not a consistent picture across the country with other schools indicating that they do not have local professional learning opportunities related to dyslexia. Some secondary schools have staff who participate in local authority dyslexia working groups, although in one case a teacher reported that the group was still at the stage of debating the most appropriate definition for dyslexia.

In a few schools, staff are actively encouraged and supported to attend national events such as the annual Dyslexia Scotland conference. Fewer still have staff who have any accredited training in the area of dyslexia.

Staff in several schools noted that teachers would benefit from further professional learning opportunities to support their understanding of a range of additional support needs and help them to explore strategies to support young people better.

Use of The Toolkit

Staff in most secondary schools visited were aware of The Toolkit, although in the majority of these cases this was restricted to pupil support rather than all staff. In a few instances there were plans to make all staff aware of the resource.

Key findings

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate pastoral transition procedures are in place between most secondary schools and their associated primary schools. • Staff in secondary schools use an increasing number of approaches to identify young people who may have dyslexia. • Staff in secondary schools use an increasing range of teaching approaches and resources to meet the needs of young people who have dyslexia.
Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff in secondary schools need to develop a consistent understanding of dyslexia, which may be supported by adoption of the definition of dyslexia used by the Scottish Government. • Staff in secondary schools would benefit from greater consistency in the quality and availability of professional learning opportunities at school, authority and national levels on how to meet the needs of young people with dyslexia. • Staff in secondary schools could better meet the needs of young people with dyslexia through greater awareness and use of The Toolkit.

6. Special schools provision



The impact of the 'presumption of mainstreaming' (see Appendix 2) is still working its way through the Scottish education system. There has been a gradual increase in the number of children and young people with additional support needs successfully included in mainstream schools. The severity and complexity of the needs of these children and young people who are now educated in mainstream schools is also increasing. As a result, children and young people who attend special schools are those who have the most severe and complex additional support needs. Scotland has a wide and varied range of provision which comes into the broad category of 'special' schools.

Local authorities have schools to meet the additional needs of children and young people who would benefit from a more specialised approach than that which can be offered within their mainstream nursery, primary or secondary school. These special schools may be meeting many types of needs and this can change over time. Grant-aided special schools are independent of local authorities but are currently supported financially by the Scottish Government.

Independent special schools are available for local authorities to refer young people to if they feel that the child or young person's needs would be better met there than in one of the local authority. Often these are establishments which concentrate on meeting specific sorts of needs, for example autism or behavioural difficulties. The provision in this sector varies greatly and, in many cases, the children and young people in special schools have needs which do not necessarily include dyslexia.

Identification and number of children and young people with dyslexia

Gaining a place at a special school, of whatever type, is dependent upon the needs of the child or young person not being able to be met within a mainstream school and the referral and selection process involves careful consideration of their needs. Usually, therefore, children and young people, where appropriate, have had their dyslexia identified through formal assessments prior to entry to school. Offsite establishments in local authorities and some independent special schools note that they are dependent upon identification and provision being put in place by the mainstream schools prior to the child or young person beginning their placement. Special schools are often reluctant to give details of numbers of children and young people who have been identified as having dyslexia.

Planning and teaching approaches to meet identified needs, including assistive technology

Planning and teaching approaches vary according to the type of special school and the needs of the children and young people. Some schools deal with children and young people who have been excluded from their mainstream schools and have therefore experienced significant disruption to their learning. In these instances, their literacy skills can be well behind that which is expected for their chronological age and special school staff then give direct attention to improving these skills, whilst not necessarily identifying this difficulty as dyslexia.

“Learning support is provided by the school with specific and individualised strategies used to support. For example, text and words are broken down into manageable sections to allow the young person to consider word groupings and phonological structure of words. ICT is used to support learning in the form of word processing programmes”.

Special school headteacher

Some schools have staff who have been specially trained in approaches such as paired reading to give children and young people, along with their parents, the skills to be able to continue to develop their literacy skills. Special schools also deploy a high staff to pupil ratio to support learning.

Sectoral transitions

Transitions for children and young people into and out of special schools are usually planned carefully. Transitions into special schools are usually accompanied by comprehensive information about the child or young person’s needs, which have been thoroughly assessed and discussed by an authority placement panel prior to the child or young person being given a place in specialist provision. At times of transition beyond special school, into further training or education, appropriate information is shared with relevant partner agencies and colleges.

Career-long professional learning

Very few of the special schools visited during the review have been involved in any professional learning related to dyslexia, whether it be at school, local authority or national level. Nevertheless, the majority of these schools are making provision for children and young people who may have difficulties with their literacy which corresponds with dyslexia.

Use of The Toolkit

Only a minority of the special schools visited are aware of The Toolkit and even fewer have used it.

Key findings

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special schools appropriately identify and meet the additional support needs of children and young people.
Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More consistency is needed in the quality and availability of professional learning opportunities at school, authority and national levels for staff on how to meet needs of young people with dyslexia.• Staff who are involved in teaching or supporting young people with dyslexia need a greater awareness and use of The Toolkit.

7. Initial teacher education



The Scottish Government, through the Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC), set up a Working Group to develop the [National Framework for Inclusion](#) (“the Framework”). On 27th April 2009, STEC launched the Framework, which had been designed “*to ensure that all students and teachers are appropriately guided and supported from the outset and throughout their careers towards gaining the required knowledge and understanding of inclusive education*”.

The online Framework was provided by STEC to support teacher educators designing initial teacher education (ITE) programmes, student teachers, teachers and teachers following advanced professional studies.

The Framework indicates that ITE should enable student teachers to:

- Plan coherent, progressive teaching programmes which match their pupils’ needs and abilities, and justify what they teach; and
- Set expectations and a pace of work which make appropriate demands on all pupils.

Specific timetabled input on dyslexia to ITE courses

Institutions have some variation in their approaches to input on dyslexia in their **Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)** courses. Whilst each institution has a mixture of taught modules and practical experience, the quantity and balance varies considerably.

In a few institutions there is a focus on additional needs in the classroom, including dyslexia, during all school experience across the four years of the B.Ed. course. Most institutions have a core module which all students study in relation to meeting the needs of all learners. This can range from a two-hour module, with an additional optional module on inclusion, to a more in-depth provision such as ten hours of lectures, ten hours of seminars and five four-hour placements in a secondary school. These placements bring together theoretical and practical approaches, focusing on the wider role of a teacher in relation to inclusion and additional support needs, including dyslexia.

In some institutions, dyslexia can also be included in pedagogical studies. Students may encounter children with dyslexia during student placements and are asked to comment on school policy, use of support staff and resources to support additional needs. They are expected to make sure that children's needs are met when they are planning for learning.

Institutions also run primary and secondary **Post Graduate Diploma in Education** (PGDE) courses. Again, whilst each institution has a mixture of taught modules and practical experience, the quantity and balance varies considerably.

A few institutions take the approach of embedding a range of relevant topics, including inclusion, across all modules, to show that they are part of every teacher's responsibility rather than highlighting them as a specialist area. Differentiation is embedded in subject teaching from the outset, and modules help students explore issues relating to a wide range of additional needs.

