



**Bolingbroke**  
Academy

## **DYSLEXIA POLICY**

Date of last review:	September 2017	Review period:	1 year
Date of next review:	September 2018	Owner:	Altina Smith and Lucy Widdowson
Type of policy:	Teaching and Learning	LGB or Board approval:	

## 1. Aims

The Dyslexia Policy is based on the principle of providing all Bolingbroke Academy pupils with the opportunities needed to fulfil their potential. We believe early identification, regular assessment and appropriate and carefully monitored provision for any child who may have a special educational need including dyslexia is important. We recognise that dyslexia affects as many as 10% of the UK population, three students in every classroom and is a learning difficulty that can make reading, writing and spelling extremely challenging and frustrating for pupils severely affected. We adhere to the SEN Code of Practice, adapting a graduated approach. The academy is guided by the SEN Code of Practice and the law within, together with the Teacher National Standards.

## 2. Definitions

*Bolingbroke Academy adheres to the working definition of dyslexia adopted within 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 co-ordination, 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 well-founded intervention.*

We understand that dyslexia falls within the umbrella term of 'specific learning difficulties', which also encompasses other learning needs such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), speech and language difficulties, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and dyscalculia. A pupil with dyslexia will have clear strengths, passions and interests which they will be encouraged to excel at Bolingbroke Academy, we will also support them in overcoming difficulties as they present.

## 3. Identification and screening procedures

All pupils at Bolingbroke Academy have reading, spelling and writing skills assessed on entry to the school. This will highlight the pupils with literacy needs that the school needs to support and monitor. Within the first term of Year 7, some of these pupils presenting difficulties with reading and/or spelling will also be screened for signs of dyslexia using the G L Assessment Dyslexia Screening programme.

The screening process will feed into discussions between the SEN team and staff as to whether the issues presenting relate to learning gaps or learning needs. In cases where children present severe and persistence difficulties, the pupil will be placed on the school's special educational needs (SEN) register and be given a pupil support plan that captures the targets and support they will receive.

Some pupils may however present concerns at different points in their school career or in certain subjects. The partnership teaching model enables staff to discuss specific pupils and difficulties arising in lessons. Teachers are then required to plan for consolidation and reinforcement of key teaching points. In cases where additional and different support may be required, teachers will liaise directly with the SEND team who will assess, plan, organise and review additional provision with staff.

## 4. Whole school approach to reading

At Bolingbroke, reading is seen as the gateway to learning and encompasses two critical skills, decoding and comprehension. Decoding is dependent upon speech-sound information and in particular, understanding that a spoken word is made up of individual sounds. Comprehension depends upon broader language skills such as active listening, vocabulary, grammar, making inferences and previous knowledge. Good readers display good decoding skills and sound comprehension of their reading material. Variations in decoding and comprehension skill result in different reading profiles.

The dyslexic pupil falters with decoding and has difficulties identifying and manipulating the sounds of language. They may also have difficulty in developing an automatic response to recognising words. The level of understanding that the dyslexic pupil brings to reading may vary from good to weak comprehension levels depending on individual profile of learning skills.

All students are allocated a reading group at the start of the school year and experience 25 minutes reading every day as a group with a trained adult. The academy's Research and Development leader plays a key role in monitoring the progress of the groups, organising the match and range of reading materials covered and devising the reading activities to support pupil's engagement and enjoyment of the reading sessions.

Bolingbroke has invested time, resources and much energy into establishing a stimulating library facility. There is a distinct area of high interest, lower reading level books, provided by the Barrington Stokes publisher of recognised 'dyslexia friendly' materials. The library is used before lessons start in the morning, at break times and lunch times and also runs Independent study during enrichment time every day. The library currently has 16 laptops, access to audio books through listening books along with high interest fiction and non-fiction titles.

## 5. Whole school approach to spelling

At Bolingbroke, supporting spelling is seen as a whole school issue with all teachers responsible for discussing and explaining how tricky words work in their subject areas and providing constructive and supportive advice on spelling curriculum vocabulary. All teachers will have available banks of high frequency words for pupils to access either on displays or for reference inside exercise books. Staff will promote use of the school spelling grid in learning tricky words. Helpful mnemonics will be displayed to support common difficulties e.g. the sentence *Rhythm Helps Your Two Hips Move helps the recall of tricky word like RHYTHM*

More intensive spelling support is provided in Year 7 with a focus on learning different spelling strategies and identifying the strategies that work best for specific pupils with ongoing difficulties. This work is led by the LSA responsible for dyslexia and will focus on common words being misspelt in pupil's writing.

Pupils with ongoing spelling difficulties are also introduced to and encouraged to use electronic spell checkers, these are recommended for home use also.

