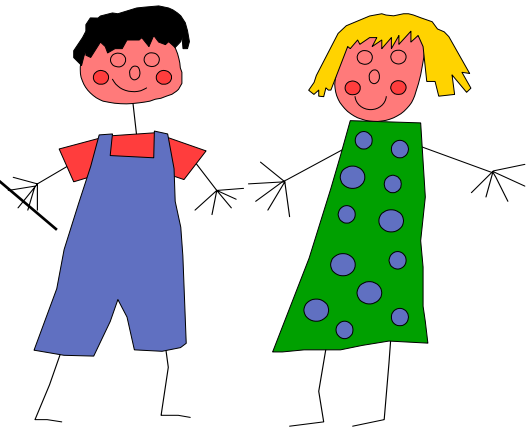




An OAASIS Publication  
for Parents and Professionals

Dyslexia



# *Dyslexia*

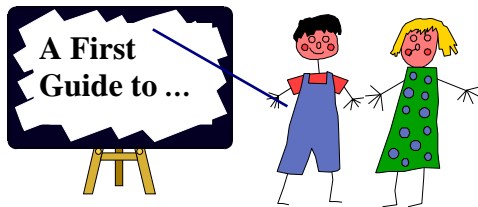
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**OAASIS**

*Office for Advice, Assistance,  
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*OAASIS is a part of **Cambian Education Services***





## *Dyslexia*

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*A First Guide to Dyslexia:* Price: £3.00

by Pauline Davies, 1996

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OTHER TITLES IN THE SERIES:

- ADHD
- Asperger Syndrome (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)
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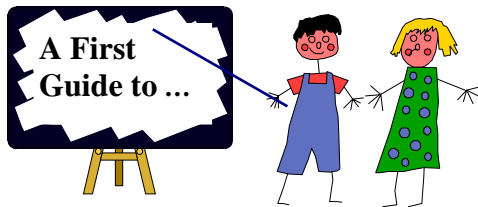
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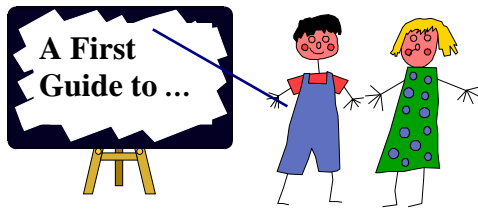
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## *Dyslexia* About First Guides

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- **This First Guide** was developed at Grateley House School as part of a range of guides being prepared for and distributed by OAASIS (Office for Advice, Assistance, Support and Information on Special Needs). They are designed to provide a quick and easy reference pack of information on various learning difficulties.
  - **OAASIS** offers:
    - a **telephone Helpline** for advice on matters to do with special education. Ring **01590 622880** usually manned between 10 and 4.30p.m., Monday – Friday.
    - various **publications** including
      - Free Information Sheets on various learning difficulties and other aspects of special education.
      - The *First Guide to ...* series. Other titles are listed on the opposite page.
      - *What is ....?* cards. Small cards describing briefly a disability. Useful for informing others. Cards are available on: ADHD, Asperger Syndrome, Attachment Disorder, Autism, Dyspraxia, Epilepsy, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Semantic Pragmatic Disorder and Tourette's Syndrome.
      - *Do You Know Someone with Autism?* booklet. Written by a former teacher at The Forum School for the brothers, sisters and classmates of a child with autism.
  - **OAASIS** can be contacted by writing to OAASIS at Brock House, Grigg Lane, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7RE; sending a fax to 01590 622687; emailing [oaasis@cambiagroup.com](mailto:oaasis@cambiagroup.com) or ringing the Helpline.
    - **Grateley House School** offers residential education (with a waking day curriculum) for young people aged 9-19 years with Asperger Syndrome or other associated syndromes requiring similar care, education and therapeutic interventions. The school is sited in a large country house near Andover, in Hampshire, within its own grounds of several acres.
    - Grateley House School and OAASIS are a part of Cambian Education Services. For further information on the Cambian Education schools and colleges please phone 0800 288 9779.
    - OAASIS welcomes contributions from families, professionals, and individuals who would like to contribute ideas for inclusion in the pack.
  - There may be a small charge for the Guides to cover OAASIS printing and packing costs. See the OAASIS Publications List for a full range of literature available.
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# *Dyslexia* Contents

