

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

Assessing and Supporting Literacy Difficulties

A Moray Framework

Education and Social Care

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Assessing and Supporting Literacy Difficulties

A Moray Framework

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1. Context

1.1 Background

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national programme which underpins all other broader frameworks and approaches to meeting the needs of children and young people.

In order to get it right for all our young people, tackling literacy difficulties is crucial. We all recognise the consequences of poor literacy – poor educational attainment, limited employment prospects, poverty, health inequalities and social and material deprivation.

The link between low socio-economic status and poor literacy levels is well evidenced and addressing literacy difficulties is recognised a primary means of tackling poverty, improving life chances and eventually realising the goal of a fairer Scotland.

The Read On, Get On document, published by various third sector organisations, articulates a mission to get all children in Scotland reading well by age 11. This document gives more detail about the links between literacy and poverty.

<https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/global/reports/education-and-child-protection/ready-to-read-scotland.pdf>

UNESCO views literacy as a fundamental human right, also stating that:

'literacy is the foundation for lifelong learning. It is fully essential to social and human development in its ability to transform lives. For individuals, families, and societies alike, it is an instrument of empowerment to improve one's health, one's income, and one's relationship with the world.

The uses of literacy for the exchange of knowledge are constantly evolving, along with advances in technology. From the Internet to text messaging, the ever-wider availability of communication makes for greater social and political participation. A

literate community is a dynamic community, one that exchanges ideas and engages in debate. Illiteracy, however, is an obstacle to a better quality of life, and can even breed exclusion and violence'

1.2 Aims of Framework

This framework aims to:

- Promote a shared understanding of how to identify literacy difficulties.
- Promote a shared understanding of how to support literacy difficulties.
- Clarify the role of professionals in the assessment and intervention of children and young people with literacy difficulties.

1.3 Links to legislation, policy and guidance

The framework links clearly to key drivers such as Curriculum for Excellence, The Additional Support for Learning Acts (2004 & 2009) and The Early Years Framework and draws heavily on the Addressing Dyslexia toolkit which was jointly developed by the Scottish Government and Dyslexia Scotland.

In Moray, the framework is linked to the Staged Model of Intervention. There are three stages in the staged intervention framework. At each stage, varying levels of support and intervention are suggested depending on the extent to which a child's needs impact on his or her learning. The three stages are: universal services (classroom and school), universal services with support (school and others), targeted intervention (school and other/ specialist support) This literacy framework will consider how to assess and support a child with literacy difficulties at each point of the staged intervention framework.

2. Literacy Difficulties

Literacy difficulties are encountered by a high percentage of children, irrespective of ability. The impact of such difficulties varies considerably from one individual to the next. In addition to difficulties with reading, writing or spelling, indicators or characteristics associated with literacy difficulties include:

- Difficulties with phonological awareness
- Language skills issues (e.g. speech articulation difficulties, not able to repeat complex instructions)
- Visual processing challenges (e.g. with shape, pattern and sequence)
- Short-term and working memory concerns
- Number skills difficulties
- Organisational difficulties
- Difficulties with motor skills
- Emotional issues (e.g. low self-esteem, frustration, embarrassment)
- Behavioural concerns (e.g. task avoidance, easily distracted, disruptive behaviour)
- Difficulties out of school (e.g. homework not being completed)

Additionally, it is important to have an awareness of factors which may impact on a child's literacy development, for example, if a child has moved school, or has experienced attendance issues or behavioural difficulties.

3. The Importance of Early Literacy

3.1. The importance of Early Experiences

Exposing children to a language rich environment from birth and the earliest days provides the foundation for the development of literacy skills. The Scottish Government's Literacy Action Plan was published in 2010 with a view to improving literacy in Scotland. It highlights that early literacy starts with attunement between parent and baby. Tuning into a baby's needs by understanding, respecting and responding to first sounds, facial expressions and body language helps to support early literacy development.

Below is a link to the Scottish Literacy Action Plan:

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/328493/0106197.pdf>



The Read On, Get On report reinforces that opportunities for early language and communication development is key in terms of developing literacy skills. By age 3, 50% of our language is in place (85% by age 5) and research suggests that a two year old's language development is a strong predictor of their reading skills on entry to school and on later attainment. We know that on school entry, there are already significant differences between children with regard to their language development.

By offering opportunities for the following early literacy skills can be developed effectively.

- Stories
- Listening
- Singing
- Environmental print
- Conversation
- Rhymes
- Mark making
- Creative and imaginative play,

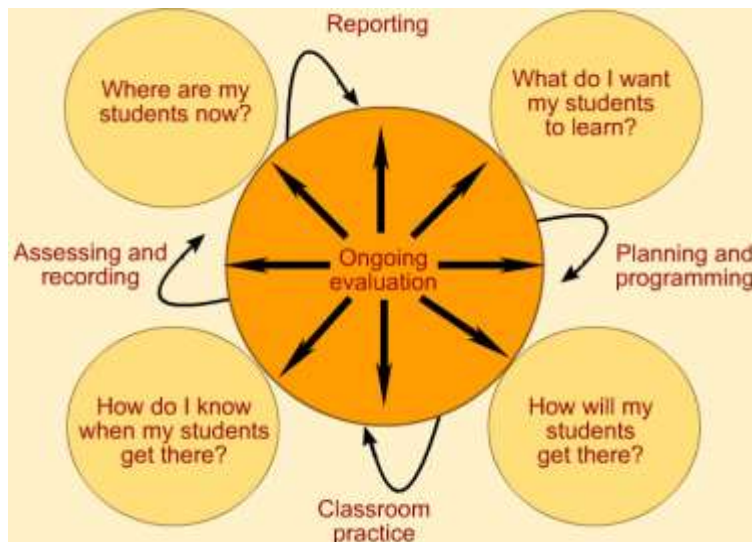
The following diagram presents the foundations of literacy development and subsequent building blocks to early literacy skills.

