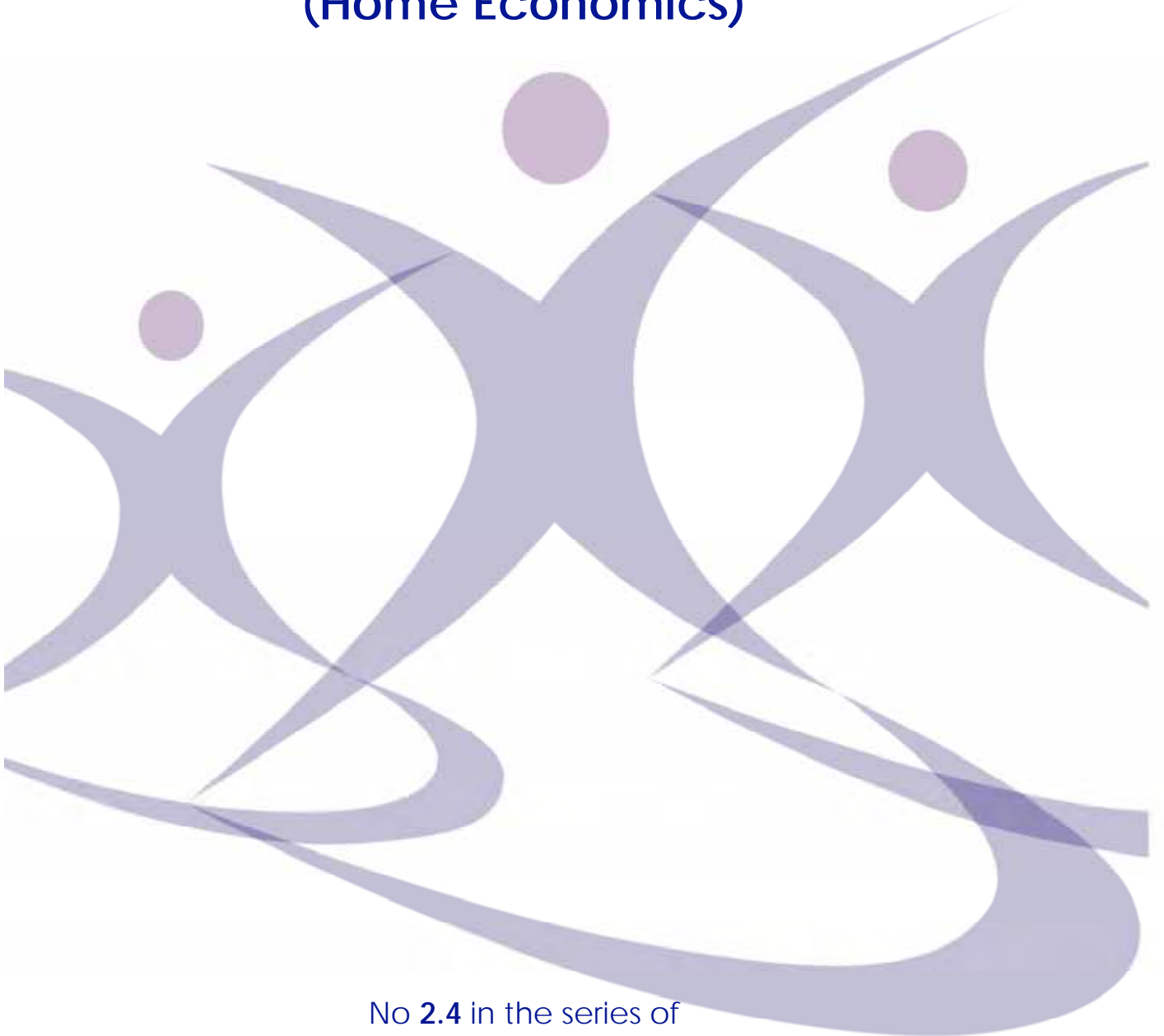




Dyslexia Scotland

## Dyslexia and Health & Food Technology (Home Economics)



No 2.4 in the series of  
**Supporting Dyslexic Pupils in the Secondary Curriculum**  
By Moira Thomson

