

# **Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice**

**Assessment and Intervention within  
the Continuum of Need**

**Procedures for All Teaching Staff  
in Angus**




**NOVEMBER 2025**

# Document Navigation Guide


It is recommended that these procedures are viewed electronically rather than in print. This will allow easier navigation of the document, and provide access to all of the links within the procedures.

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## Dyscalculia



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## Introduction

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that can vary from individual to individual in terms of severity, and in the nature of abilities and difficulties experienced (British Psychological Society, 1999). It is “a processing difference experienced by people of all ages, often characterised by difficulties in literacy” (Reid, 2004). If not adequately identified and supported, individuals with dyslexia can experience difficulties in education and later employment. It is therefore important that staff in schools are equipped to support learners with dyslexia through effective assessment, planning, support and review.



## 1.1 Background / Rationale

In 2013, Angus Council’s Educational Psychology Service worked with primary, secondary, Additional Support Needs (ASN) and Education and Lifelong Learning (ELL) colleagues to develop the first version of the Council’s dyslexia and inclusive practice procedures. The procedures aimed to:-

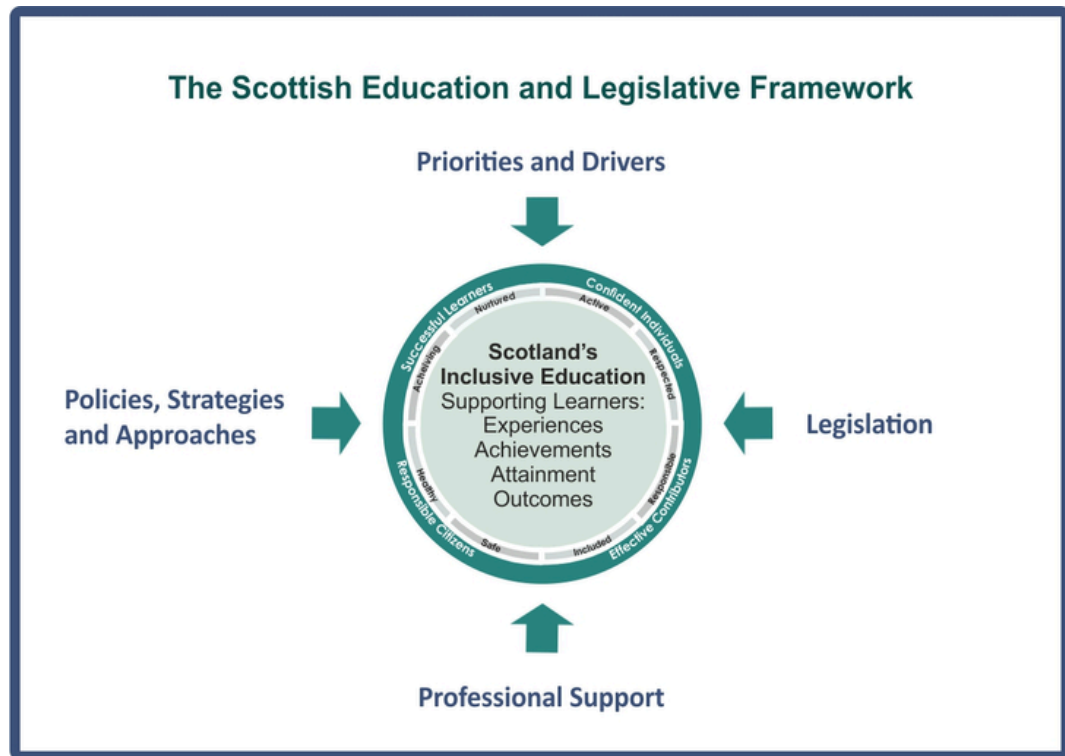
- ensure a consistent approach to identifying and supporting learners with dyslexia in schools across Angus;
- embed a staged approach to addressing dyslexia in Angus;
- highlight key resources to help schools across Angus to assess, identify, plan for and support children and young people with dyslexia;
- outline the roles and responsibilities of teaching and support staff when carrying out a staged approach to addressing dyslexia.

This revised edition of the procedures aims to reinforce the role of all teaching staff in identifying and supporting learners who may have dyslexia.

Angus Council’s procedures are closely aligned to the online [Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit](#), which is relevant for all staff working with children and young people at any stage of their education, regardless of knowledge about dyslexia, and previous experience. It is strongly recommended that teachers familiarise themselves with this helpful resource.



## 1.2 Guiding Principles



from Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit

The principles which underpin these procedures are aligned to the [Scottish education and legislative policy framework](#) which is designed to help all learners make progress within the Curriculum for Excellence. This means that all teaching staff should be involved in the following:-

- Delivering an inclusive education
- Identifying children and young people with additional support needs, and making adequate and efficient provision for such additional support as is required by a child or young person.
- Agreeing a shared, staged approach to building solutions around children, young people and their families.
- Ensuring learners are encouraged to express their views in all matters that affect them.

it is important to note that the needs-led system in Scotland, should place the learner at the centre, ensuring that support is provided **without the need to assign a formal 'label'**.