Literacy Building Blocks

Primary								Reads at 114 words per minute	Builds vocabulary through daily reading	Knows fact/opinion and explains cause/effect	Identifies confusing passages/ words and asks clarifying questions		
				Reads words with one and two syllables		Attempts larger words using Phonics knowledge		Continues to read with increasing speed	Uses context clues to decode new words	Uses roots, prefixes and suffixes	Summarises stories : recalls details and main ideas, sequences events, identifies characters		
			Reads one Syllable 'CVC' words	Knows words have a correct spelling	Identifies syllables in words	Blends Sounds Into words	Changes sounds by adding, deleting or Substituting phonemes	Creates meaning while reading	Rereads decoded words to master texts	Knows words have antonyms and synonyms	Follows simple written instruction	States Information learned while reading	
			Knows parts of books (Index/ chapters)	Names all upper and lower case letters	Knows sounds of most letters	Identifies words With the same beginning sounds	knows that letters in each word correspond to sounds	sight reads high-frequency words	Fluency	Uses new vocabulary in speech	Makes predictions about stories	Answers questions about stories out loud	
Nursery			Understands that text is read from left to right and top to bottom	Learns the Alphabet Song	Names ten letters of the alphabet	Knows that words are made of sounds	Distinguishes separate sounds in words			Uses new words and creates longer sentences	Answers open ended questions about stories such as Why? How? What?		
	Understand that print has meaning	Knows how to handle books- turning pages	Notices letters in own name	Pays attention to sounds in words	Hears the rhythm of language		Learns words for objects in the environment		Relates personal experience to support stories read aloud				
	Print Concepts		Alphabetic system: phonemic awareness/phonics					Vocabulary		Comprehension			
Infancy	Storybooks			Language-Rich Environment					Conversation				
Children start learning to read by sharing books and engaging in conversation and interactions with adults													
													

3.2 Importance of Intervening Early in Primary School

Where early literacy skills have not had the opportunity to be embedded in early experiences, timely intervention is vital. The following four aspects, shown in the diagram below, are key in doing so effectively: it is important that initial assessment is used to inform accurate target setting and planning, which is then carried out through consistent and regular intervention.



Literacy assessments inform interventions and support.

Interventions: Help develop specific literacy skills

Supports: Help children to access the curriculum

It is important to make this distinction as there is a myth that a child's literacy experiences (i.e. via exposure to literacy in his or her environment, will help a child overcome early literacy difficulties). This is not the case.

Consequently, it is advisable that, where a need is identified, interventions and supports be in place as early as possible and certainly by February of Primary 1. This is because high quality support can lead to far more positive outcomes for a child or young person (Rose, 2009). Evidence suggests that focused intervention, tailored to individual need is highly beneficial at all stages in primary and secondary education. Early intervention minimises the impact on other areas of learning and emotional wellbeing.

4. Defining Dyslexia

If, after a period of intervention from the support for learning team, difficulties still prevail then this may then lead to the identification of dyslexia. Definitions of dyslexia vary.

- Some solely emphasise the difficulty with acquiring basic reading and / or spelling skills
- Others highlight that dyslexia can be a specific difficulties (i.e. the level of difficulty experiences with reading or spelling does not reflect other achievements or abilities)
- Others highlight other features that can accompany literacy difficulties (e.g. memory difficulties, perceptual difficulties)

4.1 British Psychological Society Definition of Dyslexia

The British Psychological Society (1999) states that:

Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the 'word level' and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities. It provides the basis for a staged process of assessment through teaching.

4.2. Scottish Government Definition of Dyslexia

The Scottish Government described dyslexia as:

...a continuum of difficulties in learning to read, write and/or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities and may not be typical of their performance in other areas.

4.3 Discussing the dyslexia label with parents

Parents are often rightly anxious when their child has literacy difficulties. Some parents may hold what are common misconceptions. Therefore, it may be helpful to make parents aware of the following:

- Identification of dyslexia follows support and intervention and is not the starting point for such support.
- The needs of those presenting with literacy difficulties can and should be met without identification.
- The identification of dyslexia, or assessment indicating a strong risk of dyslexia, does not mean there is a “quick fix”.

4.4 Identifying Dyslexia

Literacy assessment should, primarily, be undertaken to identify exactly where a child is at with their learning and what supports and intervention might be helpful. Ordinarily, identifying dyslexia should be a secondary concern and should only take place after other assessments and interventions have been utilised.

