Meet Mike

Specific Learning Differences with Literacy - Dyslexia

He is very “chatty”

He is an exceptional artist

He enjoys playing rugby

He is a bright young man

Associated differences

Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD) – differences with the development of motor skills

Dyscalculia – differences with the development of mathematical/ number skills

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder – differences with the development of concentration, restlessness and impulsivity

Facts

Dyslexia is a specific learning difference that mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. It is likely to be present at birth and to be life-long in its effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed and the automatic development of skills that may not match to an individual’s underlying ability. Its effects can be mitigated by implementing appropriate interventions, including the application of information technology and supportive teaching.

But he can’t always make sense of why he can’t get his thoughts down on paper

Although dyslexia often causes significant difficulties in the classroom – it does not hinder the development of intellectual talents. Many famous people have overcome their dyslexia using their intellectual talents including Jamie Oliver, Keira Knightly and Sir Stephen Redgrave to name a few!
What to look for

Children and young people with dyslexia may:

• have an uneven performance profile, with obvious good days and bad days; strengths in some areas and unexpected challenges in other areas
• have continued difficulty learning to read and write
• experience persistent and continued reversals of letters and numbers
• experience strange spelling, perhaps with letters missing out or in the wrong order
• have difficulty learning the alphabet and multiplication tables, and remembering sequences such as days of the week and months of the year
• take an above average time over written work
• have difficulty with processing oral instructions
• have difficulty in multi-tasking and making new skills automatic
• find it difficult to copy from the board
• find it difficult telling right from left
• find it difficult to organise and sequence work
• experience secondary emotional problems such as low frustration tolerance, decreased self-esteem and lack of motivation
• tire more easily than their peers
• have difficulties with friendship and social interaction
• be creative in art and construction materials

What you can do to help

Capitalise on the child or young person’s strength and minimise reliance on reading and writing by:

• using colour or imagery to highlight key points or important details
• presenting information using a mainly visual colourful approach
• allowing more time to complete an activity
• realising the amount of written work required so that the child can complete the task with their peer group
• Minimising time spent copying non-essentials
• Providing alternative ways of recording, such as mind mapping
• Develop ICT skills

Where to find help

The School ALNCo
ALN Advisory or School Improvement Service
Educational Psychology Service

Useful websites
The British Dyslexia Association
www.bda.org.uk
Dyslexia Action
www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk
Box of Ideas
www.boxofideas.org

Useful books
MacKay, N (2005) removing Dyslexia as a Barrier to Achievement, SEN Marketing, Wakefield
Falmer, London

Useful Suppliers or Specialist Resources
LDA Living and Learning, Cambridge
Tel: 01223 357744
Ann Arbor Publications, Northumberland
Tel: 01668 214460
Learning Materials Ltd, Wolverhampton
Tel: 01902 454026
SEN Marking, Wakefield
Tel: 01924 871697