# The Friary School

## DYSLEXIA POLICY

### Introduction

The Friary School values the importance of being Dyslexia Friendly. Not only does a Dyslexia Friendly ethos help us to meet the needs of dyslexic students, but also the needs of students who have delayed literacy skills. Indeed, evidence suggests that all children who are taught using Dyslexia Friendly methods are able to benefit when dyslexia friendly methods are adopted throughout school.

This commitment is reflected in our school holding the national accredited status from the British Dyslexia Association's Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark.

We also know that a child's self-esteem and confidence goes hand in hand with successful learning and as a school we strive to nurture that confidence and create successful independent learners.

### What Is Dyslexia ?

The British Dyslexia Association, say: "Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling."

Dyslexic tendencies occur in people of all backgrounds and of all abilities. It is estimated that about 10% of the population may be affected, with 4% of these having severe difficulties.

Children with dyslexia may experience other difficulties with:

- Short term memory
- Long term memory
- Processing and retrieving words and information
- Phonological awareness
- Sequencing or rote learning
- Auditory memory
- Spatial awareness
- Direction - left and right
- Organisation
- Fine Motor Skills

The skills and strategies which dyslexic students and students with dyslexic traits need in order to learn can be taught. Therefore, as a school, we use a range of teaching strategies to support these learners.

### Support for Learners

Our main strategy is Quality First Teaching which supports dyslexic learners' development through:

- Differentiated resources
- Prompting around time and tasks to be completed
- Sympathetic use of language and questioning
- Positive grouping
- Evidenced based interventions are used during form time where there are identified literacy barriers including dyslexia/dyslexic tendencies to help students develop literacy skills and develop good working habits.

## Teaching Strategies

No two dyslexic children are alike and the difficulties they experience will vary greatly. Our teaching styles must reflect children's differing needs. These can include:

- Exploring a wide range of recording styles for children
- Use of ICT to aid recording, such as speak to text, IPads, laptops, and reading pens
- Use of ICT to help develop phonic and reading knowledge, such as e-books and recorded assessments
- Use of pictorial cues
- Use of visual timetables
- The use of our marking policy which includes symbols to identify strengths and areas for development.

In order to increase the confidence and enjoyment of learning for a dyslexic student, we employ a whole range of methods. Some of these methods include:

- Use of reading books that are at an age appropriate interest level, whilst being at the correct reading level for the individual child.
- Guided reading sessions with older peers.
- Printing off information for the dyslexic child, rather than expect them to copy/search for information from the whiteboard
- Use of precision teaching to help improve sound and word recognition
- Effective note taking including the use of mind mapping is taught through enrichment.
- Providing check lists to breakdown learning activities.
- Using glossaries and key words to support topics.
- Providing writing frames and sentence starters to support confidence in writing.

## Dyslexia Friendly Classrooms

We aim to provide a dyslexia friendly environment for all students and adults. In our classrooms, we adopt many dyslexia friendly principles to support learners.

In order to achieve this, our classrooms:

- Are arranged so that during lessons dyslexic children sit in an appropriate place
- Have water readily available throughout the day
- Use colour tinted backgrounds on PowerPoints and screens.
- Use coloured paper for worksheets, letters and information where appropriate
- Have bright and colourful subject specific displays with topic vocabulary and key information including photographs and pictures
- Are appropriately lit and well-ventilated to provide a comfortable learning environment
- Use reading rulers and coloured overlays
- Are tidy and well-organised
- Have easily accessed ICT; Eg - talking text, laptops, spell checkers, etc

## Identification of Dyslexic Tendencies

All teachers are responsible for identifying dyslexic tendencies in children. All members of teaching staff receive updates and refresher training on Dyslexia friendly teaching methods. For new members of staff, Dyslexia Friendly teaching forms parts of their personalised induction. The Friary School also use a wide range of assessment methods, and have a number of rigorous pupil tracking and monitoring procedures in place.

- If a teacher is concerned they can:
- Record class interventions on the Student's Class Support Plan.

- Speak with the school's SENCO and refer the student for further assessment by the SEND team.

Further testing may be carried out and parents consulted in the process of identifying possible learning needs.

## Assessment

Teachers and staff are constantly tracking and monitoring pupil progress. When marking work, teachers and staff are mindful of managing the needs and self-esteem of dyslexic children. They may only make a limited number of corrections on a piece of work. Where appropriate, staff will try to give verbal feedback as well as written feedback.

Where a child has known difficulties or dyslexic tendencies, then teachers will exercise sensitivity in their marking of spellings particularly. Correction of spellings will be focussed primarily upon high frequency words and subject specific terminology.

## Helping Your Child at Home

For a student with dyslexic tendencies, repetition and over-learning can be key. For children who find it difficult to remember letter patterns, practical activities can help students to retain spellings. Often, students can find that it's easier to learn in small bite sized sessions or 'drip feeding', rather than sitting for any great length of time.

Some books that parents may find helpful include:

- Birkett, R, (2011),'So You Think You've Got Problems'
- Ryden, M, (1997) 'Dyslexia - How Would I Cope ?'
- Beamish, B (2020), 'Dyslexia - Wrestling with an Octopus: 10 Tips To Help your Child'
- Roos, S, (2018), 'At Home With Dyslexia - A Parent's Guide To Supporting Your Child'

Elsewhere, 'Reading Difficulties and Dyslexia Booklist' list books which are easy to read but with interesting content published by the Book Trust. Also, there is a 'Dyslexia-Friendly Books' list produced by LoveReading4Kids and the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) website, contains an up to date list of current resources and source of information.

## Partnership with Parents

Parental support is key to helping a student overcome any dyslexic barriers. Parents can be given strategies to help their child at home, and parents are always welcome in school to discuss any concerns they may have. We also schedule parent meetings at the point of transition and during the school year to discuss parental concerns and provide guidance.

Staffordshire SEND IASS, also offers an excellent support service to parents. Staffordshire SEND IASS produce a variety of information on Dyslexia and also the SEND procedures in school. This information is free to parents, and is available on the Staffordshire SEND IASS website: www.staffs-iass.org.

## The SENCO's Role

When a teacher shares concerns they will initially liaise with parents to gather vital background information. The SENCO will then advise parents and the class teacher on how best to support the student and update the Individual Support Plan for the student. If a child continues to experience significant difficulties the school SENCO may decide to do further assessments to help identify any possible learning needs.

## SEND & Dyslexia Friendly Schools' Policy Statement

The Friary School aims to be fully inclusive. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning that can hinder or exclude individual students or groups of Students. We aim to ensure equality of opportunity for all children by paying attention to specific groups of children within our school.

The aims of our Special Educational Need & Disability Policy and practice in this school are:

- To provide access to the curriculum, the environment and to printed information for learners.
- To use our best endeavours to secure special educational provision for students for whom this is required, that is "additional to and different from" that provided within the differentiated curriculum
- To request, monitor and respond to parent/carers' and students' views in order to evidence high levels of satisfaction and partnership
- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet student need, through well targeted continuing professional development.
- To support students with medical conditions full inclusion in all school activities by ensuring consultation with health and social care professionals
- To work in cooperative and productive partnership with the Local Authority and other outside agencies, to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.

We also strive to better respond to the four key areas of need:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Sensory/physical

As part of our commitment to a Dyslexia Friendly ethos, we are continually striving to maintain and improve Dyslexia Friendly practice. We believe that a Dyslexia Friendly environment and teaching styles will benefit the learning of all students and not just those with dyslexic tendencies.

Quite simply, strategies that are good for the dyslexic learner are good for everyone.

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