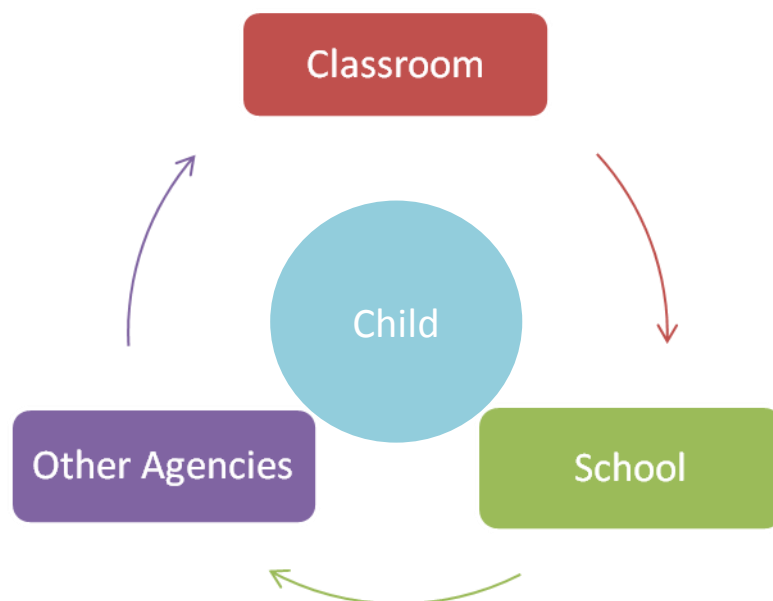
As and when necessary, school staff are often very well placed to make an identification of dyslexia. Further information about assessment is contained within other sections. Essentially, if schools can evidence, over time, that a child has a persistent difficulty with reading or spelling and that this has not been remedied by timely and appropriate intervention, identification of dyslexia can be made. A school's link Educational Psychologist will always offer advice and guidance should practitioners feel this is needed.

The Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit provides a national pathway for the identification of dyslexia:

<http://addressingdyslexia.org/sites/default/files/resources/Dyslexia%20Pathway%20March%202018.pdf>

5. Collaborative Model of Assessment and Intervention

In planning to meet the needs of individuals, the image below depicts the collaborative model of assessment and intervention following a staged intervention approach with the child firmly at the centre of the process. The process of identifying literacy difficulties is a shared approach involving all professionals supporting the child.



Parents/ carers are key partners in this collaborative approach.

Literacy difficulties and / or dyslexia cannot be identified and remedied as a result of a single test or assessment. A robust literacy assessment will adhere to the following:

- A range of information is gathered over time.
- A range of information is gathered between contexts (e.g. between home and school).
- Consideration is given to other influences on pupils' literacy (e.g. classroom and environmental factors).
- Information draws upon discussions with teaching staff and family.

Many children do experience literacy difficulties, but the impact of such difficulties can vary considerably from one individual to the next. Therefore, our main goal should be to combine information obtained from an ongoing assessment process with a good knowledge base of how literacy skills develop, in order to be able to identify the necessary supports to meet a child's additional support needs.

6. Literacy Assessment and Staged Intervention

6.1 Assessment and support at class level

At first, assessments and support remain at the class level, as part of the everyday learning and teaching process. Information gathered by the class teacher could include:

- Class teacher reports / observations
- Class assessments
- Work samples
- Writing samples
- Pre-school reports (e.g. knowledge of child's early language development)
- Child's views
- Parent's views

6.1.1 Primary One Literacy Assessment and Action Resource

Education Scotland has produced a useful resource for use with pupils in Primary 1. This is called the Primary One Literacy Assessment and Action Resource (POLAAR). It is designed to help P1 teachers identify and assess children who are most at risk of developing later difficulties with reading and writing.

It is based on a staged intervention model of 'observe-action-observe' which helps identify the most effective intervention at classroom and child levels.

Below is a link to the POLAAR resource:

[https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/Primary%20One%20Literacy%20Assessment%20and%20Action%20Resource%20\(POLAAR\)](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/Primary%20One%20Literacy%20Assessment%20and%20Action%20Resource%20(POLAAR))

It contains a series of useful tools including:

- An environmental assessment which allows teachers to audit their classroom environment and teaching approaches

- Child observational assessments (including one which suggests actions to support specific areas of difficulty)
- Three minute assessments on areas which are related to early reading difficulties

Links to each of these tools are contained within the POLAAR link noted above

6.1.2 Use of InCAS data

Data from PIPs, InCAS and MidYIS can be very useful as a form of screening, therefore highlighting which children's literacy may require further investigation and intervention. These scores, in themselves, have limitations but are a useful point from which to start discussion.

INCaS scores are broken down in considerable detail and can provide an initial insight into a child's progress with:

- Reading accuracy
- Word Recognition / sight vocabulary
- Word decoding / phonology
- Comprehension

The Developed Ability scores, coupled with the literacy scores, also provide insight into whether the child may have more specific areas of difficulty (e.g. areas of strength with vocabulary or with maths but particular difficulties with aspects of reading).

Further information on these tests can be found in **Appendix 2**.

6.1.3 Strategies for use at class level

At this stage, a vast range of strategies can be put in place to support the pupil including differentiated materials, use of visual supports, writing frames etc.

Many of these strategies are detailed in appendix 1 and in the following link:

The pupil's progress and the success of any strategies should be reviewed using the teachers' planning and assessment tools and should reflect a 'plan, do, review' cycle.

6.2 Assessment and Support at School level

If concerns persist, a class teacher should seek further advice from the additional support for learning (ASfL) team or members of senior management.

Schools should have clear processes which allow class and subject teachers to escalate concerns.

