

# Dyslexia Policy

This policy was written by PHS staff, parents and young people.

## **Rationale**

As part of our vision of 'One Peebles', our school has a culture where young people, staff, parents/carers and partners work collaboratively to support the diverse needs of all learners. We are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where every young person can thrive.

The Peebles High School (PHS) core values of 'Work Hard', 'Show Kindness' and 'Contribute' are central to our approach to meet individual needs, cultivate empathy and respect and encourage everyone to participate in building a positive and supportive school community. Through inclusive policies and practical strategies, PHS aims to remove barriers, celebrate neurodiversity and empower dyslexic learners to achieve their full potential.

## **Neurodiversity paradigm**

Whilst this policy focuses on supporting autistic learners, it is recognised that there are many students who have been diagnosed as having various neurodevelopmental conditions and acknowledges the diverse population of students in PHS. The aim of the policy and training is to 'shift' from an approach which labels individuals with 'disorders' and 'abnormalities' towards an inclusive approach which recognises that there is no 'normal' and to support an understanding of the range of neurodiversity.

Other neurodivergent categories and labels include:

- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyscalculia
- ASC- Autistic Spectrum Conditions
- PDA- Pathological Demand Avoidance/ Pervasive Demand Avoidance/ Extreme Demand Avoidance
- ADHD - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ADD - Attention Deficit Disorder
- DLD- Developmental Language Disorder
- FASD- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

The neurodiversity paradigm is about accepting that neurological difference is part of the natural diversity of being human. In changing mindsets and adopting

the values, approaches, strategies and supports outlined in this policy, the needs of all individuals in Peebles High School will be met.

## **Introduction**

Dyslexia Scotland (i) states that 1 in 10 children and adults have dyslexia in Scotland. PHS recognises that approximately 10% of our learners are dyslexic (in line with the national average) which equates to approximately 120 young people in our school. Dyslexic learners can face challenges in education and can experience anxiety about school. It is important that PHS has an awareness of this and understands the needs of our learners in order to support dyslexic learners to achieve their potential. This policy has been written in response to this growing need in our school.

The Scottish Government definition of dyslexia:

"Dyslexia can be described 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 performance in other areas". (i)

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning and teaching environment, as there are often associated difficulties such as:

- auditory and/or visual processing of language-based information (recognising and interpreting information)
- phonological awareness (being able to identify words that rhyme, recognising alliteration etc)
- oral language skills and reading fluency (speaking and reading accurately and with an appropriate speed and expression)
- short-term and working memory (storing a small amount of information in mind and keeping it for a short time eg. remembering and following an instruction)
- sequencing and directionality (being able to put things in a specific order and remembering the sequence)
- number skills (being able to work with numbers such as multiplication, division, ratios, percentages etc)
- organisational ability (being able to manage time, prioritise tasks, set goals etc)

Motor skills and co-ordination may also be affected.

<http://addressingdyslexia.org/what-dyslexia>

The national guidance developed in Scotland on dyslexia goes on to say that:

"Dyslexia exists in all cultures and across the range of abilities and socio-economic backgrounds. It is a hereditary, life-long, neurodevelopmental condition. Unidentified, dyslexia is likely to result in low self-esteem, high stress, atypical behaviour, and low achievement. Learners with dyslexia will benefit from early identification, appropriate intervention and targeted effective teaching". (ii)

### **Informed Practice**

Peebles High School (PHS) uses the Scottish Borders Council (SBC) Dyslexia Policy 2018 (iii) to inform its practice. The SBC policy sits within a suite of policies and guidelines within SBC's approaches for supporting inclusion (iv).

In addition, we are committed to the *Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)* principles of providing all young people with the right support so that they can reach their full potential (v). This policy will be used in conjunction with the PHS Dyslexia Toolkit to support staff to meet the needs of dyslexic learners so that they can achieve their full potential.