# Supporting Dyslexic Pupils in the Secondary Curriculum

by Moira Thomson

## **DYSLEXIA AND HOME ECONOMICS (HEALTH & FOOD TECHNOLOGY)**

Published in Great Britain by  
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# Supporting Dyslexic Pupils in the Secondary Curriculum

by Moira Thomson

**Complete set comprises 18 booklets and a CD of downloadable material**

*(see inside back cover for full details of CD contents)*

**Foreword by Dr. Gavin Reid**, a senior lecturer in the Department of Educational Studies, Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh. An experienced teacher, educational psychologist, university lecturer, researcher and author, he has made over 600 conference and seminar presentations in more than 35 countries and has authored, co-authored and edited fifteen books for teachers and parents.

## **1.0 Dyslexia: Secondary Teachers' Guides**

- 1.1. Identification and Assessment of Dyslexia at Secondary School
- 1.2. Dyslexia and the Underpinning Skills for the Secondary Curriculum
- 1.3. Classroom Management of Dyslexia at Secondary School
- 1.4. Information for the Secondary Support for Learning Team
- 1.5. Supporting Parents of Secondary School Pupils with Dyslexia
- 1.6. Using ICT to Support Dyslexic Pupils in the Secondary Curriculum
- 1.7. Dyslexia and Examinations

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- 2.5. Dyslexia and ICT subjects (Computing Studies, Business Education, Enterprise)
- 2.6. Dyslexia and Mathematics
- 2.7. Dyslexia and Modern Foreign Languages
- 2.8. Dyslexia and Music
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- 2.10. Dyslexia and Science subjects (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- 2.11. Dyslexia and Social subjects (Geography, History, Modern Studies, Philosophy, Religious Studies)

ALL information contained in the booklets and the CD can be downloaded free of charge from the Dyslexia Scotland website – [www.supportingdyslexicpupils.org.uk](http://www.supportingdyslexicpupils.org.uk)

**Extra copies of individual booklets or complete sets are available from**

**Dyslexia Scotland**, Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ

**Email:** [info@supportingdyslexicpupils.org.uk](mailto:info@supportingdyslexicpupils.org.uk)

***To all my dyslexic pupils, who taught me what dyslexia really is***

# Acknowledgements

Dyslexia Scotland would like to thank the following for making possible the publication of this important series of books. Every secondary school in Scotland has been supplied with a copy. All material contained in the booklets and CD is downloadable free from the Dyslexia Scotland website - [www.supportingdyslexicpupils.org.uk](http://www.supportingdyslexicpupils.org.uk).

Special thanks to **M & A Thomson Litho Ltd**, East Kilbride, Scotland who printed the booklets at below cost – [www.thomsonlitho.com](http://www.thomsonlitho.com).

Thanks also to Trevor Hook, Stephen Mitchell, Yvonne Cochrane and Senga Fairgrieve for their production input and Paula O'Connell for copy-editing all 18 booklets.

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**Dyslexia Scotland is the voluntary organisation representing the needs and interests of dyslexic people in Scotland.**

## **Mission Statement**

To encourage and enable dyslexic people, regardless of their age and abilities, to reach their potential in education, employment and life.

Dyslexia Helpline: 0844 800 84 84 - Monday to Friday from 10am until 4pm.

