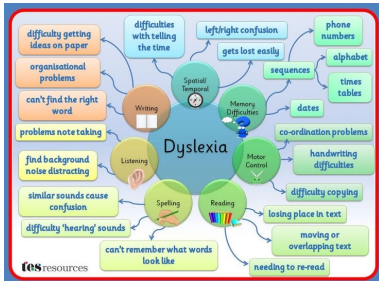


Dyslexia - Supporting Children with Additional Learning Needs.



Whitgreave Primary School (no date)

What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is an additional learning need that affects primarily on one's skills that involve spelling and reading and affects abilities of language and literacy in both children and adults (British Dyslexia Association, 2021). The international dyslexia association (2017) state that dyslexia can cause difficulties such as pronouncing words and putting words into sentences and dyslexia can impact someone's life at different stages and may affect people differently throughout their lives.

After diagnosing dyslexia

Early detection of diagnosing dyslexia can have a high and lasting impact on a child's life especially children that may have difficulty reading, spelling, or writing. These language skills are an essential part of life and if detected early and quickly then children have a better chance of developing and working on these skills before they reach adult age which may cause educational and social issues throughout their lives (University of Texas, no date). The Welsh Government (2018) explain the importance of dyslexia being identified and how the best, suitable provision must be implemented for children to benefit from the intervention and provisions as early as possible to see a difference in a child's life.

Identifying and diagnosing dyslexia.

Dyslexia can be identified if a child displays certain behaviours and mistakes in day-to-day activities such as having difficulty reciting nursery rhymes, forgetting names of certain colours or their teacher or friends' names, unable to recite the alphabet or difficulty doing so, and being confused by directional words such as left/right and up/down (British Dyslexia Association, no date).

Before diagnosing, information must be gathered from observing children, asking them questions, and possibly testing them within their school settings and this information can be gathered from an educational assessment specialist a speech and language pathologist, or a child's class teacher (International Dyslexia Association, 2009). NHS (2018) states that the earlier children can get diagnosed with dyslexia, the more effective interventions can be both at home and in their school setting however diagnosing dyslexia can be difficult as some children may not display symptoms as they are not all obvious.

Benefits of diagnosing Dyslexia

The National Centre of Improving Literacy (no date) explain the importance of early intervention in early years settings as it may prevent dyslexia and early screening can identify the children who may suffer from dyslexia at an early age. The earlier children get diagnosed with dyslexia, the more effective intervention can be to reduce the impact on child's development rather than waiting until they are of an older age.

Diagnosing dyslexia not straight forward

Diagnosing dyslexia may not always be straightforward as Adams (2016) explains that there is not a explanation that fits every child and what dyslexia is for one child may not be the same for another child. Some children may experience difficulties reading and forming words, whereas other children may be unable to spell and write therefore not all interventions and diagnoses will be the same for each child with dyslexia.

Barriers to dyslexia

A social barrier that may be linked to dyslexia is the social stigma around the learning need and the different ways people can be treated and discriminated against in comparison to those who do not have dyslexia. Some may view those with dyslexia as not putting in effort to learn or being unable to read or write due to laziness and treat them differently as a result of this (Succeed with dyslexia 2022).

The lack of understanding of people who believe that those with dyslexia cannot read or write can come across as being condescending and rude as they are placing everyone with dyslexia on the same pedestal when they could be showing compassion and empathy to those with learning needs (Discussing the Dyslexic Brain, 2019).

Strategy to support dyslexia

Multisensory teaching is an effective way of learning for children with dyslexia as it involves the use of audio, visual, and kinaesthetic-tactile ways (movement) to help children to discover which learning technique helps them in the best way to develop as a variety of different teaching methods activate different aspects of the brain (Dyslexia Reading Well, no date).

Children who may find difficulty of knowing the difference between the letters 'b' and 'd' will be taught to use different strokes for each letter. To print the letter 'b' children will be taught to draw a straight line then making a circle, and for the letter 'd' children will form a circle and then drawing a straight line and this will able children to see the difference between the two letters (International Dyslexia Association, 2016).

Barriers of these strategies

Although multisensory learning is an approach that makes teaching engaging and inclusive, it may not be possible to intergrade using senses into everyday teaching, especially in mainstream education when following the curriculum to learn is essential in settings. Children will disadvantage from this as they are not benefitting from multisensory learning and may struggle with the reading and writing activities that are asked of them whilst following and learning from their curriculum (Structural learning 2021).

Conclusion

Dyslexia affects around 10% of the population and is a neurological learning need that affects the way the brain process auditory and visual information. For some, dyslexia may show symptoms such as being unable to read, write, or spell but for others these symptoms may not be as straightforward.

However, these learning techniques will not work for all children as there are barriers in place that may prevent children from using the techniques correctly within their settings and may therefore go undiagnosed with their dyslexia.

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