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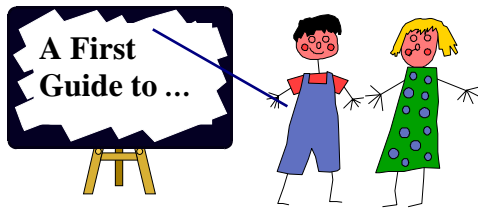
## Contents

**The Disorder**

**Teaching and Supporting**

**Recommended Reading**

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# *Dyslexia* The Disorder

“**Dyslexia** is one of the most difficult problems of our times. There are other problems far more massive and far more tragic, but dyslexia has a seriousness and complexity of its own. If we neglect it, we make many other problems more difficult to solve. For dyslexia is an obstacle to the understanding, use, control and enjoyment of man’s symbolic activity. And it is this activity which, for better or worse, has given our present civilisation its precarious dependence on communication in general and on writing in particular.”

*Professor Patrick Meredith*

## **A Synopsis**

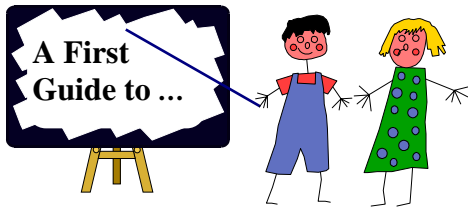
**Dyslexia** is commonly known as ‘word blindness’, but this is a misleading term. A dyslexic person is not blind to words; he or she sees a door, a table, a window, and has no difficulty in interpreting what he sees. But when he sees the printed words ‘door’, ‘table’, ‘window’, they may mean nothing to him. Thus, although all the apparatus of vision is working, the apparatus of interpretation breaks down in changing from objects to words.

- It is thought to be present in around 10% of the school population.
- It can be refined as a disorder manifested by difficulty in learning to read despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence and socio-cultural opportunity.
- Other forms of the disability have been identified as:
  1. dysgraphia: problems with writing
  2. dysorthographia: problems with spelling
  3. dyscalculia: problems with arithmetical calculations.
- An individual may have only one of the problems identified, several, or all.
- Accurate identification is difficult.

## **Thumbnail sketch of the schoolchild**

A child with dyslexia will have encountered difficulties at the onset of primary education, and may have a high level of anxiety towards learning. They may also exhibit many of the following difficulties:

- a history of late speech development, and continuing immaturities in articulation and syntax
- visual perception problems - frequent reversal of letters and numerals - distorted or blurred word shapes
- auditory perceptual problems, including difficulties in identifying sounds within words and blending sounds into words



## *Dyslexia* **The Disorder**

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- poor integration of sensory information. For example, they cannot easily learn to associate and remember printed symbols and their spoken equivalent
- weak lateralisation - under-developed hand-eye preferences - directional sense confusion
- hyperactivity
- weak sequencing skills, as reflected in jumbled letter sequences in spelling or in word-attack skills in reading
- poor coordination
- low level of motivation
- secondary emotional problems due to learning failure and poor school progress.

### **The situation of the child**

A child with dyslexia is often intellectually able and even gifted in some areas of the curriculum.

They may well have developed strategies to cope with hiding their disability.

They may have excellent verbal skills.

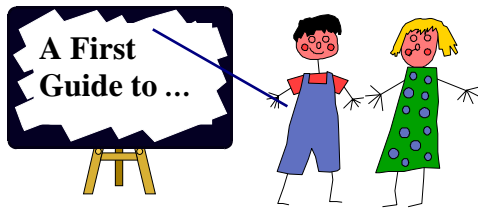
They will sometimes have well defined and numerous avoidance strategies not to settle to tasks asked of them that require reading or writing skills.

A child with dyslexia may ask and encourage other children or staff to do their work for them.

They may exhibit frustration and behavioural problems.

They usually have a poor self-image.

They may be bullied by their peers as being 'thick'.

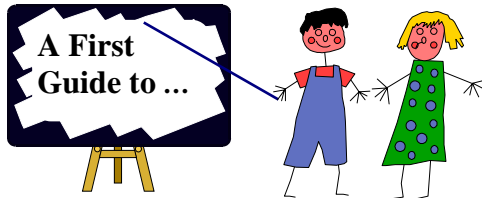


## *Dyslexia* Teaching and Supporting

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The following strategies provide general guidelines in management of children with dyslexia. It must be remembered that children are individual and what works for one child may not work for another. The severity and range of the problem will vary from child to child.

