



Case Study: Dyspraxia

Winston is a Year 6 pupil who has recently been diagnosed with Dyspraxia. His mother reported that she had been concerned that Winston was delayed in his development and that although he managed all the milestones of sitting, crawling and walking he did so at a much slower rate than other children and had a tendency to continually trip over and bang into things. Winston's mother describes Winston as being clumsy, disorganised and at times accident-prone.

On entry to school Winston struggled with fine motor activities such as holding a pencil, writing, using scissors and with constructive activities such as Lego. Winston always looks very untidy with his shirt hanging out, shoes on the wrong feet and he has problems putting on his coat. He has always relied upon the help of a classroom assistant to manage tasks such as getting changed for PE. Winston has continued to struggle throughout primary school but his good nature, sense of humour and his willingness to work hard and persevere with the activities he finds difficult means that he has always received a great deal of encouragement from staff.

Winston is now ten years old and reports that he hates school. Winston says that he would enjoy school more if he could get his work finished on time like the other children and if he didn't always find sitting down for a long time really uncomfortable. Winston also doesn't like it that he gets into trouble for not doing his homework. Winston does not enjoy playtime as he cannot join in games of football with the other boys because they won't let him be on the team and he often complains that they tease him because of his clumsiness. Winston's written work is messy and poorly organised. He does not appear to have a dominant or preferred hand and constantly changes hands for holding his pencil. Winston's writing is very large with untidy letter formation and position on the line with erratic spacing and many reversals of letters. When Winston writes he exerts a great deal of pressure on the page and quickly becomes impatient with the task and is very reluctant to continue. During class discussions Winston often has good ideas. However, he finds it hard to sit still for long and tends to fidget, stretch his legs and props his head on his arm. Winston becomes very upset before PE lessons because he finds it difficult to join in team games due to his ball skills being very erratic. Winston is gradually losing confidence to attempt new tasks. His mother reports that he complains of headaches most mornings because he does not want to go to school. Winston also finds it difficult to relate appropriately to the other children as he tends to make contact with his peers using physical gestures. He is viewed by the other children as rough and noisy.

Winston reports that he does not like school because he finds everything hard and I gets into trouble for not finishing his work.



Case Study: Dyspraxia (Cont)

'I know I have always found things more difficult than other children and I have never been able to keep up with the others in my class. From as far back as I can remember, I have been unhappy in school. I don't feel safe in school not just from the size of the school but because of the other children. In the playground I constantly get picked on because I can't do stuff like the others. I often fall over and seem to be forever having accidents and bumping into other people. I can't kick or throw a ball so I have never been allowed to play football on the field with the rest of the boys. I remember standing watching from the sidelines or walking around the playground alone. Often I stick with the dinnertime assistant or the teacher on duty because I feel safe near them and I can have a chat to somebody.

In the classroom things are not much better. I have to sit on the floor cross-legged for a long time and I get told off for not sitting still. My mum did try to talk to the teacher and ask if I could sit in a different position. The teacher said that I would have to learn to sit like the others and that she was not willing to treat me differently. My mum has spent hours at meetings and more meetings. My school kept telling her there were no problems because I just sat at the back of the class and was no trouble to them. I look the other way or keep my head down when I think the teacher might ask me a question.'