Most institutions have some sort of input on inclusion which ensures that students are made aware of the types of additional needs they may encounter, including dyslexia. Additionally, students have to research key issues from a list of compulsory topics which includes dyslexia. As in B.Ed. courses, students may encounter children with dyslexia during student placements and are expected to research this and make appropriate provision to meet their needs.

In most institutions, there is a focus on additional needs in the classroom, including dyslexia, during all school experience across the course. In their module study and school placements, students come into contact with relevant legislation relating to additional support needs and resources such as the Dyslexia Toolkit. They are asked to comment on school policy, use of support staff and resources to support additional needs. They are also expected to make sure that children's needs are met when they are planning for learning.

A few institutions have online PGDE lectures and workshops, some of which are specifically about dyslexia. These are essential, rather than optional, workshops for students. The topics include early identification, learning and teaching approaches, and an introduction to the Dyslexia Toolkit.

Topics covered in ITE programmes

Whilst there is variation regarding the content of ITE programmes in relation to dyslexia, most programmes cover the following areas:

- Identification of children and young people with dyslexia
- Research into dyslexia and its impact
- Planning for learning
- Teaching strategies to improve access to and understanding of the written word
- Resources available to support children and young people with dyslexia in the classroom

Some institutions place student teachers' understanding of making appropriate provision for the needs of children and young people with dyslexia in the wider context of inclusion related to any additional support need.

"We want all our students to have:

- a working understanding of what equality and inclusion mean in practice
- positive attitudes towards diversity
- a range of skills that will enable them to plan lessons underpinned by universal design principles (acknowledging and reflecting diversity of abilities, strengths, weaknesses, preferences and interests)
- a range of skills which enable them to plan personalised learning experiences for children and young people with specific entitlements and requirements, including those who have dyslexia."

University of the West of Scotland

Other institutions are clear that they are also making the direct link between dyslexia and the development of literacy skills in children and young people.

"On our B.Ed. and PGDE courses we work towards students developing a 'deep understanding of children's learning and development' across all domains. This is recognised as the responsibility of all teachers and is an ongoing process that requires career long professional learning (Teaching Scotland's Future, 2010, p.19). Specifically in literacy, as students learn about children's development in language and literacy, they recognise the relevance of this knowledge to supporting all children, including those who struggle in literacy."

University of Strathclyde

Use of The Toolkit

Almost all ITE institutions have indicated that they include some reference to The Toolkit in their courses.

Some institutions give students a link to the resource and ask them to take it into consideration with the other resources provided. Others use The Toolkit as the basis for planning taught lessons and directs students towards it for further study and follow-up activities.

In some cases, reference to The Toolkit is directly linked to other sources of information, for example, directing students towards the Framework website, which includes a hyperlink to The Toolkit, as part of their B.Ed. and PGDE programmes. Other institutions encourage students to look at The Toolkit in conjunction with the Framework, alongside the Dyslexia Scotland website and online local authority documentation such as ASN Manuals.

A few institutions have online workshop or modules about The Toolkit, giving a guided tour of the resource and then setting students a practical challenge which they need to use The Toolkit to address. Others introduce The Toolkit early in their ITE programmes, revisiting it before each placement to look at issues specific to that level and stage.

Key findings

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all ITE courses include specific, timetabled input on dyslexia. • Almost all ITE courses include reference to The Toolkit.
Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC) needs to work with GTCS, Education Scotland and all ITE institutions to ensure consistency of teacher training course content across Scotland in relation to additional support needs in general and dyslexia in particular.

8. Parents and carers views



Parents and carers of children and young people who have dyslexia report a number of inconsistencies in their education. Not all of these parental experiences are negative, but there are many similarities in the issues they have encountered.

The first signs of dyslexia often appear as early as Primary 1. In most cases, parents and carers were encouraged not to worry and told that it was too early to think about assessment. In a few instances, educational psychologists suggested they should wait at least another two years before pursuing any action.

Most parents reported ongoing discussion with the school about the needs of their child, sometimes with the class teacher and sometimes with a member of senior management. In many cases they were continually reassured that their child was within the spectrum of 'normal' pupils and that there was no cause for concern. In one case, a grandmother found history repeating itself as her grandchild's dyslexia was not taken seriously by the primary school in the same way as her own children's dyslexia was not acknowledged and addressed.

"I'm frustrated as a mother. My son does not feel valued. He is ill much of the time and is undermined by his teacher"

Parent of child with dyslexia

Eventually, most parents and carers realised that an assessment of some sort would be helpful in meeting the needs of their child appropriately. In most cases they asked the school to organise this but in many cases they were told that such an assessment was not necessary. A number of these parents decided that they would arrange a private assessment at their own cost, rather than continue to debate the issue with the school or the local authority. In one instance, parents applied to send their child to a private school but they would not give a place because they said the child had additional support needs which they could not meet.

In most cases, once parents brought the independent assessment of their child's needs to the school, direct support for their needs was discussed, agreed and put in place. Often this included regular input from a support for learning teacher.

“Being dyslexic has given me determination so that they get choices I didn’t get”.

Parent of children with dyslexia

Parents and carers realise that the role of the class teacher is vital, particularly in primary school. They note that it does not matter whether the teacher is a relatively recently qualified teacher with up-to-date knowledge or a more experienced classroom teacher, it is their point of view which is more important along with the availability and use of appropriate resources in the classroom. In some cases parents are confident about the class teacher being able to meet their child’s needs because the teacher has a background in support for learning or has children of their own with dyslexia.

Parents and carers are also aware that the headteacher has an important role and sets the ethos with the rest of the school. They know that if the headteacher takes their issues seriously, then the rest of the school will.

Parents and carers are keen for all teachers to have a working awareness of dyslexia and how to help children and young people with this type of difficulty. They realise that initial teacher education has an important part to play, but would like to see regular refresher courses available for qualified teachers.

“The next time you see my class teacher, tell her Margaret’s dyslexic”.

P7 child with assessment of dyslexia speaking to parents

The effects of the low self-esteem of children and young people with dyslexia can be dramatic, as described by their parents and carers. In one instance, a child told their parents in the transition between P3 and P4 that they would be “better off without me”. In another reported example, a young person was reported as being self-harming and having attempted to commit suicide twice by the time they reached their teenage years.

These experiences often mirror the findings of Alison Earey’s recent report (Earey, 2013) which noted that children with dyslexia “were supported largely due to their parents’ intervention and persistence and, even then, not as well as the parents would have wished” (p.38). However, they are in direct contrast to those of children and young people in schools which are working towards being ‘dyslexia friendly’ (Coffield & O’Neill, 2004). Children and young people who have previously suffered from mental health issues respond well to the ethos of these schools, often becoming part of dyslexia friendly groups in school. Parents are extremely positive about the impact on their child of attending a dyslexia friendly school.

“Dyslexia is not being prioritised when support is being allocated to schools by the local authority. Physical disability, then complex needs, then autism, then sensory impairments. There is no support time allocated for dyslexia and no funding for parents to make better provision for their children as there is for ADHD”.