**Dyslexia Scotland**, Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ  
[www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk)

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## **FOREWORD**

It is a privilege to be asked to write a foreword for this series of guides on dyslexia in the secondary school. Moira Thomson ought to be congratulated in putting together these informative and up to date guides that will both heighten the awareness of dyslexia in secondary schools and develop the knowledge and skills of teachers through the implementation of the suggestions made in the guides. Too often books and materials on dyslexia are cornered by a few, usually those who have a prior interest in the subject. Many feel it is not their concern, or they do not have the specialised experience to intervene. These guides will challenge and change that assumption. The guides are for all teachers – they contain information that will be directly relevant and directly impact on the practice of every teacher in every secondary school in the country. Not only that, the guides are up to date containing advice stemming from the most recent legislation (Education (Scotland) Act 2004: Additional Support for Learning). This makes the guides an essential resource in every school in the country.

Above all the guides provide a positive message. Dyslexia is couched in terminology that expresses what learners with dyslexia **can do** not what they 'can't do'. Any difficulties` experienced by learners with dyslexia are seen as 'barriers to learning' which means that the onus is on supporting learners overcome these barriers and this places the responsibility firmly on the professionals working in schools. This reiterates the view that dealing with dyslexia is a whole school responsibility.

The breadth of coverage in these guides is colossal. It is highly commendable that Moira Thomson has met this immense task with true professionalism in providing clearly written and relevant guides incorporating the breadth of the curriculum. As well as including all secondary school subjects the guides also provide information on the crucial aspects of supporting students preparing for examinations, the use of information and communication technology, information for parents, details of the assessment process and the skills that underpin learning. It is important to consider the view that learners with dyslexia are first and foremost learners and therefore it is important that their learning skills are developed fully. It is too easy to place the emphasis on developing literacy skills at the expense other important aspects of learning. The guides will reinforce this crucial point that the learning skills of all students with dyslexia can be developed to a high level. I am particularly impressed with the inclusion of a section on classroom management. This again reinforces the point that managing dyslexia is a classroom concern and a learning and curriculum-focused perspective needs to be adopted. A focus on curriculum planning and acknowledging learning styles is essential if learners are to reach their potential in secondary schools.

The guides do more than provide information on dyslexia; rather they are a staff development resource and one that can enlighten and educate all teachers in secondary schools. I feel certain they will be warmly appreciated and used for that purpose. The guides will benefit school management as well as teachers and parents, but the real winners will be the students with dyslexia. It is they who will ultimately benefit and the guides will help them fulfil their potential and make learning a positive and successful school experience for all.

Dr. Gavin Reid,  
Edinburgh, UK  
July 2007

**Dyslexia may be defined as a difficulty in processing language-based information. Short-term memory, sequencing, directionality and co-ordination may also be affected.**

It is important that secondary teachers consider dyslexia in the context of their own subject. In any subject class there will be a need to make provision to meet a wide variety of strengths and additional support needs, not all linked to dyslexia, but, teaching and learning strategies that are appropriate for dyslexic pupils can be effective for all.

Dyslexia may be difficult for subject teachers to identify, but a mismatch between a pupil's apparent ability and the quality (and quantity) of written work is often observed. Subject teachers should use the Dyslexia Indicators Checklist to confirm any suspicion of a dyslexic profile. If several indicators are ticked, referral should be made to the Support for Learning (SfL) team for further investigation.

## **TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES RE PUPILS WITH DYSLEXIA**

Reference: Education (Scotland) Act 2004: Additional Support for Learning

It is a teacher's responsibility to provide a suitably differentiated subject curriculum, accessible to all pupils, that provides each with the opportunity to develop and apply individual strengths. Responsibilities for meeting the additional needs of dyslexic pupils are the same as those for all pupils, and should include approaches that avoid unnecessary dependence on written text. Subject teachers may be expected to use teaching and learning strategies that include:

- Recognition of and sensitivity to the range and diversity of the learning preferences and styles of all pupils
- Selection or design of appropriate teaching and learning programmes that match the range of all pupil abilities, within the curricular framework of the school
- Awareness of the learning differences related to dyslexia that may cause difficulties within these programmes
- Understanding that, while dyslexia is not linked to ability, able dyslexic pupils may persistently underachieve because of this
- Knowledge that many dyslexic pupils use strategies such as misbehaviour or illness for coping with difficulties they do not necessarily understand themselves
- Willingness to ask for advice and support from the Support for Learning team
- Commitment to the need to reduce barriers to learning linked to the delivery of the curriculum

