

# OAASIS INFORMATION SHEET

## Dyspraxia



Office for  
Advice  
Assistance  
Support  
and  
Information  
on  
Special needs

**Helpline:**  
01590 622880  
**Fax:**  
01590 622687

[www.oaasis.co.uk](http://www.oaasis.co.uk)

**FREEPOST**  
**RLYY-TAUC-YRYS**  
**Brock House**  
**Grigg Lane**  
**Brockenhurst**  
**Hampshire**  
**SO42 7RE**

**OAASIS**  
**A part of**  
**Cambian Education**  
**Services**



Also known as developmental coordination disorder (DCD), motor learning difficulty, clumsy child syndrome, perceptuo motor dysfunction, Deficits in Attention Motor Control and Perception (DAMP). **Dyspraxia** refers to children who have movement difficulties; there may also be problems with perception, language, thought, planning and co-ordination. Approximately 1 in 10 children suffer from the condition, with boys affected four times more frequently than girls. In a class of 30 children at least one will have Dyspraxia.

Parents may notice the problem early on: their child may have trouble with some of the following:

- dressing i.e. doing up buttons, tying shoe laces
- picking up small objects
- left / right orientation
- concept of in/on/behind etc
- sitting, crawling, walking
- poor eye control
- poor social skills
- drawing or copying a drawing
- holding a pencil
- learning difficulties e.g. spelling, reversals, rote learning, sequencing
- doing a jig-saw or sorting game
- 'behaviour problems'
- riding a bicycle, PE, ball-games

There might also be some speech and language or pronunciation difficulties caused by problems coordinating the various movements of the mouth and tongue.

### **HELP AT HOME and AT SCHOOL**

#### **Dressing for school**

- Velcro on shoes not laces or buckles
- loose clothing
- avoid ties - they are very difficult
- shirt buttons: larger holes and buttons
- socks: short ones if possible, as long nylon socks are difficult to handle
- clothes with a distinctive front and back, for example, a V-neck sweater

#### **Social integration:**

Offer lots of public praise at the appropriate time, but ensure that other children in the class or group do not begin to feel this is unfair treatment. Always pick good points from the child's work. Make certain other children are praised for their efforts at the same time.

Give him some responsibilities / tasks which should involve others; encourage teamwork.

Encourage the child to 'join in' with other pupils, by helping find and develop common interests such as pop music, fashion, etc. Encourage other children to help him join in, to improve skills, dissuade them from isolating him.

Insist that all the social rules of the classroom / home are observed. Although this may seem painful at times, the child needs to be the same as his peers and observe the same rules. This helps the children to heighten their own awareness of behaviour.

Pupils with dyspraxia need considerable support from significant adults with regard to their social interactions. Depending on the degree of severity, they will also benefit from regular interventions from some of the following:

**(Educational) Psychologist:** If a child's difficulties are severe enough to require considerable in and out of school support, a full psychological assessment should be requested. When completed, this may lead to a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

**Orthoptists** are not only interested in general eyesight, but in how the eyes are able to work together at close proximity as they do when a child needs to read and write. The orthoptist will help give a reliable assessment of eye function to help the child's teacher should that child's letter and numeral reversals be more frequent than is expected.

**Occupational Therapists** are usually able to assist with visual-perceptual skills, fine motor performance, and pencil-hold and letter formation.

**Physiotherapists** help with gross motor skills, posture and general body image and management.

**Speech Therapists** can help young people who have speech and articulation difficulties.

There is a danger that the child may receive treatment from too many therapists and miss too much school, thus creating more problems. It is essential that the school's special educational needs coordinator avoids this by good general management of the child's individual programme and by liaison with teachers, carers, parents and all outside agencies concerned with the child.

#### **Other Useful Contacts:**

**The Dyspraxia Foundation** 8 West Alley, HITCHIN, Herts SG5 1EG **Helpline: 01462 454986**  
Support and information for individuals, families and professionals affected by dyspraxia.

Web: [www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)

Email: [dyspraxia@dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](mailto:dyspraxia@dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)

#### **Dore Achievement Centres**

**Tel: 01926 514060**

Help children, teenagers and adults affected by learning difficulties, including Dyspraxia, to achieve their full potential through exercises to improve the performance of the cerebellum, enabling the brain to use its full power.

Web: [www.dore.co.uk](http://www.dore.co.uk) Email: [info@dore.co.uk](mailto:info@dore.co.uk)

#### **The Discovery Centre** Alltryn Campus, University of Wales, Newport, NP20 5DA **Tel: 01633 432330**

Assessment, advice for parents and schools, tailor-made services, training and access to specific resources.