Parent of child with dyslexia

Some parents have set up self-help groups for parents of children with additional support needs in the school and have been successful in securing funding for their activities.

Parents of children with dyslexia have a number of suggestions regarding ways in which the system could be improved. These include:

- Support for early diagnosis of needs;
- Parents’ voices being heard and valued by schools;
- Better transfer of information between primary and secondary about children’s needs;
- A more positive view of dyslexia in the classroom, valuing children with these needs; and
- Improved initial teacher training and professional development.

Key findings

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel that some teachers have a good understanding of the needs of children with dyslexia. • Parents feel that most schools can make appropriate provision for children with dyslexia once their needs have been assessed.
Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents think that schools should take better account of their views regarding the needs of their child. • Parents think that local authorities should ensure that teachers and senior managers have a good working understanding of dyslexia, along with direct access to The Toolkit.

9. Data relating to dyslexia in schools



The Scottish Government is at the forefront of national data collection relating to the additional support needs of children and young people in education.

It collects data from schools on an annual basis. The purpose of this collection is to obtain accurate data on publicly funded schools and their pupils. It is used for statistical analysis and to support evidence-based policy making. This data is collected from all Local Authority and grant-aided schools and school centres. The [Pupils in Scotland publications](#), based on the data collected, can be accessed on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Guidance Notes for those who make the statistical returns are incorporated into 'Data Specification' documents which can be found on the [ScotXed website](#). One of the sections asks for "student need" and gives a list of 25 separate categories, including dyslexia.

The data is also used for the annual Report to Parliament on the Implementation of Additional Support for Learning Act. Under the amended Act, Scottish Ministers must each year collect from each education authority information on:

- the number of children and young people for whose school education the authority is responsible having additional support needs.
- the principal factors giving rise to the additional support needs of those children and young people.
- the types of support provided to those children and young people.
- the cost of providing that support.

Number of children and young people with dyslexia

Scottish Government has improved its collation of data for children and young people with dyslexia. Under the previous categorisation of special educational needs no identification of children and young people with dyslexia was recorded through the statistics on special educational needs. This then changed to a wider set of categories but included no definition of dyslexia and no category. However by 2004 6,877 were noted as having a main difficulty as being a specific learning difficulty.

Under changes to the Additional Support for Learning legislation the quality of data collection for additional support improved. The annual report to Parliament has published three years of data for dyslexia giving numbers and levels of children and young people with dyslexia, their tariff score and total qualifications and positive destinations.

By 2013 schools now identified 131,621 (20%) of the school population as having additional support needs and 15,368 (2.28%) are now identified as having dyslexia as a reason for support. There is significant variability in levels across different education authorities.

Qualifications attained by young people with dyslexia

Information is now available in relation to qualifications attained by leavers from secondary and special schools in Scotland who have additional support needs. This relates to session 2011-2012. A summary table can be found in Appendix 4. It shows that young people with dyslexia have broadly similar levels of attainment to their peers up to gaining one or more awards at SCQF (Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework) Level 4, equivalent to Intermediate 1. However, a gap of between 20% and 30% then opens up between the attainment of young people with dyslexia and young people who do not have additional support needs in qualifications equivalent to Intermediate 2 and Higher. Overall the tariff score shows that young people with dyslexia achieve their set of qualifications at a level which is less than 60% of the national average. The tariff score takes account not only the total number of qualifications but also the level of grade. It may be that young people with dyslexia achieve broadly similar numbers of awards but they do not achieve as highly as the “average” young person in school.

Post-school destinations of young people with dyslexia

Information is also available relating to the type of destination young people with additional support needs move to after leaving school. Again, this information relates to session 2011-2012, and is summarised in Appendix 5. It can be seen that the main difference between the post-school destinations of young people with dyslexia and those who do not have additional support needs is linked to Further Education and Higher Education. 38.1% of those with dyslexia move on to Further education, compared to 24.9% of those with no additional support needs. However, 40.4% of those with no additional support need move on to Higher Education, compared with only 17.1% of those who have dyslexia.

As indicated above, young people with dyslexia attain significantly less well than their peers who do not have additional support needs in those qualifications which would enable them to apply for places on university courses such as Highers. As a result in 2011-12, only 17% of young people with dyslexia have the opportunity to apply for these places, compared to 44.2% of their peers with no additional support.

Data from the 2013 census relating to dyslexia can be accessed amongst the supplementary data to the main published report, [Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland, No.4: 2013 Edition](#). Summary data for all 32 local authorities can be found in Appendix 6 of this report.

For a number of reasons, detailed below, it is difficult to draw conclusions from this data. However, the following general points can be made:

- In almost all local authorities, a greater proportion of young people is identified as needing support for dyslexia in secondary schools compared to those in primary schools. In some instances, the proportion can be up to six times higher.
- Approximately 3% of children and young people in special schools have been identified as requiring support for dyslexia.
- Local authorities have a wide variation in the percentage of children and young people identified as needing support for dyslexia. The lowest local authority figure for this is 0% and the highest is 5% (one child or young person in every 20). Six local authorities report that only 1% of pupils need support for dyslexia, whilst only one reports that at least 5% need this support.

There are a number of possible reasons for the perceived variability in reporting between authorities:

- *Differences in authority expectations and thresholds regarding the level of need which is recorded.* This can include differences in local authority staged intervention processes for meeting additional support needs. What would be recorded in one authority will not necessarily be recorded in another. For example, in a school in one authority Fiona's teacher may have the capacity to make appropriate provision for her dyslexia, but in a school in another authority she may require specialist support.
- *Many children and young people have more than one additional support need which requires support.* A number of recent studies have shown that children and young people with dyslexia can often have other additional support needs. For example, whilst James in S3 may have dyslexia, he may also have a moderate learning difficulty and perhaps even dyspraxia (Carroll et al, 2005; Rochelle & Talcott, 2006; Bental & Tirosh, 2007). The census guidance notes do not state clearly that more than one need can be allocated to each pupil and therefore what is seen as the principal need for the child or young person may be recorded rather than all recognised needs. James may therefore only be listed as requiring support for his moderate learning difficulty if this is perceived as being his principal need, leading to his dyslexia going unrecorded.

Key findings

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Scottish Government continues to improve and extend data collection and analysis in relation to additional support needs, which is resulting in improved information about qualifications and positive destinations.
Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Scottish Government should continue to improve the quality and reliability of the data which it is intending to collect from the census.• The Scottish Government should improve the advice and guidance for school/pupil census submissions and aim to achieve greater consistency in responses from schools and authorities.

10. Career-long professional learning and professional recognition



The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) is the independent professional regulatory body for teaching which is responsible for ensuring that children and young people in Scotland are taught by appropriately qualified registered teachers.

