

## ADVICE SHEET

### General Strategies for children with Dyspraxia

#### What is it?

- A neurological difficulty.
- Sensory messages do not get transmitted in the normal way.

#### How can we recognise it?

- poor posture
- awkward walking
- clumsy
- difficulties with hopping, skipping, jumping etc
- knocks things over, drops things, trips over the air!
- poor sense of direction
- poor visual and auditory memory
- no clear “handedness”
- reading and writing difficulties
- difficulty controlling tools
- sensitive to touch
- difficulties throwing and catching balls
- wearing some types of clothing is uncomfortable
- slow to learn how to dress / feed themselves
- poor body awareness
- slow to speak
- incoherent speech
- impatient
- dislikes, hair, nails cut, teeth brushed etc
- dislikes wearing plasters
- phobias / obsessions
- sequencing and planning difficulties

**“Dyspraxia cannot be cured but early intervention will enable significant improvements to be made”.**

### **How can we help children with these difficulties?**

- Keep tasks short – even listening is effortful!
- Praise the effort rather than the end product
- Have fun with lots of pre-writing tasks – big movements and large tools.
- Experiment with: painting/ribbons, squirty bottles/ pegs / dough.
- Try sensory play materials: water/ sand / ice / rice / pasta / gloop / shaving foam / compost / bark etc
- Strategies for sequencing – visual timetables, social stories, sequence games.
- Use “mark making” equipment that requires little effort but produces immediate results.
- Encourage balance activities.
- Give lots of time for completion of an activity; try not to rush.
- When learning about positional language, use own bodies.
- PRAISE – children with dyspraxia often have low self-esteem.