- Reading, writing, spelling and maths skills should be thoroughly taught, leaving nothing to chance.
- The skills must be utilised in a meaningful way so that reading writing and arithmetic are used for a real purpose, not merely as drill exercises.
- More attention must be given to phonic skill development than is currently the case in contemporary approaches to the teaching of reading. However, in a few cases, a predominantly phonic approach may be contra-indicated if the child has significant auditory problems.
- Purposeful and regular skill-building and practice.
- Ideally, special tuition, perhaps by withdrawing the child from the regular class for brief, intensive regular sessions. Where this is not possible, individual help should be given daily within the classroom setting.
- Read to the child daily, as he/she follows the words with you.
- Provide daily opportunities to read and write for real purposes.
- Teach reading skills in context, rather than in isolation.
- Surround the child with stimulating reading material.
- Create a climate where reading is an enjoyable, relaxing, necessary and valued occupation.
- Give abundant encouragement and praise as they master new skills.
- Systematic teaching of phonic knowledge and word-building, unless contra-indicated by speech or auditory problems.
- Skills taught should stem from, and be applicable to, the actual reading material being used by the child.
- Teach correct letter formation and handwriting alongside the reading activities.
- Use finger-tracing and other multi-sensory approaches to aid assimilation and retention.
- Be careful to select material to match the child's current ability and interest level.
- Revise and review previously taught skills or concepts at frequent intervals.
- Practice and overlearning are vital for success.



## *Dyslexia* Recommended Reading

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1. **Identifying and Supporting the Dyslexic Child**
2. **Make Your classroom Dyslexia Friendly**
3. **Plees Help**
4. **Reading Routes**
5. **Cracking the Code with Phonics**

The above publications are useful resources books. They contain a lot of material which busy teachers can use. They can be purchased through: **Desktop Publications**, 6 Silver Street, WINTERINGHAM, Scunthorpe DN15 9ND. This company will send out a full publications list if you ask. Tel / Fax: 01724 734255.

**Dyslexia:** software for children and adults. The British Dyslexia Association have produced a new range of leaflets offering advice on suitable software. Available for a small charge from the BDA. Tel: 0118 966 2677. Or find them on the BDA website (<http://www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk>). Email: [admin@bda-dyslexia.demon.co.uk](mailto:admin@bda-dyslexia.demon.co.uk)

**Dyslexia Inspirations:** a group of experienced teachers who have worked with children with dyslexia offering workbooks, activities, etc. Website [www.dyslexia-inspirations.com](http://www.dyslexia-inspirations.com) Email [trio@dyslexia-inspirations.com](mailto:trio@dyslexia-inspirations.com) Tel 01792 390625.

Many titles can be found both for teachers and parents on the **SEN Marketing** booklist. Website [www.sen.uk.com](http://www.sen.uk.com) Email [sen.marketing@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:sen.marketing@ukonline.co.uk) Tel: 01924 871697.

Also check out **Jessica Kingsley Publishers** (website [www.jkp.com](http://www.jkp.com) email [post@jkp.com](mailto:post@jkp.com) Tel: 0207833 2307) and **David Fulton Publishers** (website [www.fultonbooks.co.uk](http://www.fultonbooks.co.uk) email [orders@fultonbooks.co.uk](mailto:orders@fultonbooks.co.uk) Tel: 0207 405 5606).

### **FURTHER READING:**

*Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia): Challenges and Responses*

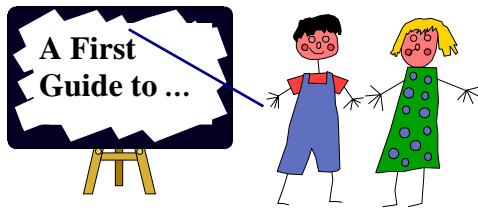
P Pumfrey and R Reason. 1991, Routledge, London.

*Achieving Literacy*

M Meek. 1983. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

*The Politics of Reading*

M Style and M J Drummond. 1993. University of Cambridge Institute of Education.



## *Dyslexia* And check out ...

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... the OAASIS Information Sheets –

- Dyslexia
- Exams and Access Arrangements for Students with Special Needs
- Finding a Special Needs School
- Independent Special Schools – what to look for
- Books – where to find them
- Forthcoming Conferences and Seminars from other organisations
- Useful Contacts and Websites

Visit the OAASIS website for the full list of free downloadable information sheets and other publications: [www.oaasis.co.uk](http://www.oaasis.co.uk).