The same values underpin all GTCS Standards and therefore apply from student to headteacher and managerial levels. The [Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning](#) (GTCS, 2012) describes the advanced professional knowledge and pedagogical expertise that registered teachers will develop and maintain throughout their career in education. The Professional Values and Personal Commitment, core to being a teacher, include “demonstrating a commitment to motivating and inspiring learners, acknowledging their...individuality and specific learning needs and taking into consideration barriers to learning” (p.7).

The GTCS revised the ‘Standard for Provisional Registration’ in 2012. This specifies what is expected of a student teacher seeking provisional registration. The ‘Standard for Full Registration’, which applies to teachers throughout their careers and specifies the standard which they are expected to maintain and enhance. These standards are now combined in [The Standards for Registration](#) (GTCS, 2012).

Relevant aspects include registered teachers being required to:

- Know how to match and apply the level of the curricular areas to the needs of all learners (2.1.2);
- Know how to use, design and adapt materials for teaching and learning which stimulate, support and challenge all learners (2.1.2);
- Have secure knowledge and understanding of the methods and underlying theories for effective teaching of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing; and effectively select the most appropriate methods to meet all learners’ needs (2.1.4);
- Plan appropriately, in different contexts and over differing timescales, for effective teaching and learning in order to meet the needs of all learners, including learning in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and skills for learning, life and work (3.1.1);
- Consistently select creative and imaginative strategies for teaching and learning appropriate to the interests and needs of all learners, as individuals, groups or classes (3.1.3);

- Skilfully deploy a wide variety of innovative resources and teaching approaches, including digital technologies...(3.1.3);
- Ensure learning tasks are varied, differentiated and devised to build confidence and promote progress of all learners, providing effective support and challenge (3.1.4); and
- Evaluate and adapt their classroom practice rigorously and systematically, taking account of feedback from others to enhance teaching and learning (3.4.2).

Within this context, individual teachers, schools, local authorities and training providers will wish to ensure that in-service professional learning opportunities and courses articulate with the Standards and that teachers are able to “meet the needs of all learners”, including those with dyslexia.

At present, as outlined above, there is considerable variability in the quantity and quality of professional learning opportunities for teachers across Scotland.

GTCS also runs a ‘Professional Recognition’ scheme. [Professional recognition](#) allows registered teachers to focus their professional learning in particular areas of interest and gain recognition for enhancing their knowledge and experience. As of July 2013, the GTCS had made 1024 Professional Recognition awards to 898 teachers in 52 discrete areas, including:

- Assessment (187 awards)
- Learning & Teaching (136 awards)
- Mentoring (98 awards)
- Additional Support Needs (three awards)
- Autism (14 awards)
- Visual Impairment (one award)
- Hearing Impairment (one award)
- Language Impairment (two awards)
- Dyslexia (one award)

Whilst it is understandable that the ongoing implementation of Curriculum for Excellence may have made learning and teaching and assessment priority areas for teachers in Scotland, it is notable that only one out of 1024 (less than 0.1%) of Professional Recognition awards relates to the area of dyslexia.

GTCS is able to pre-accredit courses with Professional Recognition so that each participant is automatically given Professional Recognition rather than having to apply for it individually. This is of great benefit to individual teachers and they will find courses which have already been pre-accredited an attractive proposition. Providers of courses relating to dyslexia and additional support needs should therefore consider applying to GTCS to have these courses pre-accredited.

Key findings

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The GTCS Standards provide a clear and consistent benchmark for all teachers in relation to their primary responsibility to meet the needs of all learners in their classes.
Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers who have been involved in making provision to meet additional support needs should consider applying for GTCS Professional Recognition.• Greater consistency of initial teacher education course content across Scotland in relation to dyslexia and additional support needs is required.• Greater consistency in the quality and content of postgraduate awards and courses relating to meeting additional support needs is required, and where possible these should be accredited with Professional Recognition.

11. Conclusions and recommendations



Conclusions

In the six years since the 2008 report, many changes have taken place in Scottish education. The most significant of these in relation to the education of children and young people with dyslexia include the 2009 amendment to the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004, the ongoing development of Curriculum for Excellence, the continuing rollout of the GIRFEC approach and the progress through the Scottish Parliament of the Children and Young People's Bill which became an Act in March 2014.

Local authorities have been working to improve services for supporting children and young people with dyslexia and are becoming better organised to help staff to meet the needs of children and young people with additional support needs, including dyslexia. Many have appropriate policies and guidelines in place to support staff who are making provision to meet the needs of children and young people with dyslexia. These could be further improved by linking these to the authority literacy strategy. Local authorities and schools are not yet consistently using a definition of dyslexia and further work is required to ensure that all staff have a working knowledge of The Toolkit and have better access to Dyslexia Practice guidelines.

Primary, secondary and special schools are generally making good provision for children and young people with additional support needs, including dyslexia, but this now needs to be more consistent. Schools need to continue to improve their approaches to the identification, planning and approaches to meeting the needs of children and young people with dyslexia with a greater focus on early intervention. Staff also need to take better account of parents' views regarding the needs of their child.

The quality and availability of professional learning opportunities relating to making appropriate provision for children and young people with dyslexia is too variable at school, authority and national level. Teachers need further support in developing appropriate skills and approaches so they can fulfil their responsibilities to meet learners' needs as outlined in the revised GTCS Standards.

The Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC) has made important progress in emphasising teachers' roles in meeting the needs of all children and young people through its development and publication of the Framework. The current revision and

updating of this document will take into account the legislative changes which have occurred in the intervening years as well as the publication of the revised GTCS Standards. Greater consistency in the quality and content of initial teacher education courses and postgraduate awards and courses relating to meeting additional support needs, including dyslexia, is required. It would be helpful for teachers if these courses were accredited with Professional Recognition.

Education Scotland has a significant role to play supporting teachers to meet the needs of children and young people in their classes. Its [website](#) is Scotland's 'one-stop-shop' for information about educational matters and is currently being redesigned. Education Scotland's team of Inclusion Officers are working with education providers to support improvement and sharing of effective inclusive practices. Further work is needed to ensure that national guidance for teachers, considers dyslexia in the wider context of literacy and additional support needs.

The Scottish Government has been supportive of the work of Dyslexia Scotland and funds a number of its projects, including the exploration of ways to promote a Dyslexia Friendly School approach. The outcome of this project has the potential to positively influence inclusive practice in schools across the country. The Scottish Government continues to improve and extend data collection and analysis in relation to additional support needs, which is resulting in improved information about qualifications and positive destinations. The advice and guidance for school/pupil census submissions needs further improved to achieve greater consistency in responses from schools and authorities.

Overall, local authorities and schools have made some progress in addressing the recommendations in the 2008 report. There is evidence that local authorities and practitioners have moved closer to a shared understanding of what dyslexia is. The Scottish Government has worked with key stakeholders to provide a description of the range of indicators and characteristics of dyslexia. While this is providing helpful guidance for educational practitioners, learners, parents/carers and others, some local authorities do not have an agreed and shared understanding of dyslexia. In response to the 2008 report, more accessible and practical advice is now available through, for example, The Toolkit to help practitioners to recognise and meet the needs of learners with dyslexia. Education Scotland shared examples of best practice nationally on its Journey to Excellence website. However, there remains scope for local authorities to encourage schools to make better use of The Toolkit and share best practice in dealing with dyslexia.

