Getting it Right for Every Child

Meeting Support Needs

Guidance for Inclusive Practice

Syndromes and Conditions

Handbook
for
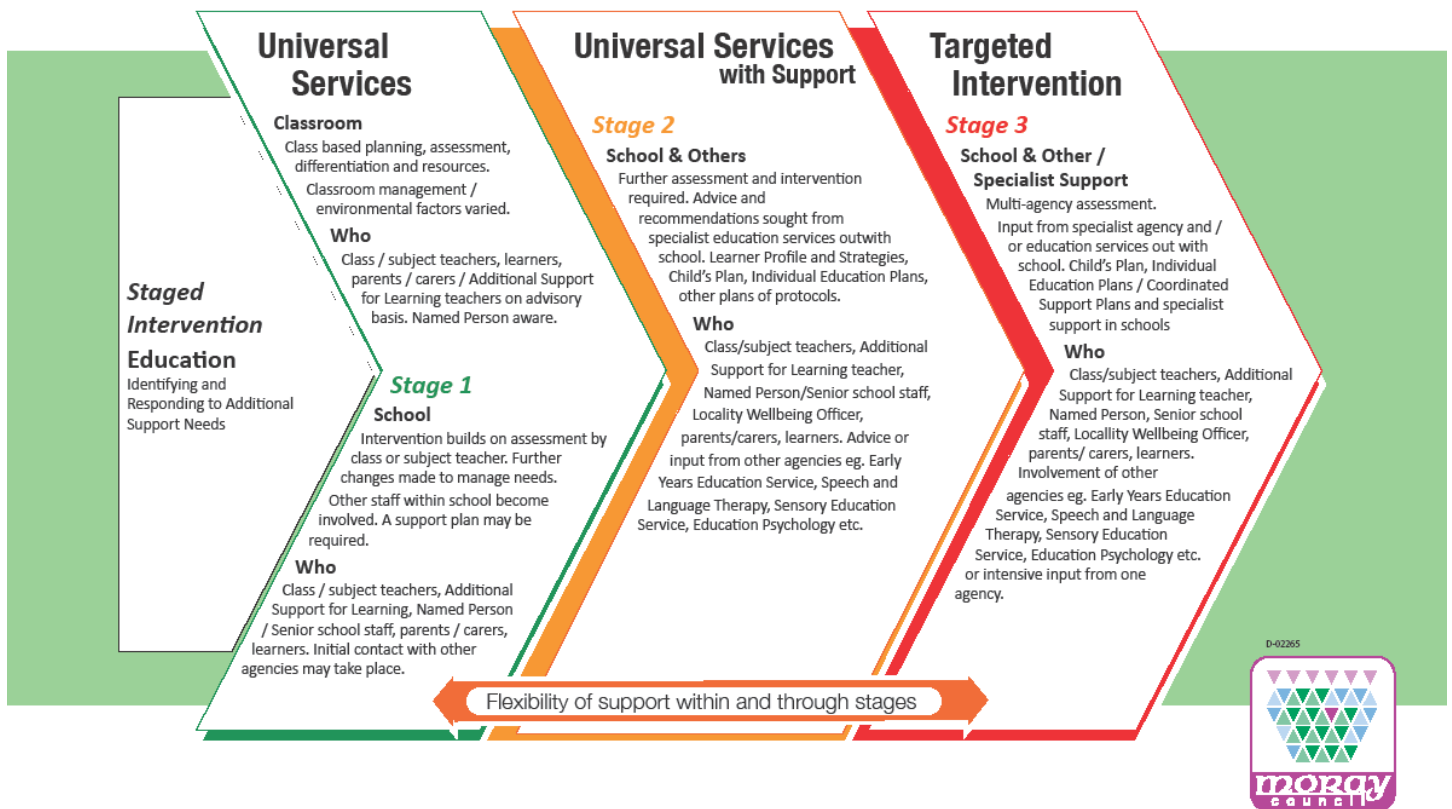# Literacy Difficulties
including Dyslexia

Introduction:

This handbook is a guide for Moray Educational Practitioners on where to go to find comprehensive guidance for assessing and supporting literacy difficulties and to know when it would be appropriate to identify a learner as dyslexic.

Contents

1. Supporting Literacy within Staged Intervention

Our school education system, and the policies and legislation which support it, is designed to be inclusive and one which is based on the needs a child or young person experiences. Literacy, numeracy and Health and Wellbeing are the responsibilities of every teacher. Personalising learning is a key focus of Curriculum for Excellence, ensuring learning, teaching and assessment is planned with the learner at the center and that support is targeted to individual needs. This approach is supported by 'Getting it Right for Every Child', a key Scottish Government policy for all professionals working to support children, young people and their families The assessment, support and monitoring of literacy difficulties should, for most children and young people, be a staged process. Children and young people with literacy, including dyslexia, will generally be accommodated at the first two stages of the staged process. If, however, difficulties are more complex, or there are complicating factors that involve services other than Education, then there may be a need to follow through to the second and perhaps third stage.

Universal Services

Classroom
Class based planning, assessment, differentiation and resources.
Classroom management / environmental factors varied.

Who
Class / subject teachers, learners, parents / carers / Additional Support for Learning teachers on advisory basis. Named Person aware.

Staged Intervention

Education
Identifying and Responding to Additional Support Needs

Stage 1
School
Intervention builds on assessment by class or subject teacher. Further changes made to manage needs.
Other staff within school become involved. A support plan may be required.

Who
Class / subject teachers, Additional Support for Learning, Named Person / Senior school staff, parents / carers, learners. Initial contact with other agencies may take place.

Universal Services with Support

Stage 2
School & Others
Further assessment and intervention required. Advice and recommendations sought from specialist education services outwith school. Learner Profile and Strategies, Child's Plan, Individual Education Plans, other plans of protocols.