Teachers are advised to 'mark for success' in spelling tests, so that pupils are aware of the letters that they have correctly identified and not just have a word marked as wrong

e.g. √√√

B e c o z (because)

Pupils work is primarily marked for content with a reference to a single spelling and or grammar point where necessary.

As pupils progress through the schools the role of spellcheckers (whether handheld or on laptops) will be emphasized.

## In class support for pupils with literacy difficulties including dyslexia

Most pupils with dyslexia will have their needs met through 'differentiation' of the curriculum which means teachers tailor their approaches to ensure lessons are accessible to all pupils. Some key, underlying principles of differentiation at Bolingbroke Academy centre on the following points

- teachers are aware of the reading age ranges within their classes and materials used are not well beyond the pupil reading levels
- teachers consider providing practical and/or visual support for pupils wherever possible, to enable them to grasp new concepts and ideas
- instructions are broken into clear, distinct chunks
- teachers organise word banks of key and topic words on display and make available to hand during writing tasks
- teachers plan for and create writing frames /graphic organisers that help to structure and organise ideas where necessary
- teachers ask a range of questions to elicit understanding across the class and pupils will be given thinking time when asked questions in class
- Pupils are taught efficient ways to record information and dyslexic pupils are shown alternatives as appropriate
- Some pupils will use a laptop as a more successful means of recording understanding

## 6. Interventions

At Bolingbroke, interventions are planned to meet specific needs. All interventions are time limited and establish a clear baseline and exit criteria. The current range of interventions for key stage 3 pupils includes:

**Read Write Inc. Fresh Start:** This Year 7 programme has been developed specifically for struggling readers aged 9-13. Fresh Start is an phonics based teaching programme proven to help older readers enhance reading skills and boost their reading and comprehension skills quickly, improving access to all areas of the curriculum and fostering a love of reading.

**Accelerated Reader:** Using information generated by the Accelerated Reader software, staff can help pupils select books that are difficult enough to keep them challenged, but not too difficult to cause frustration. Pupils are expected to take a quiz after reading a book allowing staff to monitor comprehension.

**Handwriting group:** This group meets weekly for one hour over a term. Attendance is by invitation and pupils are referred by class teachers. The focus of the group is to improve posture, fine motor control, letter formation and alignment of letter shapes.

**Pre-teaching:** Identified pupils are supported in learning subject specific vocabulary and concepts in one-to-one and small group situations.

**Interact group:** There are currently two social skills groups, one for KS3 one for KS4 run by an LSA. Attendance at both groups is by invitation only; pupils take part in various activities where team work and communication is required, such as board games and talks about current affairs.

**Lexia:** Lexia is an online based daily intervention programme that runs for about 20 minutes daily. It is used for pupils with a lower than average reading age. What's great about Lexia is that it is accessible from home.

**Art Therapy:** Art Therapy group meets weekly for one hour over a term. Attendance is by invitation only. Pupils are referred by the SEN team, the school counsellor and the focus room lead. The focus of the group is to act as a safe environment for pupils to be able to freely express their emotions. We also look at different ways in which the pupils can express themselves through the use of different mediums. This is facilitated through different art activities based around emotions.

**Vocabulary group:** Vocabulary group meets once a week and is aimed at enhancing the understanding and facilitating the expression of a wide range of basic and relevant concepts, meanings and vocabulary. The emphasis of the programme is on teaching pupils strategies to enhance their word learning skills and promote independent learning. The group uses the Vocabulary Enrichment Programme by Victoria Joffe at City University and staff have received training from a speech and language therapist to support on planning and delivery.

## 7. Marking and Assessment

Pupils at Bolingbroke are regularly assessed in all key area of the curriculum. Bolingbroke teachers, through formative as well as summative assessment, seek to validate the effectiveness of their teaching and mastery of a unit's Learning Intention. By carefully analysing pupil performance data, Bolingbroke teachers discuss and evaluate their teaching methods and consider necessary adjustments in order to increase pupil understanding and, consequently, levels of proficiency.

Monitoring of learning and providing pupils with constructive feedback is the single most effective factor in driving pupil achievement and improving performance. Bolingbroke teachers and LSAs give detailed and diagnostic feedback and engage in a learning dialogue with their pupils in order to improve their work significantly and to master the learning intention and the success criteria set.

Bolingbroke pupils are trained in giving constructive feedback to each other and their teachers. They are also well aware of assessing their own performance and acting upon set targets set by their teachers, peers and themselves.

Marking is all about allowing pupils to make further progress, develop their confidence in delivering an improved piece of work as well as to provide opportunities for peer and self-assessment. At Bolingbroke Academy, we subscribe to the WWW (what went well) and EBI (even better if) principles of marking. We encourage positive marking and therefore the ratio of WWW to EBI should be 3:1.

