

Creating a Dyslexia Friendly Classroom

Support memory and processing:

- ✓ Classroom routines
- ✓ Instructions chunked
- ✓ Sneaky Peaks
- ✓ Tasks chunked
- ✓ Homework

How to present information:

- ✓ Lesson structure
- ✓ VAK
- ✓ Use of colour
- ✓ Worksheets
- ✓ Presentation of text

Use of visual aids:

- ✓ Timetables
- ✓ Wall displays
- ✓ Table-top prompts
- ✓ Vocabulary
- ✓ Spelling display

Environment

- ✓ Room well lit & ventilated
- ✓ Pupil seated facing board
- ✓ Water available
- ✓ Quiet space
- ✓ Classroom buddy

DYSLEXIA FRIENDLY CLASSROOMS:

Making adjustments to the classroom environment

Classroom ethos:

- ✓ Positive ethos
- ✓ Growth Mindset
- ✓ Build confidence
- ✓ Metacognition
- ✓ Independence
- ✓ Speaking and listening

Support organisation:

- ✓ Teach organisation
- ✓ Colour coding
- ✓ Assistive Technology
- ✓ Study skills
- ✓ Seating

Support pupils recording:

- ✓ Planning frames
- ✓ Writing Frames
- ✓ Alternative ways to record
- ✓ IT
- ✓ Extra time

How to present information in a dyslexia friendly way	The 'Big Picture'	At the beginning of the lesson give the 'Big Picture' (overview) – supported visually: *What are we doing, why, where does it fit + key points/ vocabulary highlighted/ recorded *Links to previous learning made explicit. *Logical sequence followed in lessons *Review breaks built into lessons (supports: memory, processing, focus, consolidation) At the end of the lesson recap: *objectives *key learning points
	Multi-sensory approach	Use a good mix of Visual Auditory Kinaesthetic modes in lessons, for example: *some information presented using mindmap/ flow charts *use of audio/ video *use of IT *play a game *small group discussion/ talk partners *role play *make a model *concrete materials used in lessons N.B. Reduce teacher talk, give small amounts of information (key info) at a time
	Copying	Do not expect pupils to copy from the board Instead provide teacher notes/ IWB print-out with key learning points to annotate
	Colour	*Use coloured paper for hand-outs/ pupil recording (cream, pastel colours) *Change background colour of IWB/ smart board/ computer screen and font colour *Use colour to: break up text, signal instructions/ information/ key points/ key vocabulary, show syllables/ vowels/ phonemes/ highlight target spelling patterns *Coloured overlays available for reading
	Support for reading	Talk/ read through information with pupil. Check understanding. Highlight key points Use IT (text to speech/ talking text applications) OR 'Reading Buddies' Match reading resources to an individual's reading ability and is age appropriate
	Uncluttered worksheets	Create worksheets with key information only and small blocks of text broken up by: *colour * numbered bullet points *pictures *text boxes *diagrams/ flow charts/ mindmaps Check readability (e.g. 'SMOG' test)
	Presentation of text N.B. work with pupil to establish individual preferences	➤ Left justify with 'ragged' right edge ➤ Avoid: BLOCK CAPITALS, <i>italics</i> , <u>underlining</u> . INSTEAD: use bold for emphasis ➤ 1.5 line spacing, well-spaced text, concise, bullet points/numbering used, wide margins ➤ Fonts: clear, rounded fonts with a space between letters such as: Century Gothic, Comic Sans, Arial, Verdana, Tahoma OR fonts similar to handwriting. Trial 'open dyslexic' font ➤ Font size: 12-14 >Numbered bullet points (easier to find place)

Classroom Visual Aids	Visual Timetable/s	<p>Visual timetables support focus, memory and independence and can reduce anxiety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Class and/ or individual timetables (may need to teach, model and encourage use) *Include: pictures for younger pupils and colour-coding for students *Job Cards/ Now & Next grids/ Task Planners can be used to sequence tasks/ lessons
	Wall displays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Relevant to current literacy/ topic/ maths focus: uncluttered, include topic specific vocabulary, referred to in lessons *Alphabet arc, handwriting cues, number line *Maths display: highlights topic vocabulary, makes concept/ process clear through visual/ concrete models *Interactive: pupils add to/ borrow from
	Table top prompts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Alphabet and/ or number strip (can include arrows to show direction of movement) *Key word lists (specific to pupil, topic or task) *Class/ individual spelling prompts *Phoneme map in KS1 *Number lines *Number bond strip *Multiplication square *'Memory joggers', e.g. for maths, see WESFORD, File 2 page 193
	Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Topic/ subject specific: lists, maps or cue cards – wall display and table-top copies *To include word meanings for KS3/4 and pictures for KS1/2
	Spelling display	<p>Examples include: *How to tackle spelling a word you don't know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Topic words/ current target words *Focus of word work, e.g. current phonemes being studied, spelling variations, syllable types, spelling rules *Strategies for practising and learning spellings
	Self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Mistakes are good'/ growth mind set posters *Display of compliments *Whole class reward display

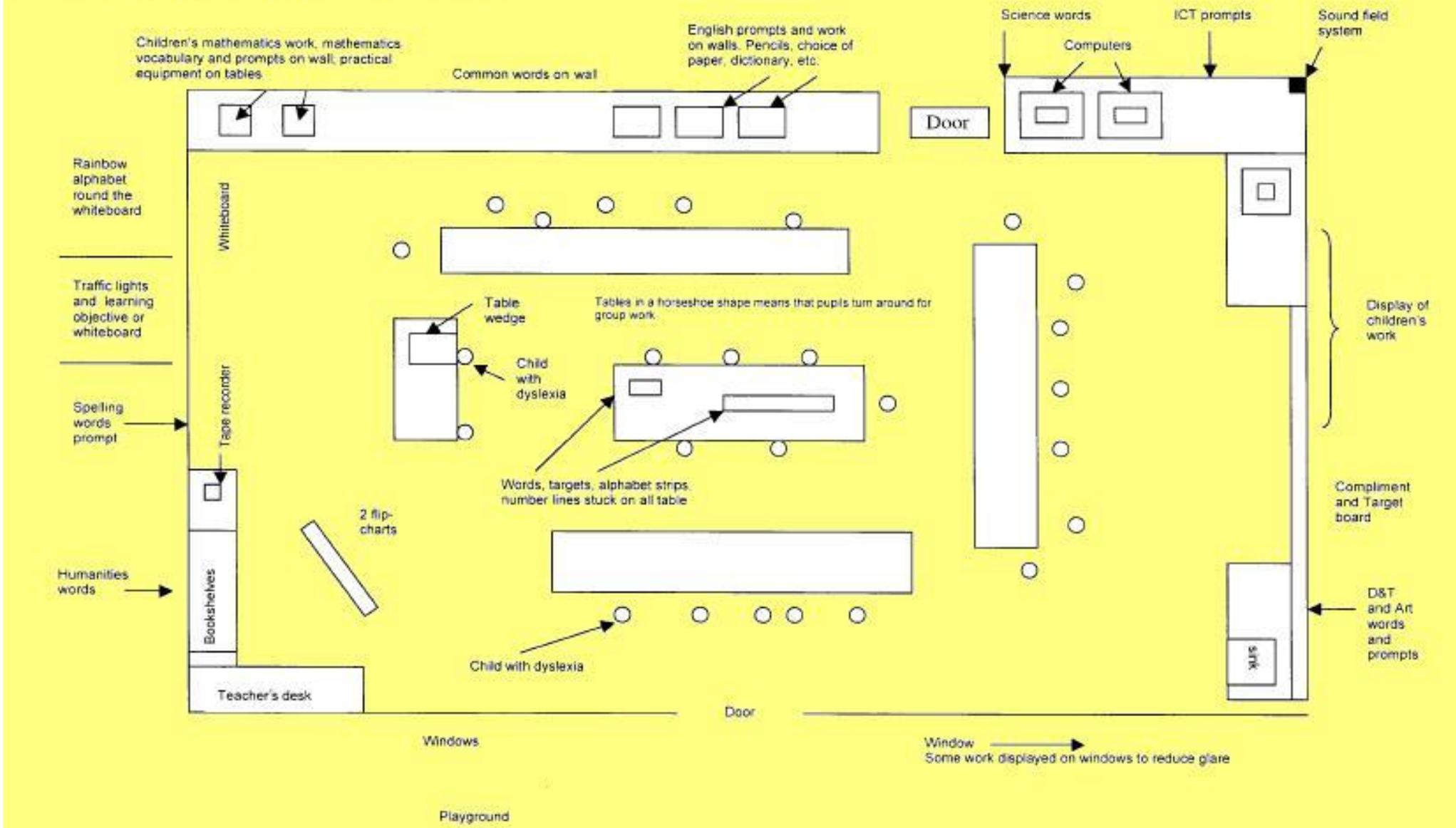
Organisation	Development of organisational skills	<p>Teach/ model/ encourage/ remind use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *diaries *timetables (with analogue clocks) *homework planners *checklists *work plans <p>Teach/ model/ encourage/ remind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *how to plan/ tackle tasks systematically - breaking the task down, organising and sequencing it - using planning strategies such as concept maps, flowcharts, timelines *how to work backwards from a deadline to plan work or revision
	Clear labelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Equipment *Subjects *Rooms <p>(N.B. colour coding may provide further support)</p>
	Colour coded storage system	<p>Storage clearly labelled</p> <p>Colours used to signal subject, for example: yellow for literacy, blue for maths</p> <p>N.B. the same colours can be used to colour code timetables, diaries, labels</p>
	'Grab bags' / resource bags	<p>For literacy and maths - provide bags of ready to use resources in a clear zippy wallet for support staff/ individual pupils</p> <p>N.B. Have spare resources in class in case pupil/ student forgets theirs</p>
	Assistive Technology, see: *BDA Technology page *Iansyst.co.uk *Iamdyslexic.com *Dyslexic.com	<p>For learning: mind/ concept mapping software, capturing handwriting using tablets, assistive tools for adding notes, digital cameras, reading pens, talking books</p> <p>Time management, e.g. setting reminders - electronic calendars/ watches/ voice recorders/ phones/ Siri</p> <p>Note-taking: using IT, adding notes using assistive technology, voice recorders</p>
	Teach study skills	<p>For example teach/ model/ encourage/ remind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *how to access the meaning of a text before reading in depth (examine: title, headings, pictures, diagrams, graphs, captions) *highlight key points *to record notes on one side of page only (so notes can be added) *how to summarise: main point/ supporting points/ summary *how to work to given headings/ sub-headings *to use one colour for each topic *to use KWL/ QUAD grids to structure research
	Seating	<p>In class seat pupil at the front of the class, near the teacher and with motivated pupils</p>

Support pupils recording in class	Planning frames for writing tasks	<p>'Warm up the task' - stimulates ideas, vocabulary, text structure</p> <p>*At its simplest: draw/ look at a picture and discuss, then label with vocabulary/ phrases identified during discussions (ideas/ memory/ spelling/ independence prompt)</p> <p>*Other examples include: mind mapping, post-it note for each idea, question star, timeline, story board, flow diagram, BME grid, cartoons, spider diagram, list, writing web</p> <p>*Identify/ number key points</p>														
	Writing frames/ templates	<p>Scaffold extended writing tasks across the curriculum</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <p>*providing a prompt sheet (pictures/ sentences/ paragraphs to sequence, questions to answer, key words to write to, sentence/ paragraph openers, paragraph planning frame)</p> <p>*notes from IWB to annotate/ expand *template for writing up science experiment</p> <p>*cloze passage *cue cards *scaffolding format for planning a sequence of events</p>														
	Alternative ways to record learning	<p>Pupil can show learning without the burden of writing – across the curriculum</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>*Drawing a picture and labelling it</td> <td>*Drawing a diagram</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*Matching labels to a picture or diagram</td> <td>*Mind map</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*Sorting statements/ pictures into categories</td> <td>*Scribe,</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*Voice recording/ oral presentation</td> <td>*Poster</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*Video/ annotated still photographs</td> <td>*PowerPoint</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*Completing a cloze passage</td> <td>*Using IT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*Model making</td> <td>*Drama</td> </tr> </table>	*Drawing a picture and labelling it	*Drawing a diagram	*Matching labels to a picture or diagram	*Mind map	*Sorting statements/ pictures into categories	*Scribe,	*Voice recording/ oral presentation	*Poster	*Video/ annotated still photographs	*PowerPoint	*Completing a cloze passage	*Using IT	*Model making	*Drama
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Assistive Technology for recording learning	<p>*Word processing: teach familiarity with keyboard/ touch typing, pupil to trial and evaluate: fonts including 'Open Dyslexic/ Dyslexie' font / font sizes, letter/word/ line spacing, background screen colours</p> <p>*Explore 'Speech to text' applications: e.g. Dragon naturally speaking</p> <p>*Consider: voice recorders, digital cameras, mobile phones, spell checkers etc.</p>															
General Points to consider	<p>Allow enough time - pupils with dyslexia may need extra time to complete tasks</p> <p>Be aware of fatigue caused by the amount of effort required</p> <p>Address any motor/ handwriting issues</p>															

Supportive Classroom ethos	Create a positive ethos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use positive language *Get to know your pupils (likes, dislikes, interests) *Positive entrapment - praise pupil for what has been done or learnt – be specific *Provide opportunities to work with different groupings - research has identified that from the age of 8-9 years pupils may learn more from their peers than their teachers *Create a 'safe space': it is ok to ask for help/ make mistakes (we learn from mistakes) *Encourage learning resilience – coping with challenges, accepting learning can be hard
	Build pupils' confidence and self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Notice and praise when pupil gets things right. Be specific (however small the achievement) *Praise for effort and attitude *Set achievable goals with right level of support *Recognise and promote learning strengths – help pupils understand their own learning profile and take a positive view of themselves and their abilities *Encourage 'ownership' of learning - from Year 5 on pupils involved in setting own targets *Use pupils interests when planning (working from the known) *Mark work alongside/ during lessons where possible. Use one colour for LO and another for spelling (2-3 errors –taught spellings- used as teaching points). Praise 2 correct spellings *Provide opportunities for overlearning, consolidation, getting enough practise
	Promote metacognition and independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Active learning, taking responsibility for one's own learning – 'adapting to' rather than 'suffering from' *Reflection and self-awareness encouraged/ modelled: How do I best learn? Remember? How can I make things 'stick'? What methods work for me? What do I find difficult? What can I do to manage/ overcome this? What have I already learnt that might help? What tools help me with my learning? What have I learnt today? What was most challenging? What will I do next time? How can I plan, monitor and evaluate my work as I progress through this task?

	<p>Plenty of opportunities for classroom talk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Discussion with: buddies (e.g. recording ideas, talking things through before answering a question), in different groupings *Pre-teach subject specific/ topic vocabulary. Plan opportunities for pupil to use in class *Allow time to formulate response and/ or hear a response modelled before answering *Model and encourage 'think alouds' in lessons
	<p>Multi-sensory teaching/ learning</p>	<p>Use a good mix of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic modes during lessons (input and activity) to stimulate memory/ promote 'stickability':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *explain and present information many times in various ways (e.g. mind maps, pictures, flow charts, diagrams, audio, video, songs, raps) *use concrete materials in lessons, e.g. maths apparatus, wooden or magnetic letters, 'roll 'n write letters/ numbers, rainbow alphabet, sand/rice , Playdoh, *use visual prompts regularly, e.g. letter/word/number cards and fans, HFW lists, topic vocabulary maps, multiplication squares, number bonds strips, visual prompts for complex maths processes *plan opportunities for: group discussions, partner working, drama and role play, playing a game, using software, using song, rhyme and raps, oral presentations, use of IT

Handout 1.7 Jenny's classroom plan



From: 'Learning and teaching for dyslexic children', DfES, 2005