It may be necessary to gather supplementary to inform the process of clarifying need and identifying appropriate supports. This information could be gained through:

- Additional observations
- Discussion with pupil
- Gathering samples of writing produced in a range of different conditions
- Completion of checklists (see appendix 4 for details)
- Direct work with a pupil
- A collaborative meeting with school and parents discussing strengths and concerns including medical factors such as hearing.
- Standardised assessments (e.g. Neale Analysis, COPs, PhAB, YARC)

It is recommended that pupils and parents are involved from the earliest possible stage of identifying and planning for literacy support. This process should develop their understanding of the nature of the pupil's needs and how the school intends to support those needs. Where a specific programme (such as an IEP) is in place, they can also be routinely involved in the monitoring, implementing and reviewing processes.

<http://www.addressingdyslexia.org/> is a vast resource and contains lots of useful information about meeting the needs of children with literacy difficulties.

Appendix 4 and the following link provide a succinct overview of this resource:

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file90499.pdf>

A number of helpful checklists are provided as part of this resource. Direct links to these checklist are contained in this paper.

6.2.1 Using Standardised Literacy Assessments

Standardised literacy assessments can be useful tool. When used in conjunction with other sources of information, they can add to an overall picture of pupil need and current literacy ability. This detailed picture can then be used to ensure that interventions are as focussed on the pupil's individual needs as possible.

If information from standardised assessments has been obtained, this should be considered as a part of an ongoing assessment process. **Literacy difficulties should not be identified based on a single test.**

Considerations before assessment

It is important to consider:

- The rationale for using a standardised assessment. Such assessments should not be viewed as ends in themselves, but rather be seen as a formative assessment which will inform the nature of intervention and support for a pupil.
- Possible downsides such as pupils feeling 'labelled'
- How other pupils and teachers will interpret the pupil's abilities following assessment. It is necessary to be clear with all concerned that the assessment is not a measure of the child's intrinsic ability and potential, just a measure of their needs at any given time.

The following tests are used in Moray.

Test	What does it test?	Further Description	Age Range
The Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA)	<p>Reading accuracy (ability to read words accurately)</p> <p>Reading fluency (speed of reading)</p> <p>Comprehension</p>	<p>Further diagnostic tests on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination of initial and final sounds • Names and sounds of the alphabet • Graded spelling • Auditory discrimination and blending <p>Also allows for technique called 'miscue analysis'. The child reads a portion of text while the adult notes down on a piece of identical text the exact errors that are made by the child. An analysis of the errors then takes place.</p>	6 years to 12 years, 11 months. Also possible to use test with older children who have difficulty with literacy.
<p>More info:</p> <p>http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file81583.pdf</p>			
Phonological Awareness Battery (PhAB)	<p>Assesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonological awareness • Some pre-reading skills 	<p>Provides a profile of a child's phonological skills.</p> <p>Tends to be a useful assessment for younger children or when it seems they are finding the process of learning to blend sounds into words a particular challenge</p>	6 years to 14 years 11 months
<p>More info:</p> <p>http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file81584.pdf</p>			
York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC)	<p>Provides reading ages and standardised scores for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading rate (fluency) • Single word reading (reading accuracy) • Comprehension 		11-16 years or children who are more able in terms of literacy
<p>More info:</p> <p>http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file81585.pdf</p>			

6.2.2 Strategies and support at school level

Schools are skilled in identifying appropriate strategies which support, in a range of ways, children experiencing difficulties with acquiring literacy skills.

Research has demonstrated that interventions promoting the development of phonological skills are generally the most effective at helping support literacy progress (Reid, 2009).

Features of successful interventions are that they:

- Are highly structured
- Are systematic
- Are provided 'little and often' (e.g. carried out for 5-10 minutes daily) and provide a high level of regularity to ensure new learning is not lost before having the chance to be effectively stored in long term memory
- Are reviewed termly
- Provide opportunities for over-learning. This means that new material should be re-visited repeatedly until it is completely fluent and automatic, without requiring conscious thought. This may make it feel that it is slower to move through programmes of learning but new learning should be less likely to be 'lost'.

Many successful programmes are underpinned by Precision Teaching methods (including Toe by Toe). These approaches are highly adaptable and can be applied across skills. More information is provided in Section 7.2 and here:

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file88660.pdf>

6.3 Multi-agency Assessment and Support

If progress is still not made despite a significant level of intervention by the school, then the next stage would be to seek further assistance from other agencies such as Speech and Language Therapy or Educational Psychology.

Detailed explanations of allied health professionals' roles are detailed in the 'Allied Health Professionals Guide' on the Additional Support Needs section of the INTERCHANGE.

The role of the Educational Psychologist in supporting literacy difficulties would primarily be to consider assessment information and offer further advice and support

on assessments and interventions. On occasion, the Educational Psychologist may carry out some direct assessment to add to the information gathered by a school.

It may feel daunting to embark on a literacy assessment for the first time. Most assessments come with clear and detailed instructions about how they should be administered and do not require external training. If, after having looked through the assessment and instructions, a member of staff has further queries about its use it is possible to contact the Educational Psychology Service for advice. Additionally, Support for Learning colleagues in other schools may have complementary experience and can therefore be an additional source of advice.

If other agencies become involved they will be able to discuss supports and interventions for individual cases. However, they may also be able to help develop a school's knowledge and confidence in using specific intervention programmes or approaches through training and general awareness raising (e.g. Educational Psychology mini papers).

7 Intervention

7.1 Support & Strategies in the Classroom

Classroom support is crucial if we are to support those with literacy difficulties. There are a variety of strategies that teachers and support staff can deploy to meet a range on needs / difficulties. Details can be found in appendices 1 and 3.

