

Section A

Dyslexia has been classified as a disability and is part of UK legislation of the Equality Act 2010. It is a condition which affects children and adults. It is reported by By Dyslexia UK.com (2021) that Dyslexia affects between 5% and 10% of the world's population. It affects people in a variety of different ways, which contribute to an overall learning disability, which causes a child to not fulfil its full learning potential and capabilities. As stated by Unicef (No date) Article 29 of the UNCRC maintains that the objective of education is to enable the child to progress its skills, abilities and talents to its utmost capabilities. Dyslexia can be mild to severe and varies from learner to learner. It is a disability which is neurological in origin. NHS (2018) gives a definition of Dyslexia as a specific learning disability which affects the ability to read, write and spell. Although it is a learning disability, it does not affect the overall intelligence of a person. It is a life-long disability but there are strategies available to help combat learning difficulties. However, according to Reid (2017) significant progress can be made if early intervention can be undertaken to improve the child's ability to tackle their specific learning needs with appropriate interventions.

Dyslexia can be difficult to identify. As claimed by the British Dyslexia Association (No date), it is even more difficult in younger children as during the learning process children often make phonological misunderstandings, can muddle up their words, dislike paying attention and may have slow speech development. Stansfield (2012) agrees that diagnosis of children in the Early Years is problematic, however, she also suggests that waiting for a diagnosis is not in the best interest of the child as a delay in early intervention could cause further lack of academic progress. Similarly, Snowling (2013) states the earlier an intervention can take place, the better it is for the child, before the sense of failure sets in the child's psyche. Currently, according to the NHS (No date) diagnosis can only be carried out by Educational Psychologists and or a specialist dyslexia teacher who has the necessary qualifications to do so and the child must be around the age of seven to be able to understand how to participate in diagnostic testing. Education Scotland (2017) reviewed how children with Dyslexia are identified and are coping within their setting. Recommendations identified were, local authorities,

Early Years settings and schools need to take more responsibility to improve services catered towards Dyslexia to meet the needs of the child, teachers need high quality training and support to identify indicators of Dyslexia of children within their setting. Initial teacher training courses need to be updated to have focused modules which explain common learning difficulties, such as Dyslexia. Detailed information needs to be made available to parents and carers to educate and raise awareness of Dyslexia and how to help children with this disability. Data collection of this type of learning disability needs to be improved. Concurring with these recommendations, Rose (2009) believes further teacher training in specific learning disabilities is essential to improve educational outcomes for children. To support this, the Department of Education funded The SpLD Trust to create suitable training for teachers for their Continuous Professional Development, a guidance framework to help practitioners implement changes to their practise to be more inclusive to children who have dyslexia and online information for parents and carers. However, according to an article in TES, Speck (No date) claims, for teachers to improve their dyslexia knowledge and understanding of the disability, they are pressured to financially support their own Continuous Professional Development due to budget cuts within the education system. On the other hand, Estyn (2020) maintains improvements have been made in mainstream settings to provide detailed information regarding individual needs of the child with the use of Individual Education Plans. Furthermore, with the introduction of The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill, Welsh Government (2018) believe new changes via the Additional Learning Needs reform will further improve outcomes for children with SpLD due to the the implementation of a statutory mandate to have an Alenco in their setting coupled with the change from Individual Educational Plans to Individual Development Plans will enhance provision for children with learning difficulties.

Embedded in the new Additional Learning Needs reform bill is a person centered approach. The inclusion of this is a positive move to upholding the rights of children to have all the necessary support needed to reach their full academic potential. Additionally, this is underpinned by the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child. As stated by Unicef (No date) Article 23, children who have disabilities have the right to be supported by the government to enable them to become an active part of

their local community and live an independent lifestyle. Moreover, Article 28 and 29 defines children's rights even further by outlining children have the right to an education and educational goals must be set to provide children with the opportunities to enhance, progress and flourish. Moreover, Emanuel (2015) claims a person centred approach empowers the child to have their views respected and valued. This covers Article 12 of the UNCRC where a child has the right to have their opinions, views and feelings considered Unicef (No date).

Furthermore, another point which needs to be raised is, it is not just the educational setting which may identify children as having ALN but also parents need to be advocates for their children to raise their concerns for the learning deficits they are noticing in their children. As stated by McCloskey (2010) when a parent fully involves themselves with Early Years settings, schools and other multi-disciplinary agencies when their child has ALN it is effective and beneficial to expressing the rights of their child. However, Lang et al. (2018) suggests parents who have suffered from adverse childhood experiences are not equipped to be a positive advocate for their child's rights due to parental stress and poor parental skills. Agreeing with this, Sandstrom and Heurta (2013) claim children from an unstable environment, who are from a low income background and also may have Dyslexia do not have the capabilities to support the rights of their child. Without support to seek early intervention for dyslexia academic developmental outcomes will be hindered and delayed.

Section B

Until recent times Dyslexia was not well known to the public. People have been wrongly perceived as being stupid where as they just have a learning disability which does not affect their intelligence, only their ability to express their intelligence via reading and writing. As stated by British Dyslexia Association (No Date) Dyslexia is a disability which is covered by the Equality Act 2010. As detailed, The Equality Act (2010) defines Dyslexia

"a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

Although Dyslexia has been identified as a learning difficulty for over a hundred years, it is only since the 1980's that it has become more widely recognised. However, despite being an official disability, Elliott & Grigorenko (2014) believe the term Dyslexia is too vague, outdated and has lost plausibility. In recent times, Dyslexia has been critiqued, Kirby (2020) suggests barriers to having a better understanding of Dyslexia is due to the fact it's definition is not specifically defined as well as it's overuse by parents who are anxious to explain their child's learning difficulty. Another view has been by Henshaw (2018) reported on Warwickshire County Council where they disputed the science behind Dyslexia and refused to recognise it as a medical case on the onus that children who suffer from Dyslexia are taught using the same pedagogy as others without Dyslexia. Snowling et al, (2020) agrees that there is much confusion around the definition of Dyslexia but it must not detract away from the implementation of interventions to reduce the educational academic gap. However, the British Dyslexia Association (No date) maintains Dyslexia's effects are on a continuum throughout their life, limit children's academic progress and mental health, as without early intervention children become self-aware of their inabilities and lose confidence and self-esteem, which is detrimental to their health and wellbeing.

