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Dyslexia and Spld Friendly Policy

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1. Introduction

The Trust intends and expects that all decisions around the use of Trust resources will be underpinned at all times by its vision and values:

Our aim:

To create centres of educational excellence that inspire all pupils to turn their potential into performance

To achieve this our schools will:

Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that allows pupils to develop their talents and ambitions

Deliver the highest quality learning opportunities facilitated by excellent teachers

Inspire our pupils to become confident, motivated and respectful individuals ready to make a positive contribution to society

The Trust will support our schools by:

Maximising the resources and expertise available to individual schools

Providing a platform for the sharing of excellent practice

Challenging and developing staff to turn their potential into performance

1.1. Aims and Scope

At Red Oaks, we are proud to have held our 'Dyslexia Friendly Schools' status for 11 years. Inclusion is at the very forefront of everything we do. This Dyslexia Friendly policy covers the following points:

1. Red Oaks' 'Dyslexia and Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD). Friendly' philosophy
2. What is Dyslexia?
3. Visual Stress
4. Identification of Dyslexia
5. 'Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly' learning environments at Red Oaks
6. Quality First Teaching at Red Oaks
7. 'Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly' staff training at Red Oaks School
8. Targeted support for Dyslexia
9. Raising the self-esteem of learners with Dyslexia and / or SpLD
10. Pupil Voice
11. Partnership with parents and carers
12. IEPs (individual education plans)

Red Oaks' whole school ethos is 'Aspire, Achieve, Grow'. We believe that every child in our care is unique, each with their own individual learning strengths and areas of difficulty. We strive to create a learning environment that values and meets the needs of our pupils with a forward-thinking, inclusive approach.

We believe that a 'Dyslexia Friendly' environment can benefit each and every one of our learners, holistically supporting their acquisition of knowledge and skills.

While we recognise Dyslexia as a learning 'difference' that, at times, can make learning more difficult for some of our pupils, we do not define it as a 'disability'. We strive to recognise and harness the strengths of those with Dyslexic tendencies.

At Red Oaks, different ways and styles of learning are openly discussed and celebrated. We seek to empower our children who have learning differences, fulfilling them with the confidence to aspire, achieve and grow throughout their learning journey.

In line with our deeply embedded attitude towards inclusion, this policy is not limited to simply being 'Dyslexia Friendly': Dyslexia is one of many learning differences that falls under the wide term of 'SpLD' – 'Specific Learning Difficulty'. As supported by recent research, many of these difficulties are cooccurring; if a child displays Dyslexic tendencies, they may well exhibit traits of other learning difficulties.

The most common of these are:

- Dyslexia (explained in greater detail below)
- Dyspraxia – difficulties with physical coordination
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Dyscalculia – impaired comprehension of Mathematics and Number
- Dysgraphia – difficulty with writing, typing and spelling

In order to be fully 'Dyslexia Friendly', at Red Oaks we believe that labelling a child as being simply 'Dyslexic' is unhelpful; we strive to look at SpLD in broader terms, thus better meeting the learning needs of all our pupils.

1.2. Other linked Policies

SEND policy

Teaching and learning

2. Policy Statement

What is Dyslexia?

At Red Oaks we use the definition of dyslexia from The Rose Report (2009):

‘Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling’.

- Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.
- Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities.
- It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.
- Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor coordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia.

A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to ‘Quality First Teaching’. Some children with Dyslexia may not only experience problems with reading and spelling, but they may also experience other difficulties with:

- Short term memory
- Long term memory
- Processing and retrieving words and information
- Phonological awareness
- Sequencing or rote learning
- Auditory memory
- Spatial awareness
- Direction – left and right
- Organisation
- Fine Motor Skills

Visual stress is a condition that is frequently linked to Dyslexia. It may cause the following:

- Headaches and visual problems from exposure to patterns in text
- Squinting
- Slow pace of reading
- Lack of stamina in reading
- Inaccurate age-expected reading

At Red Oaks, our Dyslexia and SpLD friendly approach also seeks to reduce visual stress experienced by our learners.

Identification of Dyslexia

At Red Oaks, if we believe a child is displaying traits of Dyslexia or visual stress, we follow the steps outlined below:

- 1) Support staff to raise any concerns about pupils to class teacher. Teachers to refer to Appendices 1 and 2 for checklists to identify areas of concern. If, following enhanced provision and intervention, there are still concerns then the Teacher speaks to SENCo as in point 3.
- 2) If a parent raises concerns about their child regarding Dyslexia, class teachers should make their own observations against the checklists in Appendix 2 and 3 and following this continue to point 3.
- 3) Teacher to speak to school's SENCO and line manager and review their findings in the checklists and the support they have already put in place to address their concerns.
- 4) Targeted support will continue to be put in place for these children. Children may be given a termly IEP to support this and parents will be advised if they are at the 'monitoring' or 'SEN Support' stage of the school's graduated approach (See the SEND Policy for further details about this)
- 5) School SENCO to screen for specific difficulties (including visual stress) and analyse learning profile.
- 6) If there are still concerns following significant additional support, the SENCO may refer child to an external professional, such as an Educational Psychologist, for an individual assessment providing recommendations and support.

'Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly' Learning Environments at Red Oaks:

We believe that 'Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly' learning environments can benefit all of our pupils at Red Oaks. Each classroom is set in the following way:

- Classrooms are well-lit and ventilated to a comfortable temperature for learners.
- Visual stress is reduced through the use of coloured white-board backgrounds and buff / coloured paper for those children who may benefit from it.
- Handouts are enlarged for those who need it, laid out simply and clearly. Picture cues should also be used, where possible, to reduce printed text.
- A 'Dyslexia Friendly' font should be used with those children who may benefit from this:
 - good letter and line spacing
 - clear ascenders and descenders
 - print that does not 'lead in or out' (see Appendix 4 for 'Creating Dyslexia Friendly Content guide'). Please note, however, that all children should be exposed to a range of typefaces, as they would see outside of the classroom.

- Learners are not expected to copy from the board.
- Seating arrangements are well planned: children with Dyslexic traits are sat near the front of the class and / or close to a member of support staff where this is possible.
- Extra time is permitted for identified learners, as well as scribe and reader support – this to be agreed and recorded on Red Oaks SEND register with SENCO.
- Staff give simple and clear instructions and expectations, using visual prompts to support these where necessary. These may include:
 - use of a visual timetable
 - personalised task list
 - 'Now, Next and Then' resource
 - Help Yourself stations are located in each classroom, providing easily accessed resources for English and Maths. These include coloured overlays, reading rulers and reading windows. See Appendix 5 for Red Oaks 'Help Yourself' comprehensive classroom checklists.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust

The Trust is responsible for ensuring that Red Oaks fulfils its statutory duties in relation to pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including those with Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD). The Trust will:

- Ensure that appropriate policies are in place and regularly reviewed
- Provide strategic oversight and challenge to ensure inclusive practice
- Support schools to access expertise, training, and resources to meet the needs of all learners

Governing Body / Local Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and the Equality Act (2010)
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly provision
- Support and challenge school leaders to ensure that inclusion remains a priority
- Nominate a Governor with responsibility for SEND

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for:

- The day-to-day leadership and management of inclusion and SEND provision at Red Oaks

Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly Policy

- Ensuring that this policy is implemented consistently across the school
- Ensuring staff have access to appropriate training to support Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly practice
- Working with the SENCo to allocate resources effectively and sustainably
- Promoting a whole-school ethos of inclusion aligned with the school values

Aspire, Achieve, Grow

Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

The SENCo is responsible for:

- Leading and coordinating provision for pupils with Dyslexia and other SpLD
- Maintaining and overseeing the SEND register
- Supporting staff in the identification of pupils with potential Dyslexia or SpLD, including the use of screening tools
- Advising on and monitoring Quality First Teaching and targeted interventions
- Coordinating external professional involvement where appropriate (e.g. Educational Psychologists)
- Supporting the writing, implementation, and review of Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Liaising with parents and carers regarding pupils' needs, provision, and progress
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are in place in line with the Equality Act (2010)

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Providing high-quality, inclusive Quality First Teaching for all pupils
- Identifying pupils who may display traits of Dyslexia or SpLD and raising concerns promptly
- Implementing Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly classroom strategies as outlined in this policy
- Planning and delivering appropriately differentiated lessons
- Contributing to the creation, implementation, and review of IEPs
- Monitoring pupil progress and responding flexibly to individual needs
- Communicating effectively with parents and carers regarding pupil progress and support

Teaching Assistants and Support Staff

Teaching Assistants and support staff will:

- Support the delivery of Quality First Teaching and targeted interventions
- Work under the guidance of the class teacher and SENCo
- Provide feedback on pupil engagement, progress, and well-being

- Support pupils in developing independence and self-confidence
- Contribute to a positive, inclusive learning environment

Pupils

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Develop an understanding of their own learning strengths and needs
- Use available resources and strategies to support their learning
- Share their views through pupil voice opportunities
- Take increasing responsibility for their learning as appropriate

Quality First Teaching at Red Oaks

Quality First Teaching is high quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils in a class. QFT includes differentiated learning, strategies to support SEN pupils' learning in class, on-going formative assessment and many others. QFT is about personalising learning for pupils, encouraging greater inclusion of pupils with SEN needs, and working to narrow the attainment gap. Linked with 'Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly' practice, at Red Oaks we believe that Quality First Teaching enables inclusion for all our pupils and recognises different learning strengths and needs. While a comprehensive document of the QFT strategies we use at Red Oaks is found in Appendices 3, 'Cognition and Learning Provision Checklist', here are some of its key points for effective QFT provision for Writing, Recording and Spelling:

- Teaching is multi-sensory and is mindful of different learning styles.
- Talk-based learning is promoted, providing opportunities for pupils to discuss, plan and rehearse their ideas
- Pre-teaching of upcoming ideas and concepts.
- Concepts and ideas are continually revisited, allowing for overlearning to take place.
- Marking is positive and encourages pupils to self-reflect on their progress.
- Writing is taught in partnership with spelling and reading.
- Fine motor and handwriting skills are supported and developed.
- Classrooms are well-resourced and resources are clearly labelled.
- Tasks and spellings are differentiated appropriately.
- A structured Phonics / Spelling program is in place.