7.2 Precision Teaching

Precision teaching is a method of planning a teaching programme to meet the individual needs of children and young people who are experiencing difficulties with the acquisition, fluency or maintenance of some skills. It is particularly effective in aspects of learning (such as literacy) where tasks can be broken down into small steps with clear objectives. Precision teaching's repetitive approach underpins many of the most effective literacy interventions because with over learning and committing information to long term memory there is less likelihood of learning being 'lost' again. Teaching sessions take place daily for 10 – 15 minutes and there is an evaluative and monitoring process built in, which provides accurate information about learners' progress and the most effective teaching methods.

Precision teaching can be delivered by teachers and support staff and used in the early years, primary or secondary context with learners who:

- Appear to know something one day but not the next
- Appear to know something in one area but not in another
- Are very slow in the production of work
- Don't have the 'basics'
- Seem able enough to complete tasks but are reluctant to try

The following web-page discusses how to use precision teaching to build fluency in maths.

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_62202.html

7.3 Information Communication Technology

Information Communication Technology (ICT) can be used as a key tool in the classroom both in learning and teaching experiences as well as accessing and/or recording written information. Many of the learning differences experienced when reading, writing, spelling, and accessing the curriculum, become a smaller problem when supported through the use word processing packages. This is particularly the case for those with dyslexic difficulties. Some dyslexic learners also have co-ordination, sequencing and organisational difficulties. This may affect their handwriting, causing learners to produce less work or take a lot longer than expected. Once they have mastered the keyboard this can often liberate the pupil, allowing them to concentrate on content rather than process.

Standard packages such as Microsoft Word offer many features, which can be learned gradually. Other specialist ICT packages have been developed with the needs of dyslexic learners in mind. Importantly, such packages provide the necessary risk taking, patient, multi sensory environment many dyslexic learners need. This can help develop confidence and self esteem as well as improve literacy skills.

Word Processing

Using Word Processors to record written responses (preferably with speech support) (e.g. Microsoft Word with text to speech, Textease, Clicker , Widgit software: Communicate InPrint and Cricksoft: WriteOnline) can help ease the burden of literacy based activities for pupils who find handwriting or letter formation difficult, or laborious.

Portable writing aids such as Ipads, and tablet devises offer pupils word processing facilities anywhere at school, especially if a laptop or desktop computer is not available. These products can have all the benefits of traditional Word Processors. Moreover many of these tools have additional facilities, such as diaries to help planning, personal organisation and aid memory. Some now have additional speech support and predictive text options. Moreover there is a multitude of apps available, often for free, to support pupils with literacy difficulties.

See and Hear Written Text on Screen

There are a variety of ICT packages which add speech support to existing programs, applications and web pages (e.g. a text to speech program with MS Word such as ClaroRead, Texthelp, Dolphin EasyTutor). These programmes enable pupils to both see and hear all text onscreen or typed text as it is entered. They can help aid memory, clarify unknown words or phrases and enable self-correction, allowing pupils to work more independently in a non-threatening environment.

Onscreen Wordbanks and Predictive Text Tools with Speech Support

Programmes such as Clicker, WriteOnline, Wordwall, word banks available with talking word processors and prediction in Penfriend, Co:Writer, WriteOnline, TextHelp & Claroread can help speed up the writing process, reduce the number of keystrokes, support spelling/phonological awareness and help the pupil to complete written tasks more quickly and concentrate on content, rather than typing or spelling skills.

Literacy Programs with Speech Options

Talking books, spelling and phonic games and activities, talking word processors and onscreen wordbanks can be very helpful in developing pupils' literacy skills. Speech support is essential especially for literacy activities such as reading, spelling, phonics and writing. Pupils can hear words in games, spellings to practise, spellcheckers, instructions and help menus. Auditory repetition of any text can support weak memory skills and increase independent learning. Spoken encouraging comments made in interactive games and tasks can increase confidence, success and self esteem.

Alternatives to Writing as Key Method of Recording

Dyslexic learners enjoy using alternative forms of recording and often use strengths in pictorial imagery in their learning. I.C.T. can support this with the use of digital

images and clip art, digital cameras, multimedia presentations, video cameras and smart phones.

Recorded speech using digital recorders and/or smart phones offer low tech solutions. Digital pens that record written and spoken information such as the Livescribe Pulse Smart pen may help. Voice recognition software may be appropriate in some cases, where the demand for writing in all curriculum areas increases both in volume and difficulty. This software enables the pupil to record responses orally and have their words transformed automatically into text.

Planning and Organising of Work

There are tools to facilitate concept mapping. Mind maps can help learners with dyslexia to organise their ideas visually and then produce more and better structured written work by helping them to organise their information into a manageable visual format. This is done by arranging or connecting ideas and concepts into groupings, branches (or nodes) in a hierarchy of importance. An idea or heading is connected to a series of sub-headings which contain small portions of relevant information.

Typing and keyboard awareness programs

ICT can provide an excellent source of support to pupils with literacy difficulties. It is therefore important that they have a good knowledge of the keyboard and learn to either touch type if possible or type efficiently, (using two hands) so that entering text is as least as fast or faster than their normal writing speed. This needs to be done as early as possible and practised in regular daily short sessions, with support, at school and at home. Where appropriate, typing can then be their normal mode of recording and used for extended writing and recording of class work, homework and possibly in exams.

For many learners the QWERTY keyboard layout can be confusing. A range of [alternative keyboards](#) is available such as 'abc' keyboards where keys are arranged in alphabetical order. Other keyboards feature extra-large keys or keys which are colour coordinated into vowels and consonants.