## *Dyslexia and Home Economics*

- Acknowledgement of the very severe difficulties that dyslexic pupils might experience due to failure to master the early stages of literacy and numeracy
- Understanding that dyslexia is developmental in nature and that some pupils who have coped with the early stages of literacy acquisition may have difficulties with higher order skills, which do not appear until upper primary or secondary
- Acceptance that some pupils with dyslexia may require additional support within the context of their subject and to consult with colleagues and specialists to determine how best to provide this
- Taking account of the difficulties experienced by dyslexic pupils when assessing progress so that subject knowledge and ability are assessed fairly by making alternative arrangements for assessments that reflect the additional support usually provided

Dyslexic pupils constantly meet barriers to learning across the curriculum and may become discouraged very quickly due to lack of initial success in subject classes. This can result in subject teachers assuming that pupils are inattentive or lazy, when they are actually working much harder than their classmates, but with little apparent effect. For pupils with dyslexia the experience of success may be rare, if not totally absent. They may:

- Lack self-confidence
- Have a poor self image
- Fear new situations
- Confuse written and verbal instructions
- Be very disorganised
- Lack stamina
- Appear to avoid set work

For example, a dyslexic pupil may fully understand the subject teacher's spoken introduction to a topic but be unable to follow the written instructions to complete class activities

Home Economics (HE) courses offer all pupils the opportunity to acquire essential life skills as well as a range of vocational experiences. The nature of this subject, with practical demonstrations and support for individual differences of approach and technique as well as opportunities to work with peers allows dyslexic pupils to experience success on a regular basis – something that is not often possible in the context of the secondary curriculum. Difficulties may still arise due to motor planning and fine-control problems that may make the acquisition of some skills slow. The short-term memory problems experienced by many dyslexic pupils may cause them to appear disorganised and unable to follow simple instructions. Many dyslexic pupils are reluctant to take HE as an examination subject because of the reading and writing demands involved. However, once strategies for dealing with their dyslexic problems are in place, many pupils become highly skilled in subjects such as Fashion and Textile Technology, Hospitality and Practical Cookery.



**Significant Strengths of dyslexic pupils in HE may include:**

- Multi-sensory learning styles that are particularly suited to practical activities
- Multi-dimensional thinking and perception
- An acute awareness of the environment
- Originality and creativity in their approach to problem solving

**READING/WRITING/STUDY SKILLS**

The underpinning literacy difficulties of many dyslexic pupils will impact on their learning in all areas of the curriculum, including HE. Since the need to plan, record and evaluate their practical activities is an essential part of an examination course, dyslexic pupils should be given support for reading and offered a range of alternatives to writing, including ICT, and provided with additional support for sequencing activities.

**Additional barriers to learning – dyslexic pupils may:**

- Find it difficult to follow a series of instructions in the correct order
- Be unable to achieve a required learning outcome due to confusion of a sequence of instructions
- Have disorganised and messy work stations, making it difficult for them to follow instructions
- Be unable to carry out an activity and listen to the teacher at the same time
- Have difficulties understanding subject terminology
- Confuse HE specific meanings with the same words used in a different context
- Struggle to work at the same rate as peers
- Be unable to carry out activities demonstrated by the teacher
- Lose the place – e.g. in recipes, and forget whether or not they have added ingredients
- Fail to understand the need to follow instructions in sequence
- Find that they have not collected all their ingredients together before starting to a task
- Experience visual distortions in text, making it hard for them to follow a recipe