Who
Class/subject teachers, Additional Support for Learning teacher, Named Person/Senior school staff, Locality Wellbeing Officer, parents/carers, learners. Advice or input from other agencies eg. Early Years Education Service, Speech and Language Therapy, Sensory Education Service, Education Psychology etc.

Targeted Intervention

Stage 3
School & Other / Specialist Support
Multi-agency assessment.
Input from specialist agency and / or education services out with school. Child's Plan, Individual Education Plans / Coordinated Support Plans and specialist support in schools

Who
Class/subject teachers, Additional Support for Learning teacher, Named Person, Senior school staff, Locality Wellbeing Officer, parents/ carers, learners. Involvement of other agencies eg. Early Years Education Service, Speech and Language Therapy, Sensory Education Service, Education Psychology etc. or intensive input from one agency.

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Flexibility of support within and through stages

2. Assessing and Supporting Literacy Difficulties: A Moray Framework

The Moray Framework- Assessing and Supporting Literacy Difficulties, with associated support materials was created by the Educational Psychology Service in 2013 with the most recent update in 2018. It is consistent with the Scottish National Dyslexia pathway and should be used in conjunction with the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit.

http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file92834.pdf

Assessing and supporting pupils with literacy difficulties

The building blocks of literacy, assessment and staged intervention are explained in the Moray Framework. The literacy section on the Educational Psychology website has a number of papers for use by professionals to guide them in the identification, intervention and classroom support for literacy difficulties.   There is also information on some formal assessment tools and what they can be used for.

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_115678.html

Specific Assessment materials available through the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit are the:-
- Pathway Overview for Identification and Support
- What to Look for Checklists
- Establishing Needs Form 1 & 2
- Pupil checklist
- Collaborative Assessment Collation Form
- Reading and Writing circles

http://addressingdyslexia.org/identification-formstemplates

These forms and templates are also available downloaded on the ASN section of the INTERCHANGE: interchange.moray.gov.uk/ASN

3. The National Pathway for the Identification of Literacy Difficulties and Dyslexia

There is a national pathway for the identification and assessment of literacy concerns and dyslexia – this is based on a cyclical model of recognition of concerns, implementing appropriate intervention and monitoring progress. If concerns persist it is appropriate to gather information and consider this in relation to the definition of dyslexia which may lead to identification of dyslexia for a young person. This can be done by school and when required can be supported by Educational Psychology.

http://addressingdyslexia.org/sites/default/files/resources/IdentificationPathwayforDyslexia.pdf

A copy is also available on the INTERCHANGE interchange.moray.gov.uk/ASN.

4. Defining Dyslexia

Definitions of dyslexia vary.

- Some solely emphasise the difficulty with acquiring basic reading and / or spelling skills
- Others highlight that dyslexia can be a specific difficulties (i.e. the level of difficulty experiences with reading or spelling does not reflect other achievements or abilities)
- Others highlight other features that can accompany literacy difficulties (e.g. memory difficulties, perceptual difficulties)

British Psychological Society Definition of Dyslexia

The British Psychological Society (1999) states that:

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.

Scottish Government Definition of Dyslexia

The Scottish Government described dyslexia 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 their performance in other areas.

For the detailed definition and description, refer to
http://addressingdyslexia.org/what-dyslexia

5. Literacy Difficulties and Identification of Dyslexia

As indicated in the 'Addressing and supporting Literacy Difficulties - a Moray Framework' and the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit, literacy assessment should, primarily, be undertaken to identify exactly where a child is at with their learning and what supports and intervention might be helpful. If schools can evidence, over time, that a child / young person has a persistent difficulty with reading or spelling and that this has not been remedied by timely and appropriate intervention, an identification of dyslexia can be made. School staff are very well placed to make this identification of dyslexia.

The 'Collaborative Assessment Collation' form in the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit or a similar school version should be used to evidence the processes of identification, interventions and assessments that have been used in the process of diagnosis. (For ease of use, a copy of this form and an example is available on the INTERCHANGE in the section on Syndromes and Conditions; Literacy at interchange.moray.gov.uk/ASN.

Due to the wide variations in the specific areas affected for an individual, there is no prescriptive number or type of test required in order to agree that an identification of dyslexia is appropriate.

Ordinarily, identifying dyslexia should be a secondary concern and should only take place after other assessments and interventions have been utilised. A school's link Educational Psychologist can offer advice and guidance should practitioners feel this is needed.

6. Discussing the dyslexia label with parents

Parents are often rightly anxious when their child has literacy difficulties. Some parents may hold common misconceptions. Therefore, it may be helpful to make parents aware of the following:

- The needs of those presenting with literacy difficulties can and should be met without requiring an identification of dyslexia
- Identification of dyslexia follows supportive strategies and intervention and is not the starting point for such support.
- The identification of dyslexia, or assessment indicating a strong risk of dyslexia, does not mean there is a "quick fix".
- Parents should be given clear information about what a school has already done within the staged intervention process, to assess and meet their child's literacy needs and what further support and interventions are planned.
- For further information, direct parents to the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit http://addressingdyslexia.org/and the literacy section on the Educational Psychology section of the Moray Council website: http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_115557.html

7. The Highland Literacy Approach

https://highlandliteracy.com/

The Highland Council have created a comprehensive literacy strategy with the aim:
'to ensure that all children and young people make the appropriate progress in Literacy supported by developmentally appropriate learning and teaching'

It is a highly recommended, very comprehensive resource with a wide range of materials and guidance offered, starting with the '"Where to Begin?" guide.

https://highlandliteracy.com/where-to-begin/el-where-to-begin_june2017/