Further information in relation to ICT supports for those with literacy difficulties is available at:-

<http://addressingdyslexia.org/> and at <http://www.callscotland.org.uk/home/>

7.4 Fostering an interest in reading

Focusing solely on developing the technical aspects of reading (e.g. focusing on phonics or phonological awareness) can run the risk of decontextualising reading and therefore making it less enjoyable. This can be a particular concern for children who are in receipt of support to remediate literacy difficulties. Consequently, fostering an enjoyment of reading is key to developing literacy development. It may seem obvious but research indicates that children who are encouraged to read as children, read more as adults. Additionally, reading for pleasure (between the ages of 10 and 16) is more important for cognitive development than level of parental education. National Literacy Trust research indicates that children from low income families are just as likely to report that they enjoy reading as children from higher income families but opportunities are less so they have fewer or no books at home and don't have access to such a wide range of reading material.

Various companies have developed 'high interest / low vocabulary readers'. These are designed to be age appropriate in terms of content but make fewer demands on basic reading skills.

7.5 Assessment Arrangements

Assessment Arrangements (AA) may be appropriate if either speed or accuracy is a concern in reading and/or writing. If the purpose of the assessment is not to gain information on literacy per se, then some form of AA may be required. This holds true for informal class assessments and external examinations AA may include:

- extra time
- reader and/or scribe
- use of ICT/digital exams
- prompt

Identification of dyslexia is not necessary for these arrangements to be implemented.

Further information and details of implementing AAA is available on the SQA website at:

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/QAofAA_AdditionalGuidanceSchools2017.pdf

8 Transition to Secondary School

It is crucial that clear information is communicated by Primary Schools and acted upon by secondary schools. For those children in late P6 for whom reading and or spelling/writing continues to pose a significant challenge the following information should be conveyed to secondary school.

- 1) Detail of the nature of the difficulties
- 2) Information of any formal/informal assessments/observations
- 3) What strategies/interventions have been helpful in support of the difficulties
- 4) Whether ICT has been utilised, in what way and with what impact
- 5) Reading and/or spelling ages (those children with ages up to 2 years below chronological age will require intervention at secondary school)
- 6) What the primary school feel effective support and intervention may look like in the secondary setting

This information will be required by January prior to transition to allow for effective planning and provision at secondary school

APPENDIX 1: Minimising impact on other areas of learning through classroom support

It is important to minimise the detrimental effects of literacy difficulties/dyslexia on other areas of learning. Support can be offered for a range of areas. Children who struggle to learn to read, write and spell in comparison to the rate of the majority of their peers require interventions that fall broadly into two categories;

The removal of barriers:

- Within the child – literacy skills (teaching the basic skills required to develop their literacy and learning skills)
- Within the classroom – access to the curriculum (ensuring fair and equal access to the curriculum at the level of their understanding)

“Children are wired for sound, but print is an optional accessory that must be painstakingly bolted on”

(Pinker, 1997)

Class teachers have a key role and responsibility in both these areas. In working together, ASfL and Class teachers can ensure that effective approaches are identified and followed through across contexts and across the curriculum and that, where appropriate, specific interventions can take place daily. This paper gives an overview of areas to be considered in the classroom and offers a flavour of the strategies that can be used – often to the benefit of all pupils in the class.

Use of the document follows on from identification and assessment. It is written to complement the Addressing Dyslexia toolkit <http://www.addressingdyslexia.org/>. Specific approaches will differ in practice for age and stage of literacy development; however the underlying principles will remain constant.

GENERAL

Early identification of difficulties acquiring literacy skills should take place and result in additional focussed input by February in P1.

Reading difficulties do not spontaneously recover and will only get worse if left.

The evidence suggests that intervention to improve word attack skills and fluency also improve **comprehension** too.

www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk provides a comprehensive overview of positively **evaluated** systematic approaches to addressing reading, writing, spelling and comprehension difficulties.

Have high **expectations** for thinking skills and realistic expectations of literacy skills

Whether for reading, writing and/or spelling, an appropriate and evidence based, structured and systematic approach should be identified and adhered to. The effectiveness of any programme relies on 'little and often' approach. Interventions for reading and spelling will often have a phonological basis and many are a version of precision teaching
<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file88660.pdf>.

It is essential that class teachers work jointly with ASfL colleagues to bring specific interventions and strategies into the classroom. Joint planning requires ring fenced liaison time between the class teacher, ASfL and support staff. Pupils views should be sought to discuss what works for them.

Pupils with literacy difficulties will require **extra time** for tasks that involve aspects of literacy that they find difficult and require additional effort.

Some literacy difficulties may be as a result of **disrupted learning** and a short intensive period of input may provide the boost that is needed to get back on track.

The young person's **progress** should be monitored in order to inform next steps and ensure intervention is having a positive impact.