Web: <http://dyscovery.newport.ac.uk>

Email: [dyscoverycentre@newport.ac.uk](mailto:dyscoverycentre@newport.ac.uk)

#### **Therapy in Praxis Ltd** PO Box 90, Kirkbymoorside, York YO62 6YE

A paediatric therapy and assessment service for children.

Web: [www.therapy-in-praxis-ltd.co.uk](http://www.therapy-in-praxis-ltd.co.uk)

#### **Anything Left Handed Ltd** 18 Avenue Road, Belmont, Surrey SM2 6JD

**Tel: 020 8770 3722**

All staff are left-handed; they produce a range of 200 items. Have a fact sheet on handwriting for left-handed children.

Web: [www.anythingleft-handed.co.uk](http://www.anythingleft-handed.co.uk)

#### **British Dyslexia Association**

Website: [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)

**Tel: 0118 966 8271**

#### **Dyslexia Action**

Website: [www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk)

**Tel: 01784 222300**

#### **The Foundation for Conductive Education**

**Tel: 0121 449 1569**

Cannon Hill House, Russell Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8RD

**Fax: 0121 449 1611**

A registered charity for children and adults with incurable movement disabilities, offers more independence and dignity by teaching them how to overcome their disability in everyday life. Programmes for children with dyspraxia aged 3-14 years at four levels for progressing at their own rate.

Web: [www.conductive-education.org.uk](http://www.conductive-education.org.uk)

#### **The 3D Centre for Specific Learning** (Halifax) Website: [www.the3dcentre.co.uk](http://www.the3dcentre.co.uk)

**Tel: 01422 365500**

Offers diagnostic assessments for children with dyslexia and dyspraxia and online courses for dyslexia.

#### **Reading: see also OAASIS information sheet 'Books – where to find them'**

OAASIS also publishes **A First Guide to Dyspraxia** in its **First Guide** series (£4.00 plus p&p). You can ring or write to OAASIS at the address over the page for a publications list / order form or visit the website. The OAASIS website is at [www.oaasis.co.uk](http://www.oaasis.co.uk).

#### **Routledge Education** (member of the Taylor Francis Group)

Tel: 020 7017 6000

Website: [www.routledgeeducation.com](http://www.routledgeeducation.com)

Fax: 020 7017 6699

**Jessica Kingsley Publishers:** Website: [www.jkp.com](http://www.jkp.com) Email: [post@jkp.com](mailto:post@jkp.com)

Tel: 020 7833 2307

**Sage Publications:** For all professionals working in schools and educational settings (includes Paul Chapman Publishing and Lucky Duck books). Web: [www.sagepub.co.uk](http://www.sagepub.co.uk) Email: [market@sagepub.co.uk](mailto:market@sagepub.co.uk)

**SEN Marketing:** Books and software for special educational needs.

Tel: 01924 871697

Website: [www.senbooks.co.uk](http://www.senbooks.co.uk)

#### **The internet book shop**

[www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

*Development Dyspraxia – Identification and Intervention – 2<sup>nd</sup> edition: A Manual for Parents and Professionals.* Author: Madeleine Portwood, 1999. £22.99 ISBN 1 85346 573 9.

*Dyspraxia: A Guide for Teachers and Parents.* Authors: Kate Ripley, Bob Daines, Jenny Barrett. Includes resource materials. Price £21.99 ISBN 1 85346 444 9

*Understanding Developmental Dyspraxia. A Textbook for Students and Professionals.* Author: Madeleine Portwood. Price £22.99 ISBN 1 85346 574 7

All the above are published by Routledge Education (see above for contact numbers).

#### **Internet Sites:**

[www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~velleman/cas.html](http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~velleman/cas.html) is a US paper on apraxia (verbal Dyspraxia) and has a link to [www.apraxia-kids.org](http://www.apraxia-kids.org) the Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America (CASANA).

[www.matts-hideout.co.uk](http://www.matts-hideout.co.uk) a website set up and run by a teenage boy, aimed at other kids with dyspraxia.

**Cambian Education Services** run seven residential special schools and colleges for young people with autistic spectrum disorders, Asperger Syndrome/HFA, severe learning difficulties. OAASIS can give you advice on the schools and send you their prospectuses or visit the website [www.cambianeducation.com](http://www.cambianeducation.com). OAASIS produces a wide range of **free Information Sheets**, 8 **publications** entitled 'First Guide to...' and **wallet sized cards** explaining 9 learning disabilities. Please contact OAASIS (see front of sheet for contact details) for the full list, or view and download them on the website at [www.oaasis.co.uk](http://www.oaasis.co.uk). All sheets are checked annually, please ensure you have the current version.