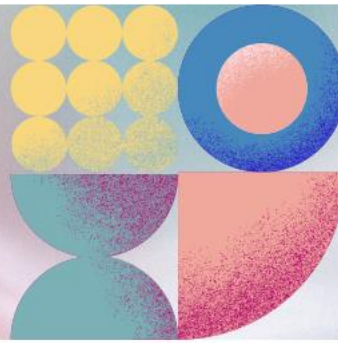


Reading difficulties and dyslexia



What is dyslexia?



No universal definition of dyslexia. The Rose report (2009) defined dyslexia as difficulty in one of three areas: phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Elliott and Gibbs (2014) published 'The Dyslexia Debate' and concluded there is no scientific or clear cut way to separate children who have a general difficulty with reading with those who have dyslexia. Some propose that the term dyslexia should be replaced with the term reading difficulty, which would be defined as the low end of a normal distribution of word-reading ability.

Dyslexia diagnosis



How to get a dyslexia diagnosis in the UK

- EP or Specialist Teacher, diagnosis lasts a lifetime no matter when it is first produced
- Is a 'Specific Learning Difficulty' but is the only one which requires a private diagnosis.
- Specialist Teachers are required to link the diagnosis to Rose's definition of dyslexia (2009)

Pros of a diagnosis:

- An EP report or Specialist Teacher with APC report will allow application to DSA.
- The report contains a list of helpful recommendations for home and school.
- It can help schools or workplaces to identify strengths and needs of a person.
- Children and young people feel it leads to increased specialist support and resources within schools as well as access arrangements, protects their self esteem and self image as a learner and provides relief from other generic labels and perceptions such as being lazy or unintelligent because it provides a biological explanation (Gibby-Leversuch, Hartwell & Wright, 2021).

Cons of a diagnosis:

- Equity issues – can be costly and some parents or schools may not be able to afford a diagnosis.
- May lead to lower academic expectations from the child, parents or teachers and may become a self-fulfilling prophecy (Gibby-Leversuch, Hartwell & Wright, 2021)

Universal screening for dyslexia

Pros	Cons
Early intervention. Screeners are good predictors of future attainment.	False positives: worry and stress for caregivers, stigmatisation and inefficient use of time and resources.
Prevents long-term negative effects on mental health, behavioural difficulties and educational outcomes.	False negatives: children being missed and not accessing the support they need.
Easy and short to administer.	Not appropriate or accurate for all children.

Please see references handout for more information.