<p>READING</p> <p>The introduction of a specific and positively evaluated literacy programme can be important, particularly when the pupil requires additional input to reinforce the class approach to early reading (e.g. Jolly Phonics). This should be followed through in school, not left as an additional homework task.</p>	Make explicit the links between the same words or sounds across the curriculum.
	Avoid asking the pupil to read out loud in front of the wider group.
	Pre record reading books to help familiarise the pupil with the story and increase their confidence when tackling it.
	Paired Reading has positive outcomes for both tutee and peer tutor. It can be used for different ages and stages and has evidence based impact on both reading fluency and comprehension. https://www.dundee.ac.uk/esw/research/resources/readon/resourcesforteachers/ http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_62204.html
	Choose high interest readers for the older pupils where the stories are age appropriate and the reading demands modified. Examples of these include Barrington Stokes and Rapid books. Source non-fiction books focusing on a pupil's interests.
	Have a pre-agreed signal for help when a word or passage is too tricky.
	Establish an ethos of peer support within the classroom.
	Emphasise different strengths and ensure that pupils understand that reading skills are not a measure of general intelligence.
	To support reading for information , teach the pupil to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skim for the gist - Scan for specific information - Read any questions (and ideally discuss), - Re-read the passage carefully and use a highlighter for what they think are the key points.
	Read through any written feedback provided on work to ensure the pupil is aware of the comments made.
	Coloured overlays can help a range of pupils in 'seeing' text. Have a range available so that pupils can use if they think it makes a difference. Background colours can also be changed when using ICT.
	Some pupils respond to line trackers or book marks to help them keep their place.
	Encourage an enjoyment of reading and opportunities to extend vocabulary and comprehension by providing access to stories and non-fiction books in alternative formats. See https://bookriot.com/2016/09/15/11-websites-find-free-audiobooks-online/ for free access to digital audio books.

SPELLING It is important that new spelling is taught in a systematic manner and organised into word 'families'.	Irregular spellings are likely to need memory aids (e.g. mnemonics, pictures) to help them stick.
	Tackle spelling patterns using methods such as Simultaneous Oral Spelling. Encourage the pupil to say the word, spell it out loud while looking at it, cover and spell it out loud a few more times before writing it down.
	Cued spelling incorporates use of memory aids and aspects of precision teaching and involves an adult helper and short daily exercises. https://www.dundee.ac.uk/esw/research/resources/thinkingreadingwriting/
	Create individual word cards for reference words or sound patterns that the pupil struggles with. A picture, drawn by the pupil, could be added for reference.
	By P7 and into secondary, focus on establishing the 100 to 200 most common words .

WRITING In general terms, teach strategies for organising thoughts prior to writing. Develop skills in identifying own errors.	Discuss the pupil's writing task and content prior to them attempting to structure the response.
	Provide structure for writing tasks. Writing frames can help. See the following for examples. http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/factsheet/en12plan-l1-f-using-a-writing-frame https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/early-years-writing/early-years-writing-frames-and-templates/early-years-general-writing-frames http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/curriculum/guides/english/eng1202/Appendices_B.pdf
	Consider the use of writing programmes such as 'Write Away Together' or 'Paired Writing'. Support staff can be trained to work with pupils.
	Explicitly teach editing and proofing skills, including use of spell checker etc.
	Be aware that pupils may limit themselves to writing the words they think they can spell and hence their content is less sophisticated than it would be if they presented orally. Encourage 'having a go' in their writing to elicit a wider range of vocabulary.

HANDWRITING Where needed, this should continue to be taught in short, regular sessions. Alternative forms of recording should also be introduced to access the curriculum including the development of ICT skills.	Difficulty with letter formation requires short regular practise where formation is explicitly taught. This can use a variety of materials including mini white boards, chalk etc.
	Consider use of writing aids such as pencil grips or slanted writing boards.
	Additional time for writing tasks and modification of written expectations.
	Avoid extended copying from a class board (extended will mean different amounts for different pupils). For some pupils with tracking difficulties, any amount of copying from the board will be difficult.
	Teach keyboard and word processing skills by P5, if not sooner. This may take time away from other curricular tasks, but will save time and increase curricular access in the future.
	Encourage cursive writing while accepting extended written efforts whatever the format, recognising effort expended. It is important that pupils can focus on getting the main ideas on paper without worrying about spelling or handwriting.
	Encourage self-talk or thinking out loud while writing, whether in letter formation (at early stages) or content later on.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT Pupils with literacy difficulties can be disadvantaged in terms of language for two reasons. Early speech difficulties are often linked with difficulties acquiring literacy skills. In addition, poor acquisition of literacy has a knock on effect on pupils' vocabulary and wider knowledge and understanding as they will read less and at a lower level. The effects of the reduced reading can be cumulative.	Find alternative ways of accessing literature (e.g. audio books; on-line resources).
	Do not assume knowledge of vocabulary and explicitly teach new/topic based words/concepts. Do not fall into the trap of thinking pupils 'should' know what a word means.
	Where a pupil's difficulties are specific in nature, have them learn new spellings at the level of their spelling and make sure they can explore more complex vocabulary verbally. This might mean belonging to two spelling groups, one for spellings, the other for meanings.

ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Always differentiate between the young person's literacy skills and the level at which they can engage in learning. How large this gap is will depend upon the individual. However, it is important to keep expectations around thinking and doing high.

Differentiate reading and writing expectations without 'dumbing down' content and concepts. This may require recording or someone else being a reader.

Make links with **cognitive learning** and that engaging in activities that are effortful help our brains 'grow'. Teach the '**how**' of learning as well as the '**what**'.

Use a range of teaching approaches including **critical skills, reciprocal teaching approaches, group tasks** etc.

Teach **study skills** from an early age including the use of **mind maps**.

Be clear about the purpose of **assessments**. If they are to provide information regarding the pupil's skills, knowledge or creativity, care should be taken that literacy demands do not hinder their performance both in how the assessment is presented and how their responses are recorded.

