



Hednesford Valley High

Dyslexia Friendly Policy

Reviewed by: Jill Overbury

Last reviewed: February 2024

Next review due by: February 2027

1. Overview

Hednesford Valley High School endeavours to meet the diverse needs of its students to ensure inclusion for all. All of our students are entitled to a broad, balanced curriculum, delivered in a relevant and differentiated manner, enabling progression and continuity to be experienced.

It is important in this school that the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matters. In order to make access to the whole curriculum a reality for all students, we foster an ethos in which positive attitudes to gender equality, cultural diversity and special needs of all kinds are actively promoted.

In order to meet the needs of all of our children we are actively working towards 'Dyslexia Friendly School status'. We believe that this will not only benefit children with dyslexic tendencies but will also have a significant impact on other students whose Literacy skills are not appropriate to their age, as strategies that are good for the dyslexic learner are good for everyone.

2. What is Dyslexia

"Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the word level and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities. It provides the basis for a staged process of assessment through teaching"

British Psychological Society 1999 (as adopted by Staffordshire County Council, January 2007)

According to the Dyslexia Institute, dyslexia can be defined as:

'...a combination of abilities and difficulties which affect the learning process in reading, writing, spelling and sometimes numeracy.'

Dyslexic children frequently have weaknesses in short term memory, sequencing and processing information – skills everyone needs to learn effectively in a busy classroom. What may start as a learning difference becomes a learning difficulty if dyslexia goes unrecognised and the teaching is inappropriate.

However, if those with milder forms of dyslexia are identified early and given the opportunity to learn the way they learn best, they may cease to have special educational needs. The skills and strategies which dyslexic children need in order to learn can be taught.

3. Teaching Strategies

Everybody had an individual learning style. Dyslexic children seem to process information differently. Understanding how they learn best and being flexible enough to adapt teaching approaches are vital factors in enabling dyslexic children to learn effectively in the classroom. Therefore, at Hednesford Valley High School, we employ the following teaching strategies for dyslexic children:

- Have high expectations for intellectual stimulation, but reasonable expectations for written responses.
- We promote a 'can do' culture.
- Use multi-sensory methods of learning – VAK learning styles
- Be prepared to explain things many times in a variety of ways

- Give guidance about how to do things systematically
- Implement SEAL to promote positive self esteem
- Be aware of signs of tiredness and fatigues, implementing Brain Gym and Take 10 to allow children opportunity for a break within their learning
- Enable dyslexic children to show their interest, knowledge and skills, despite their difficulties in writing
- Marking identifies success and improvement points (next steps)
- Use of ICT (Wordshark, Talking First Word, Sound recorders and digital cameras for example)
- Use adult of 'Buddy' support where available

4. Dyslexia Friendly Classroom

At Hednesford Valley High School we recognise that the correct working environment is vital for all learners. For a dyslexic child, already they may be having difficulties with listening, hearing, concentrating, sitting still, writing, finding the things they need. If their classroom environment works against them, no matter how hard they try it will be more difficult for them to succeed. Therefore classrooms are:

- Arranged so that during lessons, the dyslexic child can sit near the front
- Equipped with clearly labelled and neatly arranged resources so that they can be accessed easily
- Adapted so that dyslexic children have opportunity to sit alongside well motivated children or a work partner who can clarify instructions for them
- Information and displays are accessible, e.g. using non-white paper, picture clues

5. Dyslexia Indicators

All teachers have a responsibility for dyslexic children. If the school's assessment and observation procedures indicate concerns regarding reading, spelling, writing or numeracy, teachers will implement the following procedures:

- Refer to Handy Hints in SEN Folder, located in every classroom
- Complete Dyslexia Indicator checklist (DFEs)
- Consult SENCO
- Consult with parents/carers and student
- Consult with SENSS if required

6. Assessment and Intervention

The school's assessment and tracking procedures facilitate the early identification of difficulties, whilst highlighting individual abilities. Areas of difficulty are highlighted and an appropriate intervention programme is developed, in conjunction with the SENCO.

7. Partnerships with Parents

As the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs states:

'Professional help can seldom be wholly effective unless it builds upon parents' capacity to be involved'

We acknowledge that maximum participation by parents/carers is essential in embedding positive attitudes

in dyslexic learners. We endeavour to be in regular contact with parents/carers – face to face, on the telephone or via individual homework diaries. We will help to allay and fears parents/carers may have for their child's education, by understanding their concerns and pursuing strategies to help. Parent/Carer workshops are available and held at school which are delivered through the SENSS.

8. Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint please come and see us. We will listen and deal with it as quickly as possible.

When parents/carers are worried or unhappy about any aspect of school life or the curriculum they should come and talk to the class teachers first. This will usually resolve the problem, however, if they are still dissatisfied then they should contact wither the Head teacher or Deputy Headteacher. Further steps would be to inform the Governing Body and the Local Education Authority.

9. Dissemination and Review

The policy will be disseminated widely both to Staff and Governors through appropriate meetings.

The policy will be reviewed February 2027.