## 1.3 Definition of Dyslexia

The Scottish working definition of dyslexia was developed by the Scottish Government, Dyslexia Scotland and a Cross Party Parliamentary group on dyslexia, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. In 2025 some minor changes were made to the Scottish working definition following consideration of the [2024 Delphi Dyslexia Definition](#).

Dyslexia can be described as a continuum of difficulties in learning to read, write and/or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities and may not be typical of performance in other areas.

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning, teaching and working environment, as there are often associated difficulties such as:

- auditory and/or visual processing of language-based information
- phonological processing – awareness, processing speed and/or memory
- oral language skills and reading fluency
- short-term and working memory
- sequencing and directionality
- number skills
- organisational ability

Motor skills and co-ordination may also be affected.

Dyslexia exists in all cultures and across the range of abilities and socio-economic backgrounds.

It is hereditary, life-long and neurodevelopmental and it can impact on wellbeing. Unidentified, dyslexia is likely to result in low self-esteem, high stress, atypical behaviour, and low achievement.

Learners with dyslexia will benefit from early identification, inclusive ethos, approaches and environments, appropriate intervention and support.

To ensure consistency across Angus, the Scottish working definition should be adopted by all those involved in the assessment and identification process.

Terms like “dyslexic tendencies”, “signs of dyslexia” and “dyslexic-type difficulties” should be avoided as these can be confusing, particularly for parents/carers and learners.

It is more important to work towards understanding how a learner's strengths and needs inform teaching and classroom practices, rather than solely focusing on assigning a 'label'.

# Visual Representation of Difficulties Associated with Dyslexia

Oral language skills

Auditory and/or visual processing of language-based information

Phonological awareness

Organisational ability

Scottish Dyslexia Definition 2009

Sequencing & directionality

Number skills

Short term & working memory

Reading fluency

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning and teaching environment

from [Addressing Dyslexia toolkit](#)

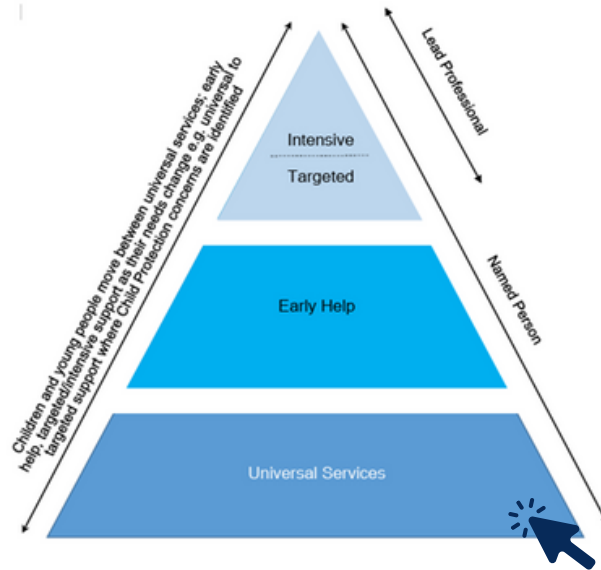


## 1.4

# Continuum of Need

In Angus, the Getting It Right approach uses a shared framework, namely the Continuum of Need, for assessment, planning, and action across all agencies. This ensures coordinated, effective support with minimal disruption to the child. As needs change, children move along the continuum in either direction.

These procedures focus on assessment and intervention within **universal services** and **early help**. However, even when needs are more complex and require targeted support, assessment and identification of dyslexia (where appropriate) should not be disregarded.



### Universal services

It is important to adopt a whole school approach which focuses on dyslexia friendly and inclusive practices. Teachers should aim to make learning accessible for all learners, and try to ensure children are 'safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included'.

### Early help

Where there are concerns about a learner's progress, the Getting It Right core questions should be asked:-

- What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing (or progress)?
- Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
- What can I do now to help this child or young person?
- What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
- What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

### Targeted support

When there are complex needs that require support from two or more agencies, the named person or lead professional collaborates with the child, family, and others to develop a Child's Plan.



Click on the cursor for a flowchart that provides an overview of the process for assessing, supporting and reviewing the needs of learners who may have dyslexia.