## 8. Access Arrangements

Bolingbroke follows the advice given by the British Dyslexia Association regarding access arrangements as follows:

Formal tests and examinations can present challenges for dyslexic candidates. Speed of processing, organising information, sequencing, short term and working memory, reading accuracy and automaticity and fluency in writing

can all be particular issues which can prevent the dyslexic candidate from achieving their potential. Visual difficulties in reading on-screen or tracking from one piece of paper to another can cause further problems. Some dyslexic people may have difficulty with legible handwriting. In addition, dyslexic people can be prone to stress, which in turn may exacerbate their difficulties.

Dyslexic candidates in tests and exams will normally require accommodations in order to level the playing field with non-dyslexic candidates. These would be recommended in a professional diagnostic assessment report from either an Educational Psychologist or specialist dyslexia teacher assessor. Accommodations can include extra time (+25% is normal), a reader, a scribe, using a computer instead of handwriting, using assistive software. There may be specific recommendations for particular formats of exam, such as multiple choice and case study exams. Every dyslexic person will have different requirements.

Where a dyslexic candidate is requiring special accommodations, they may need to be examined in a separate room from other candidates, even if they are only entitled to extra time. Many people with dyslexia find it difficult to screen out background noise and visual disturbance, which can impact on concentration. Once concentration is disturbed, it can be very hard to get back on track. Putting a candidate for extra time in the main examination hall could negate the benefits of the extra time with the disturbance caused by the body of candidates leaving at the end of normal time. In addition, some candidates may be particularly susceptible throughout the exam to extraneous disturbance in an examination hall with a large body of candidates.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publish a booklet, entitled "Access Arrangements and Special Consideration: Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in GCE, VCE, GCSE, GNVQ, Entry Level & Key Skills Examinations", which is updated every autumn.

Dyslexia is a recognised disability under the Equality Act which requires all organisations to ensure that people with disabilities are not treated unfavourably and are offered reasonable adjustments.

## **9. Curriculum Professional Development CPD**

Bolingbroke Academy has been committed to becoming a dyslexia friendly school since its opening in September 2012 and was recredited this status in June 2017. As part of this process, whole staff training on dyslexia is timetabled every Autumn Term of the new school year. In addition, the school aims to build a body of specialist dyslexia knowledge. Teachers are encouraged and supported to train for accredited dyslexia courses. The school has teachers trained with OCR level 5 in dyslexia teaching and other short dyslexia courses provided by bodies such as the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre, The British Dyslexia Association and Swindon Dyslexia Services.

The school has appointed a Lead Learning Support Assistant with specific responsibility for dyslexia within the school. The role involves delivering in-house dyslexia training, screening and assessing pupils for dyslexia, supporting dyslexia friendly classroom practice and ensuring access arrangements are part of normal classroom practise.

## **10. Partnership with Parents**

Bolingbroke Academy staff strive to work in partnership with parents in supporting all pupils but especially those with special educational needs. Parents have opportunities to meet with the staff that teaches their children and to discuss individual needs at parent meetings held on the Progress Review Day during the first term of the school year.

Civitas tutors meet their tutees and parents on Tutor Review Day during the first term of the academic year to discuss 'what has gone well' and what would be 'even better if' for the academic progress of the pupils. The evening allows the parents to engage with the Civitas tutor on pastoral matters as well.

SEND team meet with SEND pupils in the Summer Term to discuss the progress made on targets given over the course of the year. New targets are discussed and agreed upon.

As well as formal opportunities to discuss pupils with staff, parents are encouraged to contact their child's Civitas tutor with any concerns or questions on an ongoing basis. Likewise Civitas tutors contact parents regularly when an issue arises or to offer positive feedback about the behaviour or progress of the pupil.

### ***1. Pupil Voice and self esteem***

Bolingbroke readily accepts that students experiencing literacy difficulties are likely to experience low self-esteem compared to their peers. The Academy creates opportunities to raise awareness of dyslexia to normalise it within the school context. Staff are encouraged to be mindful of the impact learning differences can have on children and to make adjustments to minimise stigmatisation and embarrassment, e.g. by not asking students with dyslexia to read aloud in class unless by prior arrangement. Bolingbroke recognises that improvements to literacy can greatly enhance the school experience of pupils with dyslexia and makes this a high priority on entry to the school. Whole staff dyslexia training encompasses self-esteem issues.

**Pupil attitudes to self and school (P.A.S.S.) Survey:** The P.A.S.S. survey is used to determine the attitude to self and school of the Bolingbroke Academy pupils. This allows staff to ascertain the areas where pupils feel confident and the sections of the Academy where they struggle. Information gleaned from the survey informs the practice of staff.