Pupils have the opportunity to record their ideas in a wide variety of ways.

For instance, they are able to make use of the following:

- mini whiteboards
- post-it notes / scrap paper
- big paper

- writing frames (including Widgit grids)
- scribe
- technology such as Clicker, dictation software or video software

'Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly' staff training at Red Oaks

At Red Oaks, teachers and support staff receive regular training on 'Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly' practice. Training may be delivered by external speaker, from the Director for Inclusion/SENCO or by the designated 'Dyslexia Friendly' lead teacher, or a subject leader for English, Phonics or Maths.

Targeted support for Dyslexia

After identifying children who may benefit from this, teachers will discuss the needs of these pupils with SENCO, the relevant subject lead and their Phase Leader as appropriate.

Following this, the pupil will have targeted support.

Raising the self-esteem of learners with Dyslexia and /or SpLD

In line with our school philosophy 'Aspire, Achieve, Grow', we believe that it is important to share and celebrate different learning styles. Our pupils are taught that we all learn differently and each of us has unique learning strengths and difficulties.

Discussion and openness towards this inclusive attitude is promoted by the staff. The strengths of Dyslexic people and their achievements are championed. Annually, Red Oaks participates in World Dyslexia Day through a whole-school assembly led by the designated lead teacher for 'Dyslexia Friendly' practice. Awareness of the day is raised on the school's website and social media (Facebook and Class Dojo).

As well as this, Red Oaks holds 'No Pens' days - in which teachers plan tasks that promote different ways of recording. Teachers share the reasons why we hold these days and use these as an opportunity to discuss different learning styles.

There are pre-made class assembly PowerPoints to promote regular discussion on the following topics:

- learning styles
- left and right brain
- strengths and weaknesses
- helping yourself learn
- See Dyslexia differently

Pupil Voice

At Red Oaks we undertake pupil voice to discuss learning matters, such as the following:

- Which resources help us learn best?
- What would you like to do more of in lessons?
- Is there anything else that your teachers could do to help you?
- Are the Help Yourself areas being used in your classrooms?
- Do your Help Yourself areas contain everything on the checklist?
- What are we great at?
- What do we need some extra help with?

Following these discussions, the designated teacher will give feedback to staff, as appropriate.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Effective partnership between home and school is important for all of our learners.

At Red Oaks, we strive to maintain clear communication with parents and carers at all times. If we have concerns about a child's learning, we feel it is important to discuss these with parents / carers at an early stage. Likewise, we encourage parents / carers to raise worries about their children with our staff.

Teachers may initially discuss concerns during a formal biannual parents' evening or may ask parent / carers to visit the school during an additional visit. During this meeting, the teacher will outline their concerns –linked to age-appropriate attainment and progress– and show the parent / carer what interventions they will be putting into place

Checklists for identifying Dyslexia will also be shared with parents at this point. Teachers will discuss what the parent / carer can do with the child to support their learning. This will usually include sending targeted resources home that can be completed without the support of an educational professional.

At this point, it may also be appropriate to send differentiated spellings and / or homework home. If the pupil still experiences learning difficulties, despite taking part in targeted support and additional parental support, the SENCO will meet with parents to communicate new strategies and next steps (see section 4, Identification of Dyslexia). In addition to these meetings, Red Oaks offers a range of subject specific parental workshops throughout the year.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

As outlined in Section 4, Identifying Dyslexia, if –following discussion with the parents, SENCO and Class Teacher the child is placed on the SEND register and an IEP is written (Individual Education Plan). IEPs are shared with parents three times a year using an online programme called Provision Map.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this Dyslexia and SpLD Friendly Policy is monitored regularly to ensure that provision at Red Oaks meets the needs of all learners.

Monitoring includes:

Review of pupil progress and attainment

Termly review of Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Monitoring of Quality First Teaching through learning walks, observations, and work scrutiny

Evaluation of targeted interventions

Pupil voice and parent/carer feedback

The SENCo, in collaboration with senior leaders, evaluates the impact of provision and makes adjustments where necessary to ensure pupils' needs are met effectively.

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner in response to changes in statutory guidance, school practice, or pupil need. The review is led by the SENCo and Headteacher and reported to Governors.