**Additional support strategies – teachers should:**

- Give only one instruction at a time or repeat instructions frequently
- Ask pupils to repeat instructions back - this not only lets the teacher check that pupils have understood, but they remember things better if they hear themselves speak
- Issue notes of instructions in order, perhaps numbered
- Construct personal flip charts for dyslexic pupils that give only one instruction per page
- Use wall charts and arrows to illustrate direction and sequence
- Teach specific terminology and explain and demonstrate the specialist meanings often

## *Dyslexia and Home Economics*

- Use visual clues (pictures/diagrams) to illustrate 'technical' instructions such as 'whisk' 'beat' to make the meaning clear
- Allow extra time for dyslexic pupils to carry out practical tasks
- Try to ensure that dyslexic pupils are placed so that they can see demonstrations clearly
- Use flow diagrams to illustrate the sequence of steps in an operation
- Introduce colour-coding to help them organise tidy work stations
- Help them set up and organise their workstations in advance
- Issue checklists of ingredients/equipment for pupils to tick
- Supply pupils with a coloured filter to reduce glare and flickering on worksheets

## **ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSMENTS**

SQA and other examining bodies offer a range of alternative assessment arrangements for dyslexic pupils taking examinations. These are designed to reflect the support provided for dyslexic pupils in the curriculum and to address any specific difficulties caused by the style of the examination and its impact on the opportunities for dyslexic candidates to demonstrate actual attainment. Consideration should be given to the following points:

- Some dyslexic pupils may require alternative arrangements for practical assessments in HE where planning, reading and writing are required, and many will need these for timed, written exams
- If assessment instructions are given orally, dyslexic pupils may need to hear these repeated, often more than once
- It may be necessary for dyslexic candidates to ask for specific work stations in order to take account of personal organisation needs, ambient lighting etc.
- When an internal assessment has been prepared in advance, dyslexic pupils may request that their notes are in digital or electronic format to enable them to be used effectively
- When an internal assessment involves reading and writing, dyslexic candidates are eligible for the same linguistic support used in class and for timed exams

The range of alternative assessment arrangements available for dyslexic candidates in timed, written exams includes:

- Linguistic support (reader, digital examination papers, scribe, transcription with correction)
- Extra time allowances
- Use of word processors with spellcheckers, specialised software and other technological aids
- Transcription without correction to remove illegibility
- Rest periods/supervised breaks when the extra time makes the exam extremely long
- Adapted question papers for candidates who experience visual distortions

## **ROLE MODELS FOR DYSLEXIC PUPILS**

When at school, the impact of dyslexic difficulties often outweighs a pupil's natural abilities in a subject area – which is one reason why teachers of successful individuals often express surprise – or astonishment – at their achievements after they have left formal schooling behind.

So, perhaps some of those who have already succeeded may be the best guides to promote understanding of how to create success where there is so often failure. The giftedness of some dyslexics seems to be particularly clear in the creative and practical fields. In these areas, achievement is measured by demonstrated success, which is often more highly valued in society than traditional academic skills and paper credentials. The following personal comments and case histories may offer new insight into dyslexia.

**Marco Pierre White**, chef and restaurateur, compensated for his dyslexia by concentrating on those things he was good at. 'When I had difficulty with spelling and reading, I concentrated on mathematics and sports. ... I found traditional teaching methods ... pure torture. Dyslexia gave me a different way of looking at things. '

The creativity of well known TV chef, **Jamie Oliver**, is undeniable, but his gifts went unnoticed at school because of his dyslexia - "When I was a kid the schools were never very good at recognising dyslexia – it was only those people who were really bad who were diagnosed and the rest of us like me just went to a special needs class and everyone thought we were really thick. I still can't spell, and to be honest, I never became a good reader. I have never read a book in my life"

### **Tommy Hilfiger – fashion designer**

I performed poorly at school, when I attended, that is, and was perceived as stupid because of my dyslexia. I still have trouble reading. I have to concentrate very hard at going left to right, otherwise my eye just wanders to the bottom of the page." He often acted as the 'class clown' in an attempt to hide his dyslexia from his classmates.