Although, as stated by The European Dyslexia Association (No date) Dyslexia is extensively acknowledged across the world as a learning disability. However, there are still gaps in teachers' understanding and knowledge of how to support children with this condition. Rose (2009) suggests further high quality training for teachers in Special

Educational Needs to remove barriers for learning. Concurring with this, The Dyslexia SpLD Trust (No date) states 74% of teachers who complete their teacher training course feel unprepared for the complexities of teaching children with learning disabilities. Corroborating with this, Ofsted (2008) found approximately two thirds of lessons taught by newly qualified teachers were only satisfactory or worse. To improve this situation, OECD (2014) collaborated with Wales to support and identify ways to improve equity, inclusion, quality teaching, help schools to deliver effective and positive change to enhance their identification of learning disabilities and to ensure the learning needs of children are met by school.

From specific ALN training teachers would benefit from finding out about physical resources such as colour guides, pastel coloured paper etc which would remove some barriers for children who are identified as having Dyslexia. Furthermore, when planning for children the British Dyslexia Association (No date) suggests using their Dyslexia style guide, which would enable the teacher to use these resources as strategies for support. It details Dyslexic friendly fonts, colours and writing styles which would assist Dyslexic children with their learning. In addition to this, as explained by Early Years Matters (2021) effective planning to incorporate learning strategies which the child enjoys, along with the child's preferred learning style would be advantageous. Activities which are holistic and kinesthetic would be alternatives for the Dyslexic child. This style of planning recognises the unique child and incorporates inclusive practice, which would be another strategy to help the child to progress academically without dealing with the struggles that Dyslexia can have on a child's health and wellbeing. This inclusive practice and equity for each child is also noted by Donaldson (2015) he believes planning must reflect the interests of the child to improve their learning experiences.

Section C

In my setting, it was decided by senior management due to a high ratio of children who are school action or school action plus, all children below key stage two were to have Read Write Inc Literacy intervention programme as a whole school intervention approach. Fricke et al (2013) state literacy interventions delivered by trained experience staff are key to improving phonological awareness, word processing skills, oracy skills and reading comprehension. This action leads to putting theory into practice as Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development is used as knowledge is shared by using the more knowledgeable other.

According to BDA (No date), diagnosis for dyslexia occurs at around the age of seven. However, it is not practical to wait to implement an intervention at that age as many months or years will have passed and that child will have missed an opportunity to close the Literacy gap. Before children begin on the intervention programme, parents are informed about the schools decision to want to place their child on an intervention programme as parental consent must first be gained. Levakis (2020) claims, parents who engage in participating in an intervention with their child maximizes the effectiveness of the progress made by the child. Furthermore, collaborating with the school to carry out interventions at home allows the parents to have a better understanding of their child's progress. This incorporates Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory, where a child is taught by the people around them in their environment. However, Hornby and Lafaele (2011) suggest factors which act as barriers to parental involvement are, lack of social engagement with the setting, insufficient invitations to get involved from the school and inadequate understanding or knowledge of the interventions involved in the child's learning. To combat this, parents are invited to attend meetings for teachers to explain the strategies used within the school so the parents can continue with the same strategies at home.

To understand what phonological knowledge the children know and do not know, the children are individually screened using a phonological awareness test which is part of the Read Write Inc programme. To be consistent the children were tested by the same person to ensure equity for all children.

The next step would be to group children into small groups of no more than eight according to their ability and placement on the Read Write Inc assessment record. Groups are allocated a space to hold their sessions. The sessions are carried out daily and are for approximately twenty minutes a day. Repetition, songs and overlearning are key strategies used when delivering an intervention session. During sessions, a multi method style of teaching is used, which incorporates holistic and kinesthetic activities. This creates a fun environment to learn in where learning is turned into games. According to Hong (2017), using the Reggio Emilia approach to teaching is suitable for children with or without Additional Learning Needs by working with children in small groups, an environment is created where language development, cognitive development and social interaction is nurtured. When children feel comfortable and at ease, learning becomes easier. However, Milkie and Warner (2011) maintain children who are in a class which has poor facilities, resources and excessive noise pollution struggle to progress and fail to meet learning outcomes.

All staff have received Read Write Inc training, however it is only staff with experience of teaching who lead groups. Supporting this, Welsh Government (2019) has invested over £24 million pounds into staff training to enable Higher Level Teaching Assistants and Teaching Assistants to deliver the new curriculum. The success of interventions pertain to a variety of different aspects. However, according to Olin (2009) barriers to interventions would be lack of support from senior management, insufficient training investment for ongoing CPD and poor parental support and engagement. Similarly, Yu (2019) suggests teachers who are not enthusiastic and have the relevant training and experience to be competent at teaching children with learning difficulties.

In addition to this, another barrier would be undiagnosed SpLD. If a child failed to academically improve with interventions, the next step would be to notify the Alenco in your setting. The Alenco would refer the child's case to the Local Educational Authority to bring in other specialists to assess the child to identify their intervention needs.

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