## 2 Supporting Learners - Universal Services

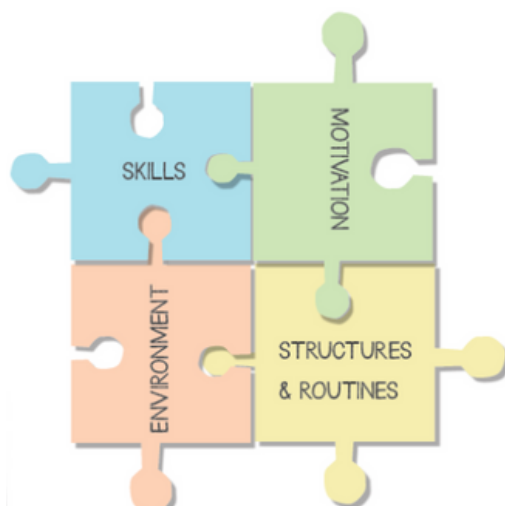
This section outlines the importance of ensuring that the needs of all learners are met within an inclusive learning environment. Guidance is also provided on what to do when there are initial concerns about a learner's progress.

Steps taken to support learners within universal services are usually **class teacher led**, particularly within primary settings. At secondary school, **ASN teachers** may take a lead to ensure information is gathered from a range of teachers and settings that a learner accesses, but class teachers will still play an important role in differentiating, making adaptations and supporting learners. The process is summarised in the 'universal' section of the [assessment and identification flowchart](#).

### 2.1 The Learning Environment

The Continuum of Need in Angus places an emphasis on ensuring needs of all children and young people in Angus are considered within the universal services of education and health. Universal provision represents good active learning and teaching practice that can be expected to occur within any classroom or learning environment.

As described in the [CIRCLE framework](#) (2021) good inclusive practice is embedded within an environment that not only takes account of the skills of individual learners, but also interlinking factors which include the physical and social environment, structures and routines, and motivation.





## 2.2 Appropriate Learning Opportunities

The Scottish definition of dyslexia refers to difficulties which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. Therefore, when there are any concerns about a learner's progress, the **primary focus** should be on the learning environment and literacy instruction they have received since starting their educational journey.

**Has the pace of teaching allowed the learner to review and consolidate key concepts throughout their learning journey?**

**Has the learner been exposed to instruction that includes learning to blend and segment phonemes; learning which letters represent which phonemes in words; and having the opportunity to copy/write letters, words and sentences?**

**Has the learner had consistent access to a literacy-rich environment that takes account of the physical and social needs of learners, structures and routines, motivation, and skills and strengths of individual learners?**

**Are there any other factors that may have impacted on a learner's access to appropriate learning opportunities e.g. low attendance, periods of ill-health, multiple school moves, etc?**

**Has the learner been taught how parts of words (morphemes) work together to create meaning (morphological instruction)?**

**Has the learner's speech, language and communication been supported across the curriculum?**





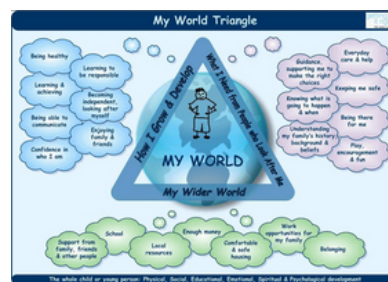
## 2.3 Addressing Initial Concerns

Within universal provision, teachers should differentiate and adapt the learning environment and curriculum to meet the range of needs within the class. When concerns about a learner's progress first arise, the early identification of needs, and the planning required to meet these needs rests initially with the class teacher, although at times support from other staff within school and/or visiting professionals may be sought.

This sub-section provides guidance on gathering relevant information, making necessary adaptations, and maintaining clear records.

### Important Considerations

In addition to gathering information about a learner's individual strengths and needs, the impact that classroom, school, family, environmental and cultural factors might be having on progress should also be considered.



Focusing on wellbeing factors and understanding a learner's strengths can guide appropriate intervention at any stage of their education journey.

Learner's and parents'/carers' views must always be considered, to ensure the assessment and intervention process is as child-centred as possible.

Our own findings indicate that parents and carers have not always felt fully informed about the process for identifying and supporting their children when dyslexia is being considered. It is essential that any concerns are shared with families at the earliest opportunity and that they are actively involved in collaborative planning throughout the process.



Click on the cursor for a Parents Leaflet that can be provided when initial concerns are raised.

## Information Gathering / Assessment \*

### Learning Environment



CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale  
[primary](#) & [secondary](#)

[Environmental Checklist](#)

### Learner



#### Wellbeing and Strengths

[Resilience Matrix](#)

[PERMA Model](#)

[Character Strengths](#)

[Progress Checklists](#)

[Additional Factors Checklist](#)

To help teachers consider a learner's progress in relation to the Scottish definition of dyslexia

#### Learner's View

[Wellbeing Web](#) ([blank web](#) and [notes](#))

[Pupil checklist](#)

#### Contextualised Assessment

- PPR - for learning history
- Samples of written work - free writing; copied from board, dictated, etc.
- teacher observation
- [miscue analysis](#)
- [spelling error analysis](#) of written work

#### Scheduled Standardised Assessment

e.g. SNSAs

### Family



[Parent / Carer checklist](#)

Talk to the family to gather information and listen to any concerns they have

\* This page offers guidance on assessment information that may be gathered. Not all details apply to every learner, and the list is not exhaustive.