### **How Literacy Difficulties Are Identified**

Within Scottish education, there is no one-off test for dyslexia and every dyslexic learner is different. Indeed, not everyone who has literacy difficulties is dyslexic. Schools take a holistic and collaborative approach to identification and this takes place over a period of time. The following is not an exhaustive list but contains possible indicators of dyslexia and can be used as a starting point in the identification process:

- reading very slowly and having to re-read a number of times before fully understanding
- making many spelling mistakes and having difficulty with extended writing
- finding it easy to explain a concept or idea but finding it difficult to write this down
- losing the place or missing out lines when reading
- difficulty retaining immediate information
- appearing forgetful or lazy

- experiencing difficulty filling out forms
- spelling better some days than others
- difficulty in getting organised
- confusing words that are similar when writing
- struggling to copy things down accurately
- finding it difficult to follow complicated or multiple instructions
- dreading reading aloud in class
- confusing left and right
- difficulties becoming worse under stress
- difficulties with multiplication tables, days of the week etc
- confusion with mathematical symbols such as + and x signs
- problems with telling the time, time-management and/or concept of time  
e.g. yesterday, tomorrow

These indicators may seem negative but it is important to remember that dyslexic learners learn in a different way and have many strengths which may include creativity, thinking outside the box and seeing the whole picture, taking an interest in people and seeing the potential in others, seeing solutions that others don't see, finding it easy to visualise ideas or concepts, being empathetic and many more. With the right support, dyslexic learners can achieve their full potential, can be high achievers and attain academically. In PHS, our dyslexic learners and their families will have a say in the support that is put in place for them and staff will listen to their views on what is working for them and what changes or adaptations need to be made to improve their school experience.

We use the following flowchart to investigate literacy difficulties and identify dyslexia. It should be noted that if dyslexia is not identified, the young person will still be supported. Support should be based on the needs of the young person, not by a label.

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sb/public/peebleshighschool/uploads/sites/3558/2024/09/25164819/Literacy-Profiling-Flowchart-2024.pdf>

The flowchart references 'literacy profiling'. This is essentially an investigation into a young person's literacy levels (their strengths and difficulties) when a concern is raised by staff, parent/carer or the young person themselves. A referral is submitted to the Support for Learning (SfL)/Literacy Profiling team and they carry out an investigation into the young person's potential literacy

difficulties. Evidence is gathered from class teachers, parents/carers and young people. Where appropriate, diagnostic tools and assessments are used to help gather further literacy evidence and a thorough review of all the evidence is carried out by the literacy team. A literacy profile report is then completed and the results/support strategies are shared with the young person, their parent/carer and staff. The young person may have a 'Ready to Learn' (R2L) plan which is shared with all staff through our electronic information management system (SEEMiS). Young people and their parents/carers contribute to the R2L plan before it is shared with staff.

It is essential that staff continue to have the appropriate training, professional discussions and information in order to meet the needs of dyslexic learners and this will be considered within school improvement plans. Please refer to the toolkit for details of how young people will be supported.

### **Dyslexic Collective**

Peebles High School works in partnership with the Dyslexic Collective which is a local community group which raises money to supply PHS with practical items (hardware and software) to help make education more accessible for dyslexic learners. The Dyslexic Collective has also collaborated with the school to assist in the development of this policy and the PHS Tool Kit to help parents and young people navigate their secondary education and also any future journey into further and higher education.


Peebles High School is a Rights Respecting School and as such, we promote young people's rights as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (vi). The articles contained in the treaty pertinent to this policy are:

Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 12: Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

## References

- (i) [dyslexiascotland.org.uk](https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk)
- (ii) [dyslexiascotland.org.uk](https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk)
- (iii) [education.gov.scot](https://education.gov.scot)
- (iv) SBC Dyslexia Policy -  [Dyslexia policy Oct 2018.doc](#)
- (v) SBC Includes - [Inclusion Policy FRAMEWORK FOR STAGED INTERVENTION Revised Jan 2022.docx](#)

<https://scotborders.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/IntranetContent/INCLUSION%20FRAMEWORK%20FINAL%20Jan%202020.pdf#search=inclusion%20framework>

<https://scotborders.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/IntranetContent/Inclusion%20Policy%20March%202020-FINAL.pdf#search=inclusion%20framework>

- (vi) <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>
- (vii) <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk>