

Dyscalculia is recognised as "A condition that affects the ability to acquire arithmetical skills. Dyscalculic learners may have difficulty understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers and have problems learning number facts and procedures. Even if they produce a correct answer or use a correct method, they may do so mechanically and without confidence." DfES 2001

Research in this area is ongoing and the definition is not fixed.

Dyspraxia is "A form of developmental coordination disorder. It is a common disorder affecting fine and / or gross motor coordination in children and adults. It may also affect speech. It occurs across a range of intellectual abilities. Individuals vary in how their difficulties present; these may change over time depending on environmental demands and life experiences." The Dyspraxia Foundation 2018

Dyspraxia can be diagnosed by a paediatrician in consultation with other medical services.

Dysgraphia is a term sometimes used when a student presents with significant handwriting and spelling difficulties. Recognition and diagnosis are contentious because there is not a recognised and agreed list of core symptoms / indicators and it is not listed as a specific learning difficulty in the SEND Code of Practice 2014

Laurance Haines SpLD Outreach Service

*Empowering schools to remove barriers to learning
for pupils with specific learning difficulties*

www.lhaines.herts.sch.uk



The SpLD Outreach Specialist Teacher Service based at Laurance Haines School

A 'high needs' funded service to schools in Hertfordshire

We are a small team of experienced teachers who have postgraduate qualifications in, and experience of, assessing and working with learners with specific learning difficulties (SpLD).

Specific learning difficulties affect one or more specific aspects of learning. They encompass a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

SpLD Outreach Specialist Teachers **recognise** rather than diagnose specific learning difficulties. We are a **teaching focused service**, so, in line with the Code of Practice for SEND 2014, we are focused on the 'assess - plan - do - review' cycle to ensure that provision is closely matched to need.

We support schools by providing advice on suitable resources, strategies and interventions, in line with the latest research and developments, to enable them to meet the needs of pupils with a range of specific learning difficulties.

Schools can access our specialist training for teachers, SENCOs and teaching assistants to develop knowledge, understanding and practical strategies to meet the needs of learners with a range of specific learning difficulties.

As a 'high needs' funded service, we provide additional support to pupils with the most significant SpLD difficulties, where the school has already identified difficulties and put in place a carefully tailored programme of support and reasonable adjustments, but progress remains very slow.

Following a service request from a school, in consultation with parents, support from the team usually lasts between a term and a year. Schools can request support more than once for a named child if difficulties change. Schools will usually have access to the service for support for a longer time to meet the needs of pupils with an EHC which identifies SpLD as a main presenting need.

Additional support can include:

- Specialist assessments to identify more precisely the underlying barriers to progress
- Very specific advice and targets to meet the needs of the learner in school
- Help in adjusting or setting up extra support to accelerate progress and improve access to the curriculum
- Observation of some teaching to enable us to give tailored advice to ensure it is meeting the needs of the learner, or we might teach a few exemplar sessions to train a member of staff in how to use new techniques or resources.

The school remains responsible for teaching the student, monitoring progress and keeping parents informed about progress, targets and reviews.

What are specific learning difficulties?

Dyslexia is the most common type of learning difficulty that pupils are likely to experience, with about 10% of the population having some form of dyslexia.

"Dyslexia is present when fluent and accurate word identification (reading) and/or spelling do not develop or do so 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." British Psychological Society 2002

Short term memory, mathematics, personal organisation and speaking may also be affected.

Dyslexia presents as a continuum of need ranging from mild to severe and individuals have different profiles of need.

Recognition of dyslexic difficulties does not automatically mean that learners will have access arrangements for exams. These are specific and tightly regulated by the DfE and exam boards. SENCos will coordinate these arrangements at schools.

Recognition of dyslexic difficulties at school also does not automatically mean a student will qualify for Disabled Students Allowances. This is assessed separately post 16, and tight criteria apply to the nature and extent of difficulties that qualify.