## **FURTHER READING**

**McKay, N** (2001): *Dyslexia Friendly Schools* IN Peer L & Reid G (2001) *Dyslexia – Successful Inclusion in the Secondary School*, London, David Fulton Publishers

**McKay, N** (2005): *Removing Dyslexia as a Barrier to Achievement: The Dyslexia Friendly Schools Toolkit*, Wakefield, SEN Marketing  
Of particular interest is the chart of *Dyslexia Friendly Classroom Strategies* on page 214.

**Oliver, Jamie** (1999): *The Naked Chef*, London, Michael Joseph

**Reid, G & Green, S** (2007): *100 Ideas for supporting pupils with Dyslexia*, London, Continuum

## DYSLEXIA INDICATORS AT THE SECONDARY STAGE

Dyslexia is more than an isolated defect in reading or spelling. The problem may be perceptual, auditory receptive, memory-based or a processing deficit.

Subject teachers are not expected to be able to diagnose these difficulties as such, but some general indications are listed below. If several of these are observed frequently in the classroom, please tick the relevant boxes and enter details of the pupil concerned and pass to the Support for Learning team for further investigation.

Pupil Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Quality of written work does not adequately reflect the known ability of the pupil in the subject
- Good orally but very little written work is produced – many incomplete assignments
- Disappointing performance in timed tests and other assessments
- Poor presentation of work – e.g. illegibility, mixed upper and lower case, unequal spacing, copying errors, misaligned columns (especially in Maths)
- Poor organisational skills – pupil is unable to organise self or work efficiently; carries either all books or wrong ones; frequently forgets to hand in work
- Sequencing poor – pupil appears to jump from one theme to another, apparently for no reason
- Inability to memorise (especially in Maths and Modern Languages) even after repeated practice
- Inability to hold numbers in short-term memory while performing calculations
- Symbol and shape confusion (especially in Maths)
- Complains of headaches when reading; sometimes see patterns in printed text; says that words move around the page or that text is glaring at them
- Unable to carry out operations one day which were previously done adequately
- Unable to take in and carry out more than one instruction at a time
- Poor depth perception – e.g. clumsy and uncoordinated, bumps into things, difficulty judging distance, catching balls, etc.

- Poor self-image – lacking in confidence, fear of new situations – may erase large quantities of written work, which is acceptable to the teacher
- Tires quickly and work seems to be a disproportionate return for the effort involved in producing it
- Easily distracted – either hyperactive or daydreaming
- Other – please give details**

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

- Action requested:
- details of known additional needs
  - investigation of problem and advice re support
  - dyslexia assessment
  - profile of additional needs
  - suggest strategies for meeting additional needs
  - advice re assessment arrangements

**Dyslexia Scotland** has supplied every secondary school in Scotland with a free copy of this publication. **All information contained in the 18 booklets and CD, including extra copies of dyslexia identification checklists, is available free to download from their website.**

[www.supportingdyslexicpupils.org.uk](http://www.supportingdyslexicpupils.org.uk)

## **CD CONTENTS:**

### **Worldwide dyslexia contacts**

#### **Identification & Assessment of dyslexia**

Dyslexia checklist for subject teachers  
Classroom Observation  
Pupil Checklist for Dyslexia  
Dyslexia - self esteem issues  
Assessment Materials  
Fine Motor Assessment (writing)  
Visual Dyslexia  
Strategies to meet identified needs  
Example of a dyslexic profile  
Personal Learning Plan: Example of an information page  
Dyslexia glossary

#### **Co-morbid conditions**

ADHD - teachers' checklist  
Visual Discomfort Meares-Irlen Syndrome  
Dyspraxia  
Dyscalculia  
Dysgraphia

#### **Teaching & Learning**

Summary: Classroom management support strategies  
Developing Social Skills - dyslexic learners  
Dyslexia glossary of terminology  
Modern Languages Grid

#### **Study skills**

Active Revision.  
Techniques for improving memory  
Study techniques Revision  
Accessible Curricular Materials.  
Writing support using ICT  
CALL project Voice recognition –  
Description for schools  
Small and Portable Devices.

