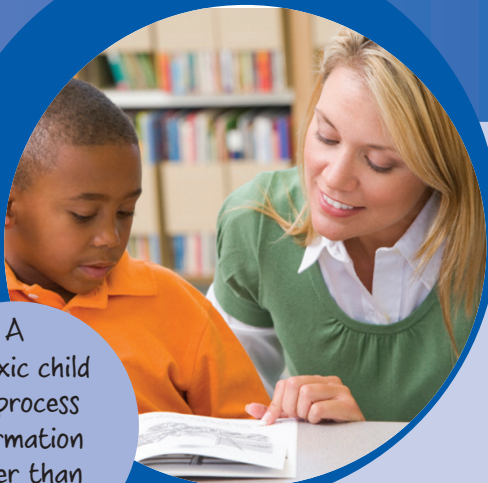


# How to Create a Dyslexia Friendly Classroom



A dyslexic child will process information slower than other people



Teaching and learning styles need to encourage confidence and success



Successful strategy: use ICT as a multi-sensory method of learning

Every one of us has an individual learning style. A dyslexic child will process information, particularly the written word, slower than other people. Effective learning in the classroom is dependent on two factors; the pupil understanding how s/he learns and the teacher being flexible enough to adapt their teaching approaches.

Expectations should be high for intellectual stimulation but reasonable for their written response and pupils should be placed in groups according to their intellectual ability levels. They may be orally confident but struggle to put their ideas into words.

A Dyslexia Friendly classroom will include a variety of teaching and learning strategies enabling every child to access the full curriculum. This needs to be in a style which will encourage confidence and success, as well as developing good self-esteem.

If a child's working environment is right – they will find it easier to achieve. The following list is a summary of successful primary classroom strategies:

- A well organised environment with clear routines to minimise movement and noise.
- A good mix of Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic activities within each lesson.
- An alphabet arc on the wall.
- Dyslexic pupils sitting within easy eye contact of the teacher.
- Colour coded storage system (e.g. yellow for Literacy; blue for Numeracy).
- Resource boxes / Goody boxes.
- A variety of writing implements including red and blue pens for practising spellings before writing in books (red for vowels; blue for consonants).
- Revisiting reading and spelling strategies at the start of each year and having these displayed for constant reference.
- A selection of high interest/ low reading age texts available.
- Whiteboards with coloured markers to practise spellings and sentences.
- Keyword cards /Days of the week/Months of the year cards.
- Writing planning boards or writing frames.
- Using a variety of recording methods – mindmaps, storyboards, flowcharts, video, diagrams, oral presentation.
- Using ICT as a multi-sensory method of working.
- Giving children thinking and talking time.
- Having drinking water available.
- Using 'buddies' or 'peer mentors' to help with homework / organising.
- Colour photocopies / coloured wallets for use with white paper.

With thanks to Elaine Darwin, SENCo / Deputy Headteacher at Irlam Primary School for writing this article in conjunction with 'Dyslexia friendly schools in Salford: a resource book for teachers and teaching assistants' Irlam Primary School was the first school in the UK to be awarded Dyslexia friendly status.

“ If they don't learn the way we teach them, can we teach them the way they learn? ”  
(Dr Harry Chasty)