

Devon SpLD (Dyslexia) Service

Please contact Deborah Lynch or Ann Atherton if you have any queries or concerns.

The following leaflets are available on the QE website:

- What is Dyslexia?
- Assessing for dyslexia
- Emotional Support for Dyslexic Students
- Reading at home
- Supporting Dyslexic Students in the Classroom
- How can I help my child?
- Helping with homework
- Helping your child with spelling
- Visual Stress
- Working Memory Difficulties

Ann and Deborah are part of a Secondary Dyslexia Network ; these materials were produced by this group of teachers and educational psychologists.

Devon SpLD (Dyslexia) Service Information

For further information please visit our web page:

<http://www.qe.devon.sch.uk/school-information/partnerships/devon-dyslexia-service/>

or contact

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Helping
with
Homework

Devon SpLD
(Dyslexia)
Service

Helping with Homework

This can often be a tense and difficult issue for parents and students. Try to remove some of the negatives by remaining calm, but be very clear about what needs to be done. It is important not to let homework become a battleground. If you find this has happened, it is important to contact your child's teacher/tutor to discuss homework issues.

You may feel unable to 'help' with the actual content of the homework. Do not worry about this.

Your role is not to do the homework for your child.

It is to provide the structure and support needed. Your child was in the lesson and if he/she can't do the homework, the teacher needs to know that they haven't understood the work. Please avoid turning homework into a major chore.

Some points to be considered:

- **Be positive at all times.**
- **Negotiate an agreed time to do homework** which fits in with your family routine in the evening and at weekends. Draw up a timetable, if it helps, of all the activities that everyone is involved in across the week and fit the homework into a regular slot so that it becomes an accepted part of what happens. It is much easier to achieve this if it can be the

same time each evening. It does not necessarily have to be every evening. Much better to have two productive sessions each week than five that are battles. Be aware that your child has to work exceedingly hard at school and does get very, very tired.

- **Agree**, with your child, **how long** each session should last. This will obviously depend upon a number of factors such as school year, amount of homework expected by the school, concentration levels, time of year. It is often useful for you to indicate in the margin of the exercise book, how much time has been taken to produce a piece of work. It is easy for teachers to get the wrong impression of a student's capabilities if all they see is the end product.
- **Be patient and encouraging.** If you find yourself getting annoyed or angry, it is usually best to stop and try again later or another day if there is one available. Do your best to finish the session as positively as possible.
- **Be interested** in what your child is doing
- **Encourage independence**, wherever possible. However, if you have the time, it is perfectly acceptable for your child to dictate their ideas and you write them down, if the writing demands of a task are considerable. Always indicate to the teacher that this has been done.
- **Explain carefully to brothers and sisters** who are not experiencing difficulties with literacy the kind of difficulties your child is dealing with. Help them to be supportive.

Suggestions for other ways you could help at home:

1. Read aloud to your child - never mind their age. Try to encourage them to follow the text you are reading as you do this.
2. Encourage them to listen to books recorded onto tape or CD. If these are 'cover to cover' and have an accompanying text which can be followed, so much the better. You can obtain these from your local library for a small hire charge. It may be possible for you to obtain a 'disabled reader's ticket', which would allow you to access tapes and CDs of written material free of charge. Ask at your library for a form to apply for this. For £70 per year you can join Listening Books which will give you access to some of the best audio books on the market. (www.listening-books.org.uk)
3. Have fun with words.
4. Play word games.
5. Encourage leisure activities, particularly ones involving physical exercise, such as swimming, cycling, skate boarding, roller blading, juggling.
6. If your child does not already have a television in their bedroom, think very carefully before permitting them to have one.

Remember, if you are doing something constructive to help your child you are less likely to be anxious yourself about literacy difficulties. Your anxiety is easily communicated to your child and can lead to them becoming anxious too.