## Adapting and Differentiating to Support Learners



### Reading

#### How Can I Help?

- Take care when asking to read aloud
- Reinforce rhyme and rhythm through games
- Practice high frequency words through games
- Warm up texts through discussions and images
- Read with children regularly
- Highlight key information
- Provide page and paragraph details
- Read for children when necessary
- Use structured phonics programmes
- Develop motivation through interesting books
- Explicitly teach learners the unique reading and writing skills needed for each subject area (disciplinary literacy)

### Writing and Spelling



#### How Can I Help?

- Use writing frames and sentence starters
- Use multisensory approaches for spelling
- Develop muscle tone and pre-handwriting skills
- Allow different methods of recording work
- Discussion before writing tasks
- Spelling aids - dictionaries, word banks, spell checkers
- Handwriting paper
- Provide notes so copying is not necessary
- Paired or group work where one person writes



### Learning Environment

#### How Can I Help?

- Seating - ensure learners can see you / the board; arrange seating to minimise disruption and ensure learners have space; consider lighting; offer footrest, writing slope, seat wedge, etc if posture needs support.
- Routines - Ensure learners know the purpose of the lesson, and what is expected from them; display class timetables; organise equipment effectively; have an agreed location for finished work
- Equipment - offer (as required) triangular pencils' grips, line trackers, bookmarks, overlays, digital aids where available

\*Consideration of the [evidence-based strategies outlined in section 3](#) may also be helpful when planning support for learners at this early stage.



## 2.4 Keeping a Record

When initial concerns are raised and investigated, a record of any agreed adaptations, strategies and/or interventions should be kept. This record can be brief, and may be kept using a school's own reporting format. Alternatively, this [template](#) may be used. At this early stage, a record will usually be completed by the class teacher, or other personnel that are involved. Regardless of how the record is kept, the following should be taken into account.

### Consider strengths as well as areas of concern

When creating a plan there can often be a focus on strategies and interventions that address a learner's needs, with the aim being to 'bridge the gap' between what they can't do yet, and what we want them to be able to do. Consideration of strengths and interests can provide a foundation that other areas of learning can be built upon.

### Match support to strengths and needs

For example:-

- If a learner shows strength in practical activities, how can these be used to develop skills in other areas
- If an initial concern is around spelling, participation in a small reading group may not specifically address this. Consideration should be given to specific strategies and interventions to support spelling.

### Views of the learner

Consider the learner's views about their progress in school and what they think might help.

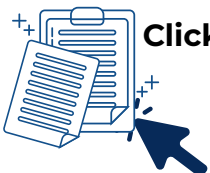
### Parent / Carer involvement

Regardless of who has raised concerns, parents should be consulted, their views sought, and they should be kept updated of progress at agreed times.

### Review progress

Once a plan has been agreed, ensure that a date for reviewing progress is included and adhered to.

Where there has been no or limited progress as a result of the agreed actions, consultation with an appropriate member of the school's leadership team and/or ASN staff should take place to consider next steps



Click on the cursor for a sample Record of Initial Concerns

## 2.5 Universal Services - Section Summary



Within universal services, class teachers take the lead in supporting learners. At secondary school, Additional Support Needs (ASN) teachers may coordinate information from various teachers and settings, but class teachers remain crucial in making adaptations and supporting all learners.

**Does the environment and curriculum meet the needs of all learners?**

**Where there are concerns about a learner's progress, are you sure they have had consistent access to appropriate learning opportunities?**



Universal provision starts with good learning and teaching practice within an inclusive environment.



Assessment should be contextual and be as unintrusive as possible. Strengths should be considered alongside any areas for concern.

**Have you completed the relevant checklists?**

**Have you considered the learner's strengths?**

**Have you gathered any other contextualised assessment information?**



**Have you gathered relevant information from parents / carers (e.g. using the parent checklist)?**  
**Have the learner's views been sought?**



It is important to involve parents / carers and include the views of learners in the assessment and planning process.



Learner's strengths, areas of concern, adaptations and interventions should be noted and a date for review agreed.

**Have you kept a record of the information you have gathered?**

**Have you matched any support to identified strengths and needs?**

**Do you have a date to review the plan?**



### IMPORTANT

If you have answered 'NO' to any of the questions in the green boxes, you may wish to revisit this section before continuing

## 3 Supporting Learners - Early Help

If satisfactory progress is observed after making appropriate adaptations to the learning environment and/or introducing interventions/strategies to support a learner, progress should continue to be monitored. Parents/carers and the learner (where appropriate) should be kept informed.