The 2008 report identified weaknesses in local authority information about how many children had dyslexia and the numbers of teachers with appropriate experience and qualifications in dyslexia. Scottish Government has extended the range of data including qualifications gained and positive destinations reached by those with dyslexia. However, information about the number of children and young people in schools and local authorities identified as having dyslexia is still not yet consistently reliable. As yet, few authorities are able to supply numbers of staff who have been involved in accredited courses. A further recommendation from the 2008 report related to the need for strategic approaches within authorities to developing their approaches to evaluating the effectiveness of services to meet the needs of learners with dyslexia. All local authorities now have staged intervention approaches to meeting additional support needs, including dyslexia. Approaches to evaluating the

effectiveness of services to meet the needs of dyslexic learners now need to be further developed. The Scottish Government Literacy Action Plan's specific commitment to work with Dyslexia Scotland to address literacy difficulties from the early years is now providing a focus on early intervention to help children to develop these skills. Although the 2008 report highlighted the importance of professional development for teachers to meet the needs of learners with dyslexia, this is still variable at school, authority and national level.

Whilst much progress has been made, young people with dyslexia attain significantly less well than their peers who do not have additional support needs. There remains the need for teachers together with local and national partners to work together to ensure a collective commitment to improving the services and support for children and young people with dyslexia.

Recommendations

1. Teachers, support staff, learners and parents should have access to up-to-date practical advice and guidance on dyslexia:

- Local authority websites, including guidance for parents, must contain information and contact details relating to provision for children and young people with additional support needs, including those with dyslexia, in line with responsibilities under section 26 of the Additional Support for Learning Act.
- Local authorities should ensure that teachers have access to Dyslexia Practice Guidelines, linked to their literacy strategy.
- Establishments should have a whole school approach to dyslexia as part of each school's literacy strategy and inclusive practices, linked to staff professional learning opportunities.
- Dyslexia Scotland should work with local authorities and schools to encourage all teachers to be familiar with, and make appropriate use of, [The Toolkit](#).
- Education Scotland should produce national guidance for teachers on education for children and young people with dyslexia in the wider context of additional support needs.

2. Teachers, support staff and local authority staff should have access to a wide range of high quality career-long professional learning opportunities at school, local and national level related to meeting the needs of children and young people with dyslexia.

- Teachers should ensure that they develop their skills to be able to meet their responsibilities in relation to additional support needs in line with the GTCS standards and should consider applying for GTCS Professional Recognition for relevant continuing professional learning.
- Local authorities should extend the range and quality of career-long professional learning related to meeting the needs of children and young people with dyslexia and make these available on a regular basis.
- Education Scotland should work with Dyslexia Scotland and other relevant stakeholders to develop a comprehensive dyslexia professional learning package which can be used by local authorities to increase the capacity of teachers to meet learning needs.

- Local authorities should record centrally information on teachers' specialist skills and qualifications in meeting the needs of learners with dyslexia

3. Initial teacher education and postgraduate awards and courses should give a high priority to developing knowledge and skills in relation to dyslexia and additional support needs.

- The Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC) should continue to work with the Scottish Government, GTCS, Education Scotland and all ITE institutions to ensure greater consistency of initial teacher education course content across Scotland in relation to dyslexia and additional support needs.
- STEC and GTCS should also work together to standardise the quality and content of postgraduate awards and courses relating to meeting additional support needs, where possible accrediting them with Professional Recognition.

4. Schools, local authorities and national partners should take action to improve the quality of educational outcomes for children and young people with dyslexia.

- Schools and local authorities should improve their practices in identifying, planning and the range of approaches used to meet the needs of children and young people with dyslexia with a high priority given to early intervention.
- Parents, children and young people should be more involved in discussions and strategies related to dyslexia, in line with responsibilities under section 12 of the Additional Support for Learning Act and staff should seek and take account of their views.
- HM Inspectors should continue through inspections to monitor the quality of provision and outcomes for children and young people with dyslexia.
- The Scottish Government should work with Dyslexia Scotland to consider national accreditation schemes for Dyslexia Friendly Schools and Dyslexia Friendly Authorities.

5. The availability and use of reliable information on children and young people's needs, development and achievement should be improved.

- In partnership with the Scottish Government, local authorities should improve the quality and use of data regarding the number of children and young people identified as having dyslexia.
- The Scottish Government should review the data which it is intending to collect for the census and improve the clarity of instructions for school/pupil census submissions to improve the quality of data available regarding children and young people with dyslexia.

Appendix 1: References and further reading

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Appendix 2: Legislative and policy background

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000

This [Act](#) sets out the rights of children to school education and the related duties of education authorities. The nature of the duties on education authorities is “to secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential”. The Act introduced the policy of ‘presumption of mainstreaming’, meaning that all children will be expected to attend mainstream school unless certain circumstances apply. Specialist provision can be considered if this is the case. In almost all cases, children and young people with dyslexia are educated in mainstream educational establishments. 98% of all children and young people in Scotland are educated in mainstream schools.

Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records Act 2002

This [Act](#) places education authorities, independent schools and grant-aided schools under duties to prepare Accessibility Strategies to, over time, improve physical access, access to the curriculum and access to school information for disabled pupils.

Equality Act 2010

The [Equality Act 2010](#) requires responsible bodies to actively deal with inequality, and to prevent direct disability discrimination, indirect disability discrimination and discrimination arising from disability and harassment or victimisation of pupils on the basis, or a perceived basis, of protected characteristics, including disability². The provisions include:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

In addition, under the Equality Act 2010 responsible bodies have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and provide auxiliary aids and services. The duty is ‘to take such steps as it is **reasonable** to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage’ to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of a school or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service.

² these duties apply to all protected characteristics related to schools duties (disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation)

Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 (as amended)

The [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#) (as amended) provides a framework for local authorities and other agencies to support all children. It came into force in November 2005 and its main provisions included:

- establishing the concept of ‘additional support needs’, which includes dyslexia
- placing new duties on local authorities and other agencies
- setting out rights for parents
- establishing mechanisms for resolving differences for families and authorities, mediation, dispute resolution
- establishing the Additional Support Needs Tribunals Scotland (ASNTS)

The 2009 Act included the following amendments:

- the rights of parents to make out of area placing requests
- following a successful out of area placing request parental access to mediation and dispute resolution from the host authority
- increased parental rights in respect of access to the ASNTS
- the provision of a new ASNTS national advocacy service

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act

[The Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) makes provision about the rights of children and young people and provides a legislative basis for many aspects of the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach.

Children’s Rights

To ensure that children’s rights properly influence the design and delivery of policies and services, the Act will:

- Place a duty on the Scottish Ministers to keep under consideration and take steps to further the rights of children and young people, to promote and raise awareness and understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and to prepare reports describing this activity;
- Place a duty on the wider public sector to report on what they are doing to take forward realisation of the rights set out in the UNCRC; and
- Extend the powers of Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People, so that this office will be able to undertake investigations in relation to individual children and young people.