**I:I Work with LSAs:** Exceptionally attuned LSAs assist pupils as necessary to not only gain access to the curriculum but – to allow their emotional needs to be at the fore front of their career at the Academy. LSAs work extensively with pupils during Numeracy and Literacy interventions given during the morning, lunch and afternoon enrichment sessions.

**Civitas:** Pastoral care is essential in supporting our pupils to develop a strong social identity and courageous character. At Bolingbroke, the House and Civitas system is a key driver in ensuring high levels of staff and pupil interaction. Civitas tutors will work in partnership with all those associated with their individual pupils to ensure that the child feels secure and supported with a clear understanding of the boundaries and routines. Tutors develop compassionate and constructive relationships with all members of their Civitas group.

**Cor Unum:** Pupil voice and leadership are essential to a strong sense of belonging at Bolingbroke Academy. Termly, three members of each house are elected to be Civitas Representative who voice the concerns and worries of other pupils in an open forum. Academy issues relevant to pupil voice are discussed and opinions requested during half termly working lunches. Bolingbroke encourages all pupils to participate in this forum at some point in the school life.

Each house has a House Ambassador who assists the staff in leading the expectations and requirements of being Ever Courageous at Bolingbroke Academy. These pupils are chosen from the staff as strong leaders able to be exceptional role models. Difficulties with literacy would never be a barrier to taking up a position as House Ambassador.

### ***2. The role of other services***

Bolingbroke values the professional opinions of outside agencies such as Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy services, Occupational Therapy services, specialist dyslexia teaching services and therapeutic bodies such as Kids Company.

The school is able to draw upon the support of the ARK Schools Network Lead Teacher for Drive for Literacy for advice and support in creating a dyslexia friendly school environment and in meeting the needs of individual students experiencing long-term difficulties. The Network Lead Teacher is provided by the Driver Youth Trust, a helpful source of information and free resources relating to literacy difficulties including dyslexia.

### ***3. Creating a 'dyslexia friendly' school***

Bolingbroke currently has the British Dyslexia Association's Quality Mark for good Dyslexia-Friendly practice across the school. This means that as a school we are committed to

- thorough identification procedures and appropriate teaching of dyslexic pupils in and out of the classroom
- ensuring all curriculum departments understand and meet the needs of dyslexic pupils
- ensuring the whole school ethos and environment is rooted in an informed and empathic approach towards dyslexia (notice and adjust)
- rigorous assessment and monitoring of the teaching and learning of all pupils including children with identified needs such as dyslexia

- rolling programme of training to ensure all staff are kept informed of best practice, current research and reflect on the impact for their teaching
- working collaboratively with parents, responding positively to parental concerns, keeping parents informed of additional support, successful strategies and progress, building in regular two way conversations
- seeking and listening to the views of pupils, encouraging reflections on what helps them to learn best, being mindful of the need for all pupils to hold a positive self-image, ensure that every pupil knows their strengths, talents, what makes them unique and special.

We recognise that dyslexic pupils grow up to be dyslexic adults and can fulfil and achieve their ambitions and dreams with confidence, enthusiasm and a drive to succeed. We regularly focus pupils on their potential to go to university or pursue careers of their choice beyond Bolingbroke Academy and map the pathways of skills, knowledge and understanding required.

**See Guide to Creating a Dyslexia Friendly Classroom**

#### **4. Allocation of Resources**

The resources for special educational needs are included within the overall budget delegated to the Academy. The Academy is committed to ensuring that all monies which are allocated by the LEA to resource pupils who are the subject of a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan are used for this purpose. In addition, the Academy is committed to ensuring that pupils' needs are met and recognises the place of technology for example, as for all pupils as well as the dyslexic student.

Resource priorities over the next three years:

2015-2016 Bolingbroke is committed to developing dyslexia awareness and the most effective teaching and intervention support, further whole staff and specialist training will be prioritised.

2016-2017 will focus on developing the Lexia programme for pupils with a lower than average reading age. Bolingbroke will also focus on providing maximum support for all pupils on the Dyslexia register taking their GCSE's.

2017-2018 will focus on developing ICT materials to support spelling and writing needs. This will include the use of e-readers to provide an alternative platform for reading will focus on reviewing, maintaining and updating the academy resources.

#### [References](#)

[Rose, J \(2009\) Identifying and Teaching Children and Young People with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties. An independent report from Sir Jim Rose to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, June 2009, DCSF](#)

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**Phonological awareness-** the ability to break words into their smaller units such as syllable or phonemes Segmenting sounds is a necessary skill for spelling, blending sounds an important skill for reading.

**Verbal memory-** the ability to retain an ordered sequence of verbal material for a short period of time e.g. list of words, PIN numbers, set of instructions

**Verbal processing speed-** the rate at which verbal information is processed, dyslexics often take longer to think through verbal and written information.