Where a learner's needs persist despite the presence of appropriate universal provision, and adaptations and differentiation within the learning environment have had limited impact, there should be consideration of any additional support that a learner may require from universal service providers to develop a plan. Likewise, further consideration of needs may be required if the learner is making progress, but continues to be reliant on enhanced supports and strategies (e.g. IT support; differentiated instructions, additional thinking time, etc).

Further planning is likely to be initiated by school staff in consultation with ELL colleagues and, where appropriate, from health and voluntary services. This process is summarised in the 'early help' section of the [assessment and identification flowchart](#).

### 3.1 Assessment

Steps taken at this point are likely to be **senior leadership team** or **ASN teacher** led. At this stage concerns are likely to be ongoing, which may make it necessary to consult with ASN staff, educational psychologists, or other support services, who may in turn agree to review the information already gathered, and provide guidance around further assessment where this is required. This might involve supporting the school to gather more information, carrying out observations or contextual assessment, or considering any available and appropriate standardised assessment information. It is of utmost importance to follow the principle of "least intrusive, most impactful" assessment, and it is therefore not recommended that learners are subjected to rafts of standardised screeners and tests when gathering assessment information, over and above those that already take place in school.

## Standardised assessment: key considerations

Good quality, up-to-date standardised assessment tools can offer a consistent and objective way of finding out about a learner's ability in an identified area. Where it is agreed that it would be beneficial to use standardised assessment, including dyslexia screening tools, the following should be considered.

Standardised assessments or screeners should **never** be the sole source of evidence. They often have a narrow focus, and their results can be influenced by external factors such as test anxiety.

**Avoid over-assessing**—subjecting a learner to numerous assessments, especially when they target similar skills, can be invasive and stressful.

Only the most **recent versions** of assessments should be used—if standardised tests are outdated, they may not have been developed using a population sample that reflects today's learners.



Assessments should target the **specific area of learning** being investigated. For example, a word reading test is unlikely to provide meaningful insight into a learner's comprehension skills.

Be cautious when **reporting reading and/or spelling ages**. These scores reflect performance on a specific assessment and may not accurately correspond to a learner's overall curricular progress.

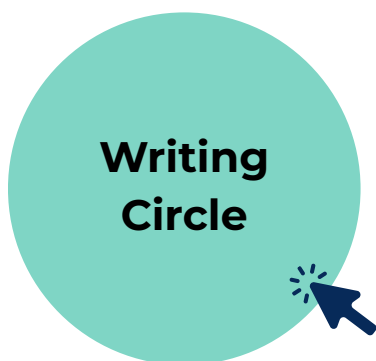
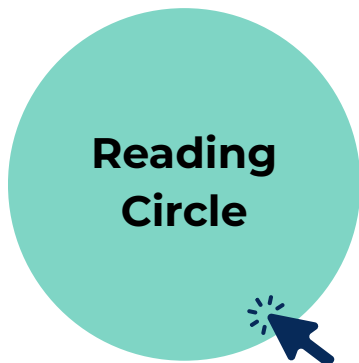


## 3.2 Intervention



Appropriate intervention may be identified through Individualised Education Programme (IEP) planning, or by holding a meeting to agree a plan. The learner and parents/carers should be involved in the development of any planned support. Consultation with others should facilitate further consideration of the inclusive practice that is in place within the class and school.

The Reading and Writing Circles within the [Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit](#) are helpful tools for any teacher who wishes to investigate and support learners in relation to key components of reading and writing. These tools also signpost to resources that teachers may find helpful.



Regardless of the intervention the following 5 evidence-based strategies should facilitate high quality teaching for learners who may need additional support (EEF, 2020)

<p><b>SCAFFOLDING</b> support to help pupils complete tasks that they struggle to carry out independently for now</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support may be visual, verbal or written</li> <li>• Examples include writing frames, partially completed examples, knowledge organisers, essay prompts, structure strips, sentence starters, reminders of equipment / classroom routines.</li> <li>• When discussing texts, promote prediction, questioning, clarification and summarising</li> </ul>
<p><b>EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION</b> teacher demonstration followed by guided practice then independent practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modelling self-regulation and thought processes through worked examples</li> <li>• 'Thinking aloud'</li> <li>• Using visual aids and concrete examples</li> </ul>
<p><b>COGNITIVE AND METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES</b> includes subject specific strategies, and strategies to help with planning, monitoring and evaluating learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chunking tasks</li> <li>• Reducing volume of information on a page</li> <li>• Providing checklists</li> <li>• Writing instructions on board</li> <li>• Provide prompt sheets to help learners evaluate progress</li> </ul>
<p><b>FLEXIBLE GROUPING</b> small group work based on shared individual needs of learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for collaborative learning</li> <li>• Pre-teaching key vocabulary for a specific subject area (<a href="#">Frayer model</a>)</li> <li>• Providing evidence-based interventions</li> </ul>
<p><b>USE TECHNOLOGY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Assistive Technology to Support Pupils with ASN</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Request for Assistive Technology Assessment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Free accessibility tools to support learning</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CALL Scotland</a></li> </ul>

### 3.3 Keeping a Record

The record kept at this stage will depend on the planning that has taken place. For example, where an IEP planning meeting has been held, the resulting IEP will form part of the record. In addition, if reports have been submitted by other services following consultation these should be kept within the learner's PPR. Where a child's planning meeting has taken place, a record is likely to be kept using a format typically used within the school for such meetings, in line with Angus Council guidance.