Wellbeing and Getting it Right for Every Child

To improve the way services work to support children, young people and families, the Act will:

- Ensure that all children and young people from birth to their 18th birthday, or beyond if they remain in school, will have access to a Named Person;

- Put in place a single statutory planning process to support those children who require it;
- Place a definition of wellbeing in legislation; and
- Place duties on public bodies (Community Planning Partnerships) to coordinate the planning, design and delivery of services for children and young people with a focus on improving wellbeing outcomes, and report collectively on how they are improving those outcomes.

Teaching Scotland's Future – Report of a Review of Teacher Education in Scotland (2010)

Graham Donaldson, former HM Senior Chief Inspector of Education, was asked by the Scottish Government to conduct a review of teacher education in Scotland. The Review commenced in February 2010 and reported to Ministers in January 2011. His report, [Teaching Scotland's Future](#), contained 50 recommendations that spanned the full breadth of a teacher's career from selection to an initial teacher education course to enhancing leadership and accomplished teaching. The Government responded to Teaching Scotland's Future in March 2011 and accepted all recommendations in full, in part or in principle.

Key recommendations include:

- The highest priority must be given, at all levels, to strengthening both teacher quality and leadership in Scotland's schools
- Selection for initial education should be thorough, broad and rigorous and carried out in assessment centres
- All teachers should be skilled in supporting the development of literacy and numeracy skills and in overcoming barriers to learning such as dyslexia
- The B.Ed degree should be replaced with degrees that combine academic study beyond education with professional studies
- Teacher education should be seen as a career-long process, with much closer working amongst schools, universities, local authorities and national organisations
- The professional development of experienced teachers should be guided by a new set of standards developed by GTCS
- A greater range of teachers' professional development should be accredited with Masters-level credits built into Initial Teacher Education qualifications

Curriculum for Excellence

The original report of the Curriculum Review Group, [a curriculum for excellence](#) (Scottish Executive, 2004) indicated that all children and young people should be **successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens** and **effective contributors** to society and at work. By providing structure, support and direction to young people's learning, the curriculum should enable them to develop these four capacities. The curriculum should complement the important contributions of families and communities.

The **design principles** which schools, teachers and other educators should use to implement the curriculum are:

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

Within Curriculum for Excellence, personal learning planning is at the heart of supporting learning. The conversations about learning, reviewing progress and planning next steps are central to this process. Planned opportunities for achievement which focus on the learning and progress made through activities across the full range of contexts and settings in which the curriculum is experienced also contribute to the universal aspect of support. It is the responsibility of all practitioners and partners to deliver this universal entitlement within their own teaching environments.

In addition, all children and young people should have frequent and regular opportunities to discuss their learning and development with an adult who knows them well and with whom they have a mutually trusting relationship. This key member of staff has the holistic overview of the child or young person's learning and personal development.

Appendix 3: Dyslexia Learning Trail

This learning trail may be used as part of the school’s self-evaluation and focus on judgements about attainment and achievement, the effectiveness of the school’s procedures for tracking and monitoring progress, the quality of support for young people with dyslexia and the effectiveness of partnership working with key agencies and parents.

Children and young people with dyslexia should have their needs identified and assessed. The school should record and share details of those children and young people with dyslexia with staff working with them.

Definition

The following working definition of dyslexia has been accepted by the Scottish Government:

Dyslexia can be described as a continuum of difficulties in learning to read, write and/or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual’s cognitive abilities and may not be typical of performance in other areas.

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning and teaching environment, as there are often associated difficulties such as:

- auditory and/or visual processing of language-based information
- phonological awareness
- oral language skills and reading fluency
- short-term and working memory
- sequencing and directionality
- number skills
- organisational ability

Motor skills and co-ordination may also be affected.

Activity	Purpose	Good practice
Review how well learners with dyslexia are known by staff and information is passed on to new staff.	To check that those learners with additional support needs, including dyslexia, have been identified assessed and have their additional support needs provided for and are known by staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff know about the strengths, specific needs and support systems required for each learner with dyslexia and information is available to all members of staff. • Learners and parents have contributed to the assessment and advice to staff. • Staff, learners and parents are aware of the barriers faced by dyslexic children and young people when accessing the curriculum and work to address barriers to learning. • Staff are aware of and actively

		use the process for alerting SfL/pupil support staff if they have concerns regarding learners' progress and possible indicators of dyslexia.
In class observations and/or interviews with pupil support staff, evaluate the class environment and how well individual needs are met.	To evaluate the quality of learning experiences for children and young people with dyslexia across the school.	<p>Children and young people with dyslexia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have opportunities to capitalise on their strengths, interests as well as experience new ideas and learn new skills. • have appropriate support to enable access to learning including visual support such as pictures, symbols and objects, specialised technology aids and support from support for learning staff if required. • have access to appropriate, accessible curriculum material across the school such as audio recordings, reading age appropriate texts, appropriately designed textual resources from class teachers, pre-prepared class notes, subject summary notes or recordings. • have access to specialised technology aids and ICT provision which develops their independence - such as reading and writing software, laptops and Dictaphones. • have access to and choice in appropriate assessment arrangements such as extra time, readers/scribes and digital examinations for internal and external assessments*. • have time to process visual and auditory language. • are encouraged to become independent learners expressing their views and making choices. • are encouraged to be actively involved in all aspects of the school and community, if appropriate.

<p>Review PLPs, IEPs and/or coordinated support plans for learners with dyslexia.</p>	<p>To ensure children and young people have their needs planned for appropriately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If appropriate, learners with dyslexia should have an IEP with targets for skills development in literacy. If appropriate, learners may have also have targets set in HWB and numeracy. The quality of coordinated planning helps to meet the needs of learners with dyslexia. Where appropriate, specialist teachers are part of planning and provision to meet needs.
<p>Review achievement information for learners with dyslexia in discussion with class teacher in primary or relevant DHT and/or PT in secondary schools.</p>	<p>To identify levels of achievement – Curriculum for Excellence progress and achievement of levels, NQs and other forms of awards.</p> <p>To investigate performance and explore quality assurance systems to improve outcomes.</p> <p>To ensure that transitions are well-managed.</p> <p>To discuss leaver destinations for young people with dyslexia.</p> <p>To explore monitoring and tracking systems in place for learners with dyslexia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The education authority or Governing Body has high expectations of achievement for pupils with dyslexia. • Quality assurance mechanisms are in place to review and improve performance for example benchmarking with other schools re effectiveness of learning and teaching for learners with dyslexia. • Transitions between establishments are well-managed with good communication and preparation including familiarisation, communication about routines. • Examples of effective tracking and monitoring of achievement at individual learner level and groups of learners. • NQ and other forms of achievement which meet the needs of learners with dyslexia and provide access to appropriate post school opportunities.
<p>Staff focus groups and discussion involving HT/DHT and/or PT support for pupils or class teacher in primary to evaluate staff knowledge and expertise in dyslexia.</p>	<p>To ensure legislative responsibilities for equalities, disabilities and additional support needs are understood.</p> <p>To ensure key staff have higher levels of knowledge and expertise in dyslexia. To ensure this is kept up-to-date and disseminated across the school.</p> <p>To evaluate the ethos and culture of the school in terms of expectations of learners with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National awareness of the issues impacting on learners with dyslexia. • Implementation of the appropriate legislation to meet the needs and entitlement of learners with dyslexia. • Culture of high expectations for learners with dyslexia. • Training, policy documentation and guidance which provides all staff with an awareness of