#### **Examinations and assessments**

SQA Guide for Candidates: Arrangements for  
Disability Support  
National Testing  
Use of a calculator in Maths noncalculator exam papers  
Modern Foreign Languages Writing  
Glossary of Exam language  
Active Revision  
Stress reducing strategy

## **Resources**

ICT resources to support developing numeracy  
ICT resources to support developing literacy  
ICT and Practising Literacy Skills  
Further Reading suggestions  
Learning & Teaching Scotland – downloadable resources  
Barrington Stoke link  
Dyslexia Shop catalogue link  
iANSYST website link

## **Information for parents of dyslexic pupils**

Enquire parent guide  
Dyslexia Scotland Guide for Parents  
Visual processing difficulties  
Using ICT to support writing  
ICT Starting Points  
Small and Portable Devices  
Alternative Therapies  
Supporting and working with parents of dyslexic pupils  
Contributory factors dyslexia  
Homework Tips for Parents  
Meeting the teacher - parent's guide  
Information for parents - Alternative Assessment  
Arrangements  
Suggested reading list for parents

## **Downloadable leaflets & information**

What is dyslexia  
DfES How to Identify Dyslexia  
DfES Being Dyslexic  
DfES Tips for Secondary School  
BDA Secondary School Tips  
A framework for understanding Dyslexia – DfES  
Guidance to support pupils with dyslexia and  
dyscalculia - DfES  
How Can Parents Help  
Dyslexia Scotland Guide for Parents  
Enquire Parents Guide to Additional Support for Learning  
Help for Dyslexic student  
Dyslexia Indications for Adults  
Checklist for Adults  
Dyslexic adults assessments  
Guide for Teachers  
Help At Home.  
Help with Reading and Spelling  
How Can Parents Help  
Help with Maths  
Hints for Homework

***Supporting Dyslexic Pupils in the Secondary Curriculum*** is a series of booklets for secondary school teachers throughout Scotland. They are intended to help them remove the barriers to learning that are often experienced by dyslexic pupils.

**The pack of 18 booklets:**

- Is an authoritative resource to help teachers meet the additional needs of dyslexic pupils as described in the Scottish Executive's ***Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice (2005)***
- Provides subject teachers with advice and suggests strategies to enable them to minimise barriers to learning that dyslexic pupils might experience in the secondary curriculum and provide appropriate support
- Offers guidance for Support for Learning staff on the identification and support of dyslexia in the secondary curriculum and on advising subject colleagues
- Addresses the continuing professional development needs arising from national, local and school initiatives
- Is packed with practical information and tips for teachers on how to give dyslexic pupils the best chance of academic success
- Is supplemented with a CD crammed with practical and helpful downloadable material

**Moira Thomson** recently retired as Principal Teacher of Support for Learning at Broughton High School, Edinburgh, after 30+ years. She was also Development Officer for City of Edinburgh Dept of Children & Families; in-house CPD provider for City of Edinburgh Dept of Children & Families; Associate Tutor for SNAP; Associate Assessor for HMIE. Moira is an independent adjudicator for the Additional Support for Learning dispute resolution; educational consultant, providing CPD for secondary teachers; secretary of the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Dyslexia; member of Scottish Qualifications Authority focus groups and a committee member of Dyslexia Scotland South East.

*"I truly hope that all teachers will embrace this publication. If they can put into practice the guidance offered it will make a fundamental difference to the way dyslexic children are taught in school today. Young people in Scotland deserve this chance."*

**Sir Jackie Stewart OBE, President of Dyslexia Scotland.**



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