

What is it Dyslexia

According to Mortimore (2008) there are many definitions of dyslexia with no two definitions being the same, however nearly all of the definitions do have some elements in common. Dyslexia is a disorder that effects a persons reading, despite their intelligence and is dependant on cognitive disabilities. (Mortimore, 2008). BDA definition of dyslexia states that it is a complex neurological condition that is constitutional in origin. According the BDA the symptoms can affect one or all areas of learning including reading and spelling (Ott , 1997). It is important that practitioners know the different degrees of dyslexia and with each degree the severity increases. Many practitioners have described the learning difficulty in three degrees including mild, moderate and serve dyslexia. For example children with serve dyslexia have a reading age of 6.3 years old and a spelling age of 6.4 years old.

How to identify and diagnose dyslexia

According to Lawrence (2009) there are some arears that are related to dyslexia, these include a weakness in short term memory, children might be slow at processing information, and the may have difficulties answering questions quickly (Lawrence, 2009). Dyslexic children have also been indicated by their performance of spelling as children tend to guess while reading and that cannot be the case in spelling (Farmer, Riddick and Sterling, 2002). Other key points to identifying children with dyslexia is that the child may find it difficult to process information and will often seem slow in learning new information. According to NHS children that are preschool aged will often display delayed speech, speech problems such as not being able to pronounce long words. Children can find it hard to express themselves and have little understanding of rhyming words. Primary school children will have difficulties spelling their name, they will experience confusion of letters and sounds, they will write and spell slower than other children and they tend to have poorer handwriting (NHS, no date)

Impact on the child

Children with dyslexia often have problems with their memory as well as their organisational skills . Children who have memory difficulties will often find it difficult to remember important phone numbers and they can forget what they need to pack in their school. If children are asked to do multiply instructions in a sequence they will often forget or feel so much pressure to remember that they often forget what they need to do. This can cause problems in school (Mortimore, 2008).

Barriers

Although teachers are normally the ones who identify children with dyslexia first, they can often miss the signs as some children do not show obvious signs of dyslexia. (Lawrence, 2009). However Farmer, Riddick and Sterling, (2002) suggests that dyslexia can not be diagnosed until other causes of poor reading as been eliminated, such as poor intelligence and inadequate education (Bromfield and Combley, 2003). Another barrier to diagnosing a child who may have dyslexia are their parents. For parents it cannot be easy to hear that their child is suspected to have a learning difficulty. That is may many parents become defensive and refuse any tests or interventions that may be suitable for their child and their abilities (Lawrence 2009).

Overcoming Barriers

There are ways to overcoming such barriers mentioned above. The first way is for teachers to use a checklist to make sure that they do not miss any child that may have dyslexia. According to Mortimore (2008) Pollock, Waller and Politt provide guidance to support practitioners diagnosing children with dyslexia. Their checklist includes questions such as does the child have difficulties with their literacy development, behaviour or do they have difficulties with their organisational or motor skills (Mortimore, 2008). It is important that teachers remain positive and arrange meeting with the child's parents to make sure that they feel involved and listened to. Schools can also suggest support groups or where to find helpful information (Lawrence 2009).

Strategies to support dyslexia

There are many different strategies that teachers and practitioners can use to help support children with dyslexia. Class sizes are usually between 25 to 30 children with one class teacher and maybe two teaching assistants. However, adult support for the child can be made available using some techniques such as one to one discussions (Blue, 2021) . As well as adult support, dyslexic children can also benefit from the support of their peers. Seating area can also be helpful to children with dyslexia. Children who sit at the front of the class often have more advantage of receiving support from the class teacher. (BackHouse and Morris, 2005). Placing dyslexic children with peers with higher intelligence can also be beneficial as again the child's peers can help the child if needed (Squires and McKeown, 2006). Parents can also help their children by doing things at home to support them. Many dyslexic children find routine beneficial. Parents can make a routine of set times for each activity that the child needs to do in the house, for example when to do their homework , what time is food and when they can play freely. As well as teachers, parents can promote confidence in the child by frequently using praises and encouraging them to answering new questions and completing difficult tasks (The dyslexia resource,2020).In addition, parents can support children by using objects or pictures when they are talking to them, this helps the child to visualise the words in their head. Parents should encourage creative and visual talents and well as encouraging children to learn through play and games that can make learning enjoyable. When given instructions parents as well as teachers should give dyslexic children short, direct and clear instructions so that it is not too much for them to process. (Parent Zone, no date)

Conclusion

To conclude, it has shown that dyslexia can be difficult to diagnose as there are many aspects involved such as intelligence and behaviour. Children who are diagnosed need to have the correct strategies in place in order to support their learning further. It is clear that there should be more done with regard to the process of diagnosing children with dyslexia as many children are often missed.

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