

# St Ignatius College Siggiewi Primary

## DYSLEXIA FRIENDLY SCHOOL POLICY

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It is recommended that this policy is read in conjunction with the school's **Language Policy**

### **1. Dyslexia Friendly School Aims**

- 1.1 To ensure that all pupils who are experiencing difficulties with reading/ writing and/or spelling are identified as early as possible.
- 1.2 To support learners with difficulties to read and/or to spell and write fluently to access the curriculum.
- 1.3 To ensure that the teachers understand the difficulties of learners with SpLD, and to make the required provisions for these difficulties in their planning.
- 1.4 To be sensitive to and eliminate possible sources of anxiety and embarrassment these learners experience.

### **2. Policy Statement**

At St Ignatius College Siggiewi Primary School, we are proud to be a Dyslexia Friendly School. All learners have the right to an education offering equal opportunities and an inclusive curriculum. Being a dyslexia friendly school not only helps us to meet the needs of dyslexic learners, but also the needs of pupils who have delayed literacy skills. Any classroom intervention focused on the needs of learners with dyslexia could contribute to enhancing the learning opportunities of all pupils. Indeed, evidence suggests that all children who are taught using Dyslexia Friendly methods are able to benefit and that, in essence, more children are able to benefit when dyslexia friendly methods are adopted throughout the school.

### **3. What is dyslexia?**

There are many definitions of dyslexia. At St Ignatius College Siġġiewi Primary we use the following definition.

Pupils with dyslexia have a marked and persistent difficulty in learning to read, write and spell, despite progress in other areas. Pupils may have poor reading, comprehension, handwriting and punctuation. They may also have difficulties in concentration and organisation and in remembering sequences of words. They mispronounce common words or reverse letters and sounds in words. ([www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk))

Dyslexia can also cause unexpected and persistent difficulties in numeracy skills, phonological awareness, auditory memory, retrieval of words, information, sequencing and rote learning. There may be accompanying weaknesses in the skills that support personal organisation, for example, speed of processing, short term memory sequences and difficulties with spatial awareness and direction – right and left. However, dyslexic learners also have a range of unique strengths that can be built on. Many learners with dyslexia have outstanding creative skills and strengths in verbal skills.

In our school every learner is important and all learners are empowered to be the best they can. We ensure that all learners have a positive self-esteem by valuing their achievements. The basic principle of our school is:

If a child does not learn in the way in which we teach then we must teach in the way in which he learns. Let dyslexia be looked at from a different angle, not as a learning disability but a different learning ability (Pollack et al., 2004).

### **4. Principles**

At Siġġiewi Primary school we recognise the strengths of learners with dyslexia and aim to use these strengths to enhance their learning. We are aware that learners with dyslexia are likely to experience more stress than their peers and this affects their learning and well-being. We also recognise that a child's self-

esteem and confidence go hand in hand with successful learning. We ensure that learners have a positive self-esteem by valuing the achievements of all learners including those with dyslexia. Learners are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own learning style. Teachers are familiar with the individual learning preferences of learners and adopt a range of multi-sensory teaching strategies.

## **5. Early Identification and Provision**

It is the teacher's responsibility to recognise the early signs of dyslexia and immediately begin to offer focused intervention even before referring the learner for a formal assessment. The complementary teacher works hand in hand with the class teacher to support the struggling learner. If dyslexic type difficulties persist, the learner is referred for a formal assessment at the end of Year 3.

## **6. Provision**

### **6.1 General**

1. The school ensures that learners' self-esteem is raised by valuing their achievements.
2. Senior Management Team ensures that the recommendations suggested in SpLD reports and/or reports written by other agencies are being implemented.
3. The school invests in dyslexia friendly resources.

It is highly recommended that teachers:

- mark all resources in the classrooms with pictures and words
- ensure that classrooms are kept well organised and are uncluttered to avoid distractions

- keep a visual time-table displayed in all classrooms
- place learners within their peripheral vision, and whenever possible, alongside a buddy who can offer support
- use dyslexia friendly fonts such as Andika, Comic Sans and Verdana when writing on the interactive whiteboard
- minimise copying from the board
- use different colours for each line in situations when copying from the IWB is required
- change the colour of the interactive whiteboard to pale yellow or light blue to reduce visual stress
- provide learners with coloured overlays to reduce visual stress, and reading rulers to enable them to keep track of lines while reading
- use the interactive whiteboard to address the different learning styles and provide individual instruction
- give instructions in a structured, slow pace and reinforce with visual material when necessary
- allow more time for tasks such as getting out books, getting started, and completing work

## **6.2 Reading**

It is highly recommended that teachers:

- provide learners with books which are at the appropriate reading age and interest level
- provide a context to the reading materials being covered in the classroom
- teach learners visualization skills to support them with comprehension and recall of information
- support learners by asking them open and embedded answers (cloze) questions for improved reading comprehension

- teach learners to identify key sentences and key words so as to enable them to understand the importance of highlighting

### **6.3 Spelling**

It is highly recommended that teachers:

- teach learners a variety of multi-sensory spelling strategies to study spelling
- give learners opportunities to practise these words independently, using a range of spelling strategies
- create a word wall of high frequency words, data banks of sounds and letter combinations
- provide learners with websites and applications to help them improve their reading and spelling skills

### **6.4 Written work**

It is highly recommended that teachers:

- ask learners to read out illegible work, rather than ask for the work to be written out again
- accept learners' work on a word processor

## **7 Marking and Homework**

It is highly recommended that teachers:

- ensure that homework and schoolwork are not completed during break time
- make provision for learners with dyslexia to ensure that all homework is written legibly on notebooks
- allow learners enough time to copy information from the board before moving to the next task
- do not give homework in the last few minutes of the day

- give credit to the learner for what s/he manages to do in the time allocated for the activity

While marking teachers should:

- identify only specific errors so as not to discourage learner
- focus on the positive outcome while suggesting which areas require improvement
- focus on the correction of frequently used words for spelling practice and ensure they are drilled on a regular basis
- mark content, effort and presentation separately
- advise learners and parents how tasks will be marked

## 8 **Assessment**

1. A screening exercise in reading and spelling is carried out in Year 1 by class teachers and complementary teachers during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Term. A screening exercise in spelling is carried out in Year 2 and Year 3 during the 1<sup>st</sup> Term. These tests form the basis for intervention.
2. Special arrangements are made for learners with dyslexia taking tests and during continuous assessment.

## 9 **Partnership with parents/carers**

At St Ignatius College Siggiewi Primary school we encourage parents and carers to share their concerns. When difficulties are noted, parents are informed and guided on the way forward. We keep ourselves updated about the various agencies where parents can get additional information and support.

DATE OF POLICY – October 2018

DATE OF REVIEW- October 2020