	<p>dyslexia. To ensure that the school has effective support mechanism and structures to meet the learning and teaching needs of learners with dyslexia.</p> <p>To identify training programmes, and policy documentation which supports all staff in delivering effective teaching and learning to learners with dyslexia.</p>	<p>the issues surrounding the needs of learners with dyslexia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key staff across the school and at all levels have undertaken higher level training and can support staff to develop appropriate teaching approaches for learners with dyslexia.
<p>Focus group/discussions with staff including HT or DHT responsible for pastoral care/ class teacher or appropriate staff on pastoral needs of learners with dyslexia.</p>	<p>To evaluate staff knowledge and understanding of the pastoral needs of learners with dyslexia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding across the school by staff of the pastoral needs of learners with dyslexia including self-esteem, social, emotional and community issues. • Range of supports and strategies are in place to support the social, emotional and behavioural needs of learners with dyslexia if appropriate.
<p>During routine discussions with support staff and class teachers ask about their experience of teaching and working with learners with dyslexia.</p>	<p>To evaluate the knowledge and understanding of school staff at all levels in meeting the learning, social and emotional needs of learners with dyslexia.</p> <p>To evaluate the learning and teaching approaches used to promote the achievement of learners with dyslexia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are knowledgeable or supported to deliver high quality, skilful learning and teaching experiences for learners with dyslexia. • Assessment to support learning approaches have been appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of learners with dyslexia.
<p>Focus groups/discussions with partner agencies to look at the quality of collaborative working to improve outcomes for young people with dyslexia – including, educational psychologist, specialist visiting teachers etc.</p>	<p>To explore roles, relationships, referral and communication systems with key agencies for the benefits of learners with dyslexia. To establish the mechanisms for partnership working across the school. To look at procedures for joint planning and target setting and establish how the outcomes from this planning are reviewed.</p> <p>To identify transition planning arrangements for learners with dyslexia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early intervention and referral to appropriate agencies including for example educational psychology. • Joint identification of targets to be worked on in the home and school context. • Multi-agency planning at all stages, within appropriate time scales, especially at times of transition. • Effective procedures and processes in place for transitional planning involving all agencies parents and the child or young person.

<p>Meet with parents to explore parental engagement and involvement in the education of their child.</p>	<p>To evaluate the consistency of approach across the curriculum and home.</p> <p>To ensure parents are well-engaged at time of transition.</p> <p>To gain the views of parents regarding the quality of the provision and the progress and achievements of their child and determine the effectiveness of planning and reporting from a parental perspective.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a strong partnership involving parents and key staff. Parents are involved in target setting and review. • Home school communication is regular, the format is jointly agreed and appropriate to the needs of the child and parents. • There is joint monitoring of the progress the learner is making at school, home and in the wider community. • There are regular parent friendly reports on the progress of their child, particularly at points of transition and key educational stages.
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* Digital question papers provided by SQA use ICT and reading software.

Appendix 4: Attainment of young people with additional support needs (2013)

Table A3.3. Total qualifications attained by leavers from secondary and special schools with additional support needs, ASN, 2011/12

	Total leavers (=100%)	Average tariff score	Percentage														
			1+@ SCQF Level 2 or better	1+@ SCQF Level 3 or better	5+@ SCQF Level 3 or better	1+@ SCQF Level 4 or better	5+@ SCQF Level 4 or better	1+@ SCQF Level 5 or better	5+@ SCQF Level 5 or better	1+@ SCQF Level 6 or better	3+@ SCQF Level 6 or better	5+@ SCQF Level 6 or better	1+@ SCQF Level 7 or better	3+@ SCQF Level 7 or better			
Total	51,421	401	97.9	97.7	92.7	95.0	82.6	80.4	58.0	54.9	39.8	28.1	18.0	2.2			
No Additional Support need	44,055	433	99.0	98.9	95.9	87.9	85.5	63.6	60.1	44.2	31.3	20.0	2.5				
Any Additional Support need of which:	7,366	206	91.3	90.0	73.8	51.3	50.1	24.4	23.8	13.9	8.4	5.9	0.8				
Learning disability	940	78	74.6	67.6	42.9	20.3	19.7	5.3	4.9	1.8	*	*	0.0				
Dyslexia	1,413	252	96.8	96.6	89.7	92.4	67.2	31.1	29.9	16.9	9.8	7.3	0.7				
Other specific learning difficulty (e.g. numeracy)	659	223	94.7	94.4	84.4	89.2	62.4	59.9	25.2	24.0	12.7	7.1	4.4				
Other moderate learning difficulty	768	128	91.4	88.9	66.9	74.1	34.4	34.2	9.8	9.1	4.4	2.3	*				
Visual impairment	166	249	81.9	79.5	71.1	72.9	54.8	53.0	31.9	33.1	21.1	13.9	*				
Hearing impairment	146	274	91.8	91.1	82.9	84.2	64.4	67.1	34.2	36.3	22.6	15.8	*				
Deafblind	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	0.0				
Physical or motor impairment	372	209	82.5	79.8	70.2	74.5	52.2	51.1	25.8	24.7	15.1	10.2	5.9				
Language or speech disorder	265	102	68.3	62.3	46.8	49.8	26.0	29.4	10.2	9.8	4.2	2.3	*				
Autistic spectrum disorder	481	215	86.5	82.3	67.2	71.5	52.8	50.9	29.5	28.9	15.4	8.1	6.2				
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulty	1,837	105	87.6	86.2	56.6	66.8	27.3	26.9	7.7	7.0	3.6	2.1	*				
Physical health problem	478	263	87.7	86.2	76.6	80.8	57.7	57.3	36.4	34.7	23.2	14.2	*				
Mental health problem	122	147	86.9	86.1	59.8	69.7	36.9	39.3	14.8	15.6	8.2	*	0.0				
Interrupted learning	138	79	86.2	84.8	39.1	53.6	16.7	21.7	5.8	5.1	*	*	0.0				
English as an additional language	559	352	95.3	95.2	88.9	93.2	77.1	80.3	48.5	52.2	32.6	19.3	13.2				
Looked after	311	109	86.8	85.5	52.4	67.8	30.9	30.5	8.4	7.7	2.3	*	0.0				
More able pupil	73	600	100.0	98.6	98.6	98.6	95.9	95.9	87.7	87.7	67.1	49.3	37.0				
Not disclosed/declared	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	0.0	0.0			
Other	715	200	91.5	91.2	77.2	81.5	50.8	49.8	23.1	22.2	12.0	8.1	5.9				

* Information based on number of less than 5 have been suppressed for quality and disclosure reasons.

