

Introduction.

Dyslexia is one of the most common additional learning needs within education (Reid, 2016). It mainly affects reading, spelling and writing, although the difficulties experienced can vary between individuals (British Dyslexia Association, 2025). Some learners struggle with reading fluency, while others face challenges with organisation, memory, or information processing (Vellutino et al., 2004). Importantly, dyslexia is not linked to intelligence. Many children with dyslexia demonstrate strong learning abilities but often face challenges in classrooms that emphasise literacy-based activities (Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2020; Snowling and Hulme, 2020). Awareness of dyslexia has increased over time, yet concerns persist about how effectively schools identify and support students facing these challenges (Rose, 2009 ; World Health Organization, 2022) This poster examines the identification and diagnosis of dyslexia, emphasises the challenges learners may encounter, and outlines effective support strategies to assist them.

Identification and Diagnosis of Dyslexia.

Dyslexia is often first recognised when a child struggles with reading, spelling or writing more than expected for their age. Difficulties may include slow reading, poor spelling, trouble recognising sounds in words or avoiding literacy activities (Collinson, 2023; sofia, 2021). Parents may also notice these challenges during homework or reading at home. Schools typically start with classroom observations and literacy screenings, then refer the child for specialist assessment if concerns persist (Rose, 2009; Snowling,2015; British Dyslexia Association, 2022). A formal diagnosis is often carried out by an educational psychologist or specialist (Riddick, 2009; Tunmer and Greaney, 2026). Assessments evaluate phonological awareness, memory, processing speed, and literacy skills to identify a child's strengths and challenges (Reid, 2016; Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2020; British Psychological Society, 2021).

One benefit of diagnosis is that it can help children access support at an earlier stage. Research shows that early intervention improves literacy outcomes and helps prevent children from falling behind academically (Snowling and Hulme, 2012; Rose, 2009; Elliott and Grigorenko, 2014). However, delays in identification can negatively affect both confidence and achievement (Morgan et al., 2012; Carroll et al., 2019). In some schools, limited resources and lack of specialist knowledge may slow down the assessment process. Another issue is that diagnosis can focus too heavily on the child's difficulties rather than the learning environment (Thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk, 2026). The medical model identifies dyslexia as an individual difficulty (Oliver, 1996), whereas the social model emphasises how educational barriers can intensify challenges for learners (Shakespeare, 2013; Norwich, 2014). Both perspectives hold significance: children with dyslexia require customised support, while schools must encourage more comprehensive learning environments.

Barriers Linked to Dyslexia and Their Impact on Children.

Children with dyslexia encounter various challenges in education that impact both their learning and emotional well-being. One major barrier is the strong focus on reading and writing across the curriculum. While literacy skills are important, this emphasis often means that other subjects or forms of learning—like problem-solving, or oral communication—can get sidelined (Peer and Reid, 2016). Classroom activities often depend heavily on literacy skills, which can create challenges for children with dyslexia (DfE, 2014; Rose, 2009; Snowling and Hulme, 2019). Timed assessments can increase pressure on learners who require more time to process information. Over time, these difficulties can affect confidence and motivation. Some children may avoid reading aloud or disengage from lessons altogether (Alexander-Passe, 2016 ; United Nations, 1989)

Educational and Institutional Barriers.

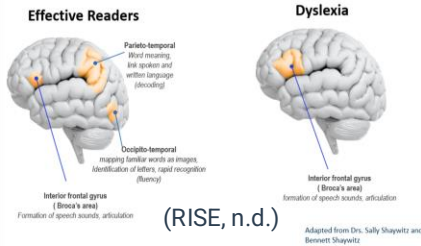
The education system often presents major challenges for children with dyslexia. Many classroom activities depend on reading and writing, which can create challenges for learners with dyslexia (Department for Education, 2015; Drgavinreid.com, 2026; Norwich, 2014). Timed assessments can increase stress for children who require more time to process information (Lee, 2025) Support can vary depending on teacher training and available resources. Some teachers express limited confidence in effectively supporting learners with dyslexia (Washburn, Joshi and Binks-Cantrell, 2011; Mather and Goldstein, 2021).

Impact: These barriers may reduce confidence, motivation and classroom engagement.

Cognitive and Emotional Barriers.

Dyslexia is often linked to challenges in phonological processing, working memory, and processing speed (Vellutino et al., 2004; Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2020). Learners often find it challenging to follow instructions, organize their ideas, and retain information during lessons. Repeated difficulties in school can also affect emotional wellbeing. Some learners experience stress, anxiety and low self-esteem (Burden, 2008; Alexander-Passe, 2016; Carroll et al., 2019).

Impact: Over time, these challenges can undermine both academic performance and emotional confidence.



Support Strategy: Multisensory Structured Teaching.

Educators widely apply multisensory structured teaching to support learners with dyslexia effectively. This approach engages children with literacy by incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities, as demonstrated by Ritchey and Goeke 2006; Birsch, n.d.) For example, children trace letters while pronouncing sounds aloud or use colored tools to segment words into smaller components. Instructors present lessons in small, organised steps to assist more effective learning. Research demonstrates that multisensory teaching enhances reading fluency, spelling, and memory retention (Shaywitz, 2003; Rose, 2009; Snowling and Hulme, 2019). Interactive activities build confidence by enabling learners to achieve success through manageable, incremental steps.

Another strength of the approach is that it supports different learning styles. Many children learn more effectively when instruction incorporates movement and visual cues rather than relying solely on written text, encouraging a more comprehensive learning environment. However, the strategy also has challenges. Multisensory teaching requires time, planning and specialist training. Teachers managing larger classrooms often struggle to provide consistent support while addressing the diverse needs of all students (Norwich, 2013; Washburn et al., 2014). This suggests that even effective interventions depend heavily on school support. Implementing strategies consistently and effectively requires proper training and resources (Department for Education, 2015 ; American Psychiatric Association, 2022)

Conclusion.

Dyslexia is a complex learning difference that affects children in different ways. Diagnosis enables learners to access support and gain a clearer understanding of their challenges; however, inconsistencies in the identification process often delay timely assistance for some children. Dyslexia can affect academic progress, confidence and emotional wellbeing, particularly when teaching methods are not adapted to meet different learning needs (International Dyslexia Association, 2016) Many of these difficulties are increased by barriers within the education system itself. Multisensory structured teaching is a powerful approach that engages multiple senses to help students grasp new concepts more effectively (Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2020; Rose, 2009). However, schools also need appropriate training, awareness and resources to provide effective support. Improving outcomes for learners with dyslexia requires individual support and educational changes to ensure all children can participate fully.