## 3.4 Early Help - Section Summary

When there are ongoing concerns about a learner's progress, senior staff in school and/or ASN staff will take the lead on reviewing existing assessment information and guiding further assessment. This process may also involve other support services as appropriate.

**Have you used the most recent versions of assessments?  
Have you gathered other evidence, in addition to administering screeners or standardised tests?  
Has your assessment investigated the specific area of learning that you are concerned about?**



Further assessment such as observations, contextual assessment, or appropriate standardised assessment may be carried out.

Findings from assessment should help develop a plan which outlines the learner's strengths, areas of concern, and identified support / targets



**Are targets within the plan SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound)?  
Have you agreed a date to review the plan?**



**Have you continued to collaborate with parents/carers and learners about the plan and been clear about timescales for review?**



Collaboration with parents/carers and learners (where appropriate) should take place throughout the process.

**No / Not Yet if satisfactory progress or not enough evidence**

Continue to monitor / intervene / review; seek support from other services, where required; continue to consult with learner/parents/carers



**Yes if ongoing concerns following planning and review**

Continue to monitor / intervene / review and consult with learner/parents/carers

Proceed to [Section 4](#) for more information and advice about dyslexia identification



## 4

# Identifying Dyslexia

This guidance should point school staff in Angus towards identifying whether a child or young person has dyslexia, and more importantly, towards establishing a support plan. Emphasis should always be placed on meeting the needs of a learner, rather than providing a label. When it is agreed that a child or young person has dyslexia, given that the process involves an educational assessment, it is important to refer to **identification** of dyslexia, rather than **diagnosis** which is a medical term, and is used following a medical assessment.



### 4.1

## Who Identifies Dyslexia?

The view that an 'expert' must confirm an identification of dyslexia is outdated. Where adequate assessment information has been gathered to explore whether an individual presents with needs that meet the [definition of dyslexia](#), then a member of staff within school who feels they have a sufficient overview of the assessment process, and sufficient understanding of dyslexia, can identify a child or young person as having dyslexia. In most cases, for children at primary school this is likely to be an ASN teacher who works within the school (possibly with support from a Principal Teacher ASN), or a senior leader with a responsibility for inclusion, and for secondary learners is likely to be an ASN teacher or Principal Teacher ASN.

It is recommended that when identifying dyslexia, the member of staff taking a lead role in the assessment does this in consultation with those who have contributed to the process, **and with the agreement of the parents and child or young person**. This may be achieved by convening a meeting to agree a plan, and including a discussion about dyslexia at this meeting.

When identification of dyslexia is being considered at a planning meeting, it may be helpful to complete the [assessment collation form](#), either prior to or at the meeting itself. This will allow those in attendance at the meeting to consider whether sufficient assessment information has been gathered to ascertain whether a child or young person has dyslexia. A copy of the form can be included with the record of the meeting. If consideration of the assessment information leads to agreement that the learner has dyslexia this can also be added to the record of the meeting. For example, if a summary of discussion is noted, a variation of the following sentence may be added:-

“Collation of assessment information indicates that <learner’s name> experiences difficulties in learning to read [and/or write / spell] despite appropriate learning opportunities. All in attendance, including parents and learner [if appropriate] agree that <name> should be identified as having dyslexia”

## Roles and Responsibilities

<b>EYP / Class Teacher / Support Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise early concerns and begin the assessment process by completing relevant checklists and gathering contextual information</li> <li>• Record and review any interventions or adaptations that are implemented</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with other professionals when a learner's needs are ongoing and support from outwith the class or school is required for further assessment and support planning</li> </ul>
<b>Senior leader in school with ASN role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that there are good processes in place for raising concerns, co-ordinating a response to concerns, communicating outcomes and planning support</li> <li>• Allow time for teaching and support staff to consult with ASN teachers and/or other professionals when required</li> <li>• Identify the need for continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to dyslexia (either as a whole establishment, or for individuals), and make arrangements accordingly</li> </ul>
<b>ASN Teacher / PT ASN / PT Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with class teachers/support staff, to help identify classroom strategies/interventions/adaptations</li> <li>• Carry out any further assessment as required</li> <li>• If needed, provide support to school staff to establish whether a learner should be identified as having dyslexia</li> <li>• Contribute to planning meetings to help identify next steps and strategies, which will either be outlined in the note of the meeting, and/or on an Individualised Educational Programme (IEP) where appropriate</li> <li>• Provide direct / team teaching as required and agreed</li> <li>• Promote good practice and the enhancement of teaching colleagues' skills by sharing information and providing CPD activities as required.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Psychologist (EP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide consultation e.g. to provide guidance on assessment information already gathered</li> <li>• In some cases, carry out further assessment if this is needed to gain a clearer understanding of a learner's needs</li> <li>• Offer CLPL to school staff and/or other professionals where a need for this has been identified</li> </ul>
<b>Allied Health Professional (AHP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g Speech and Language Therapy- May contribute to an assessment, when they are involved with the learner already, or if initial assessment indicates that involvement by one or more of these services would be beneficial.</li> </ul>