1. Leavers from publicly-funded secondary and local authority special schools. All of the 11 leavers from grant-aided special schools were excluded as only 1 could be matched to census data.

2. Individuals may have more than one additional support need - numbers will not add up to the total.

3. Includes all leavers from special schools and leavers from secondary schools with Additional Support Needs. If none are specified, they are treated as having "Other or unknown" support needs.

Appendix 5: Post-school destinations of young people with additional support needs (2013)

Table L4.1. Percentage of secondary and special school leavers from publicly funded schools in Scotland by reason for support and initial destination category, 2011/12

	Number of Leavers	Higher Education	Further Education	Training	Employment	Voluntary Work	Activity Agreement	Unemployed and Seeking Employment or Training	Unemployed and Not Seeking Employment or Training	Unknown
Total	51,421	36.8	27.0	4.7	19.6	0.4	1.0	8.5	1.5	0.4
No Additional Support need	44,055	40.4	24.9	4.0	20.4	0.4	0.6	7.7	1.2	0.4
Any Additional Support need of which:	7,366	15.0	39.5	9.2	14.7	0.7	3.2	13.6	3.5	0.6
Learning disability	940	2.6	54.7	6.5	9.5	*	3.2	12.4	10.0	*
Dyslexia	1,413	17.1	38.1	9.2	21.2	0.8	1.8	9.9	1.3	0.6
Other specific learning difficulty (e.g. numeric)	659	13.8	40.5	6.8	22.6	*	3.0	10.3	*	0.0
Other moderate learning difficulty	768	5.5	45.8	12.8	13.8	*	4.4	14.2	2.7	*
Visual impairment	166	22.3	43.4	8.4	7.2	*	*	*	12.7	*
Hearing impairment	146	24.0	45.2	*	10.3	*	*	8.9	6.2	0.0
Deafblind	*	*	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Physical or motor impairment	372	16.4	49.2	4.8	7.8	1.3	1.3	4.8	14.2	0.0
Language or speech disorder	265	6.0	57.0	7.5	4.2	0.0	*	4.9	18.5	*
Autistic spectrum disorder	481	17.3	57.2	2.9	5.0	*	1.5	5.6	9.6	*
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulty	1,837	4.8	33.9	13.4	13.5	0.6	6.5	21.1	5.3	0.9
Physical health problem	478	22.4	44.6	5.4	10.9	*	*	6.9	7.7	*
Mental health problem	122	10.7	45.1	9.0	10.7	0.0	4.1	11.5	9.0	0.0
Interrupted learning	138	*	31.9	11.6	13.0	0.0	8.0	29.0	*	0.0
English as an additional language	559	36.5	39.7	2.5	9.5	*	*	8.8	1.3	*
Looked after	311	3.5	37.6	10.9	9.6	*	7.1	23.2	5.5	*
More able pupil	73	75.3	*	*	12.3	0.0	*	*	0.0	0.0
Not disclosed/declared	*	*	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	*	*
Other	715	13.6	36.5	10.9	15.7	*	2.8	16.5	2.7	*

1. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

2. This table was revised in October 2013 to remove leavers who did not have a robust match to the pupil census.

Appendix 6: Local authority statistics (2013)

School and Pupil Numbers by Sector and Local Authority, 2013

	Schools			Primary			Pupils			Secondary			Special			Total	
	Primary	Secondary	Special	Primary	Dyslexia	%	Secondary	Dyslexia	%	Secondary	Dyslexia	%	Special	Dyslexia	%	Total	%
Aberdeen City	47	12	7	12648	57	0	8854	101	1	163	*	*				21665	1
Aberdeenshire	150	17	4	19896	407	2	14289	954	7	243	*	*				34428	4
Angus	53	8	-	8535	16	0	6530	71	1	-	-	-				15065	1
Argyll & Bute	84	10	3	5680	85	1	4979	239	5	16	0	0				10675	3
Clackmannanshire	19	3	3	3921	54	1	2690	120	4	27	0	0				6638	3
Dumfries & Galloway	102	16	2	10539	46	0	8378	123	1	14	0	0				18931	1
Dundee City	35	9	2	9886	42	0	7401	96	1	266	*	*				17553	1
East Ayrshire	43	9	7	8850	87	1	6917	294	4	235	*	*				16002	2
East Dunbartonshire	37	8	4	8424	119	1	7484	293	4	148	*	*				16056	3
East Lothian	35	6	-	7913	137	2	5745	235	4	-	-	-				13658	3
East Renfrewshire	23	7	1	8281	221	3	7842	606	8	103	5	5				16226	5
Edinburgh City	88	23	13	26900	284	1	18366	745	4	695	22	3				45961	2
Eilean Siar	24	5	-	1891	16	1	1543	97	6	-	-	-				3434	3
Falkirk	50	8	4	12138	106	1	8724	154	2	222	18	8				21084	1
Fife	140	19	8	27681	466	2	20407	878	4	127	0	0				48215	3
Glasgow City	138	30	32	37542	285	1	25970	816	3	1726	69	4				65238	2
Highland	176	29	4	16816	311	2	13956	672	5	138	*	*				30910	3
Inverclyde	20	6	3	5502	119	2	4434	379	9	156	*	*				10092	5
Midlothian	30	6	2	6592	73	1	5138	173	3	100	*	*				11830	2
Moray	45	8	-	6622	71	1	5387	248	5	-	-	-				12009	3
North Ayrshire	52	9	4	10132	189	2	7973	429	5	172	*	*				18277	3
North Lanarkshire	121	24	13	26905	43	0	21064	140	1	861	11	1				48830	0
Orkney Islands	20	5	-	1455	56	4	1188	61	5	-	-	-				2643	4
Perth & Kinross	73	10	1	9949	272	3	7568	485	6	61	6	10				17578	4
Renfrewshire	49	11	3	12592	101	1	10387	258	2	360	*	*				23339	2
Scottish Borders	63	9	2	8064	83	1	6508	133	2	-	-	-				14572	1
Shetland Islands	31	8	-	1793	33	2	1444	69	5	-	-	-				3237	3
South Ayrshire	41	8	2	7519	131	2	6555	408	6	89	0	0				14163	4
South Lanarkshire	126	17	7	23966	236	1	18884	614	3	321	17	5				43171	2
Stirling	40	7	3	6439	99	2	5795	273	5	11	0	0				12245	3
West Dunbartonshire	34	5	3	6917	79	1	5273	204	4	181	0	0				12371	2
West Lothian	66	11	5	14933	117	1	10905	360	3	306	*	*				26144	2
All local authorities	2055	363	142	376921	4441	1	288578	10728	4	6741	*	*				672240	2
Grant aided	1	1	7	461	6	1	586	17	3	243	*	*				1290	2
Scotland	2056	364	149	377382	4447	1	289164	10745	4	6984	176	3				673530	2

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