## 4.2 When to Identify Dyslexia

It is not the case that dyslexia becomes evident at a certain age and stage, and should not be identified before such a time. In fact, indicators of dyslexia can become apparent at any time, from early years to adulthood. Thus, from as early as possible it is important to be able to recognise any needs in relation to reading, writing and/or spelling, in order to begin the process of assessment and intervention.

With regards to using the label 'dyslexia', it would not be appropriate for this to happen when a child is working within the early level of the curriculum because, although indicators of dyslexia can be identified at any stage, it would be too early to ascertain that the learner has ongoing difficulties with learning. Neither will labelling occur following the initial gathering of information, even if there are a number of indicators that suggest a child or young person may have dyslexia. The definition of dyslexia includes the phrase:

**'difficulties in learning to read, write and/or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities'**,

This means that record-keeping at all stages will play an important part in deciding whether a child or young person has dyslexia, as these records will illustrate the learning opportunities provided, and evidence whether progress has or hasn't been made.

It is also important to reflect on *other factors* that could impact on literacy development when considering whether it is useful to use the term dyslexia. If there are significant difficulties in one or more other areas, then there may need to be discussion around whether it is helpful or appropriate to describe a learner as having dyslexia.

### When to Identify -A Quick Guide

A learner may be identified as having dyslexia when:-

- ongoing records show that they have continuing difficulties with reading, writing and/or spelling despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities.
- all participants in the assessment process, including parents and the child / young person, agree with the use of the term 'dyslexia';
- there are no significant difficulties in one or more other areas that make the use of the term 'dyslexia' unhelpful or inappropriate.



## 4.3 Parent / Carer Requests for Assessment

Parents / carers may raise concerns about their child's progress, which will sometimes be expressed as a specific query about whether their child has dyslexia. Such concerns should be addressed regardless of the nature of the request, and regardless of whether staff share these concerns.

When a parent / carer asks for assessment to ascertain whether their child has dyslexia an [information leaflet](#) should be offered, and an explanation provided about assessment procedures. Following this, the process of [collaborative and contextual assessment](#) should be followed, whereby assessment information should be considered by the class teacher and/or ASN staff, in consultation with other relevant school staff and/or support services if required.

If the initial assessment information provides little or no evidence that a learner has dyslexia, this should be discussed with the parent/carer and learner (where appropriate). Reassurance should be given that progress will continue to be routinely monitored and reviewed to ensure that any needs continue to be met.

In cases where further assessment is carried out to determine whether a learner has dyslexia, those involved, including parents / carers and young people, should meet to discuss the outcomes of assessment (including whether the learner should be identified as having dyslexia), agree an appropriate support plan if required, and record the findings and next steps accordingly.

Where parents / carers have made arrangements for a private assessment, they should be assured that findings of any reports produced will be taken into account, but will need to be considered alongside contextual assessment information when establishing a learner's needs, and when making a decision about whether they have dyslexia.

## 4.4 Further / Higher Education Requests

Where a dyslexia assessment is required by a further (FE) or higher (HE) education establishment to determine allocation of funding or resources, it is the responsibility of that establishment or the relevant awards agency, to administer any assessments that it requires for its own purposes which are not those of the local authority.

Where appropriate, schools and other relevant services (e.g. EPS) in Angus may provide information outlining any contextual assessment that was carried out during a learner's schooling. This is likely to involve drawing on information in a student's file and summarising relevant points about their support needs. This account may also indicate whether a learner was identified as having dyslexia whilst at school.



## 4.5 After Identification

<b>Create a Plan / Learner Profile</b>	<p>The level of detail in a plan / learner profile will vary depending on needs. A learner profile may include the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengths - Focusing on a learner's strengths can shift the perspective from one of limitation to one of potential (<a href="#">Chathurika and Kannangara, 2015</a>)</li><li>• Specific challenges</li><li>• Preferred learning strategies</li><li>• Helpful classroom adaptations</li><li>• Use of assistive technology</li><li>• Consideration of <a href="#">assessment arrangements</a></li><li>• Pupil voice</li></ul>
<b>Share Plan / Learner Profile</b>	<p>Sharing a plan with all staff that work with a learner:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• encourages consistent use of strategies and adaptations;</li><li>• reinforces a whole-school approach to inclusion - it's not just the job of ASN staff to support learners;</li><li>• creates less stigma / frustration around learning differences, leading to the learner feeling understood and more confident;</li><li>• supports transitions by helping new staff quickly understand how to support a learner.</li></ul>
<b>Involve Families and Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborate with parents/carers and include the learner's voice in planning</li><li>• Share useful information with parents / carers and learners. Dyslexia Scotland have <a href="#">free leaflets</a> and an online hub for young people with dyslexia called <a href="#">Dyslexia Unwrapped</a>.</li></ul>
<b>Monitor and Review Plan</b>	<p>Ongoing monitoring and review are essential to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Track the effectiveness of interventions</li><li>• Adjust interventions and strategies as needed to ensure continued progress</li></ul>



## 4.6 Identifying Dyslexia - FAQs

Question	Answer
Reading is good, so does this mean the learner is not dyslexic?	No, dyslexia is a difficulty with reading, writing and/or spelling, so difficulties might not necessarily be present in all three areas.
Can dyslexia be identified if a screener says a learner is not at risk?	Yes, a screener can flag difficulties but it is not a diagnostic tool. A learner can still be identified as dyslexic if all of the assessment information indicates that they meet the definition.
If a learner can spell a word one day but not the next, does this mean that they are not dyslexic?	No, inconsistent spelling is a common feature of dyslexia. It can indicate difficulty with retention and recall of spelling patterns.
A learner has been diagnosed with ADHD. Can they still be dyslexic?	Yes, a learner with ADHD can also be dyslexic. It is actually quite common for dyslexia and ADHD to co-occur and share some overlapping features, such as difficulties with attention and focus.
A learner has been given overlays because they experience visual stress. Does this mean they are dyslexic?	No, while visual stress can co-occur with dyslexia, it is not the same thing. You can find out more about visual stress, including how to assess and support children in <a href="#">Angus Council's Visual Stress Guidance</a> .
Can a learner have dyslexia if spelling is phonetically correct?	Yes, a learner may be able to spell words as they sound but have difficulty retaining conventional spelling rules and patterns.
A learner has some difficulties with spelling but is more able than others in the class. Is it fair on the others if the learner is identified as having dyslexia?	Yes, a learner can still be dyslexic if their spelling is better than others in the class. Some children can develop strategies to compensate for any difficulties, which might make these less noticeable.
What if assessment highlights a processing / working memory difficulty rather than dyslexia?	Processing and working memory difficulties are strongly associated with dyslexia. If these are impacting on progress with reading, writing and/or spelling then you may still identify dyslexia.

The Scottish working definition of dyscalculia (2022) was developed by a national working group which included representatives from Scottish Government, education bodies, local authorities and Dyslexia Scotland. Consultation also took place with children, young people, and families.

Dyscalculia can be described as a specific difficulty in understanding number and number processes which persists despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. It is distinguishable from other challenges associated with numeracy and mathematics due to the:

- Persistent inability to understand and or retrieve numerical facts from memory
- Use of underdeveloped procedures and processes
- Severity of difficulties with number sense.

Associated difficulties can include:

- Subitising – immediately recognising quantity without counting
- Estimating
- Ordering, sequencing and directionality
- Recognising and understanding number symbols
- How numbers and amounts relate to each other in their representation
- Learning and recalling basic maths facts and processes
- Applying number skills to solve problems
- Everyday tasks involving number e.g. money, time
- Short-term and working memory.

These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities. They may not be typical of performance in other areas and cannot be attributed to other factors, for example gaps in learning, developmental, genetic and neurodevelopmental differences which include autism, dyslexia and attention difficulties. The impact of dyscalculia as a barrier to learning varies according to the learning and teaching environment.

Dyscalculia exists in all cultures and across the range of abilities and socio-economic backgrounds. Learners with dyscalculia can continue to make progress in mathematics but may do so at a different pace.

Dyscalculia is likely to be a genetic, life-long, neurodevelopmental difference. Unidentified, it could result in mathematics anxiety, low self-esteem, high stress, atypical behaviour and low achievement. This can have associated impacts on opportunities in adult life.

Learners with dyscalculia will benefit from:

- Appropriate early identification, support, planning and review.
- Tailored support – for example, actively encouraging the use of specific materials which may include concrete materials and visual representations.
- Effective, inclusive learning and teaching pedagogical approaches and environments.

In Angus, the [guiding principles](#) followed to assess and plan support for learners who may have dyslexia should also be applied to those who may have dyscalculia. Resources to support identification and planning for dyscalculia are available on [Education Scotland's website](#).