HOMEWORK

It is more than likely that the pupil has had a day filled with challenges beyond that of most of their peers and as a result this has been more effortful and tiring. The pupil should not be given 'extra' homework to catch up.

Communicate regularly with **parents** in order to gauge how the pupil is coping with homework; if they are not coping, strategies should be agreed.

Bear in mind the **purpose** of the task. The form it takes may need modifying in both input and output, (e.g. instead of writing sentences for spelling homework, learn the word and tell an adult a sentence which demonstrates comprehension. Adults can then record these sentences or verify the task has been done.

Make best use of available **ICT**. Provision of a pen drive can prevent work having to be printed at home.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Consider **seating**. Sit the pupil near to where the teacher tends to sit in order to allow easy access to support and for progress to be monitored. Sit them near to and facing the board and place supportive peers around.

Sit the pupil in clear view of flow diagrams and key words to support routines and activities such as extended writing.

Clearly **label** common objects around the classroom.

SUPPORTING MEMORY

Many youngsters with literacy difficulties find it hard to immediately recall instructions (short term memory), hold small pieces of information in their minds while they work with them (working memory) or retain information in the longer term (transfer to long term memory). This has a detrimental effect on their wider learning. See www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file77540.pdf for an overview of memory difficulties and supportive strategies.

Keep **instructions** short and simple.

Avoid placing too many demands on short term or working memory by using extended **verbal instructions**. Once something is said, it is gone; so 'park' them visually (e.g. by using key words/pictures or written step by step instructions).

Activities such as mental maths can be particularly stressful. In order to enable pupils to have the mental space to do the thinking (free up space on their '**mental jotter**'), allow them access to pencil and paper or small whiteboards to use for recording the sum/problem and do their working out. It is more important that they can understand and do the task.

Prioritise what you expect the pupil to learn by rote, (e.g. focussing on 2, 5 and 10 times tables may be realistic).

Provide supports such as number lines, table squares and access to a calculator.

Help the young person **establish meaning** and link to other learning experiences to promote longer term retention. Again, tricks such as mnemonics or pictures can help establish a 'hook' where otherwise there is little. Rehearsal/repetition can also help and some have found linking to music/songs effective.

Ensure you refer back to the pupil's learning **intentions** throughout the lesson.

ORGANISATION A range of pupils can experience organisational difficulties and it is more common in individuals with literacy difficulties. See www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file82271.pdf which relates to Developmental Coordination Disorder, which a youngster may or may not be affected by. This offers a comprehensive list of strategies to support pupils with organisational difficulties.	Have a well organised classroom and ensure resources are clearly labelled .
	Establish routines for all the class and provide cues for those who struggle to become automatic with them.
	When copying from the board , start each line with a differently coloured dot to help pupils find their place when looking up again.
	Give clear, short instructions . Provide visual supports such as demonstration/pictures/tick lists.
	Have left and right, days of the week and months of the year clearly displayed . Explicitly teach tricks to remember left and right, which side of the page to start on, mnemonics for months of the year etc. Personal calendars can help pupils remember key dates or weekly routines.
	Create individualised ' work mats ' – laminated A3 paper with number line, table square, left and right and common words clearly visible.
	Ensure predictability throughout the day, and offer a countdown to prepare pupils for a change in activity (e.g. in 5 minutes, we're going to....). A whole class visual timetable will help the majority of pupils in the class. Go over this at the beginning of the day and refer back to it, modelling the use of visual supports.

To ensure continuity in support and progress, it is paramount that information regarding **assessments, supports and interventions is transferred effectively during transitions to primary, secondary and post-school.**

Appendix 2: PIPS, InCAS and MidYIS

These three types of data are systematically gathered for all children in Moray at different points in their academic career. PIPS and InCAS are relatively quick assessments of around 20-30 minutes. MidYIS takes around an hour to complete. The data is managed by the CEM Centre at Durham University. Within Moray, a designated Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) has responsibility for overseeing this data. This person offers training to schools to support their understanding as to how the scores can be interpreted and used to inform learning and teaching. PIPs, InCAS and MidYIS can be useful tools in terms of identifying difficulties and informing interventions. However, there will be a range of factors that bear upon performance in these tests and it is important that this is borne in mind when interpreting data. For example, children with literacy difficulties may experience a barrier in accessing a range of sub-tests due to the reading demands involved. Additional factors such as concentration, emotions, familiarity with computers, motivation and understanding of purpose may also impact upon scores.

Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) is aimed at children aged 4-11 years and gives standardised scores that are intended to reflect pupil potential and progress. The following areas are covered by the assessment:

Reading	Maths	Picture Vocabulary	Non-verbal Skills	Attitudes
Word recognition Word decoding Comprehension	Number and algebra Shape and space Measures Handling data	This is a curriculum free measure of English language development	Pattern recognition tasks that are curriculum free	Attitudes relating to : Maths Reading School

PIPS scores are obtained for all children in Moray at the entry to P1 and then again at the end of P1. At the start of the session the scores can be used to inform groupings of children and differentiation. At the end of the session, the two scores can be used together to give an idea of the 'value added' over the course of the

school year. As the PIPS give scores in different areas teachers can compare how a cohort of children have done in the different areas. This can inform future planning and considerations as to where more time and effort might be directed with subsequent cohorts. With individual children, scores can be used to judge who may benefit from additional support

Interactive Computerised Assessment (InCAS) is aimed at children aged 5-11 years. It is used with all children in Moray in P3 and again in P6, although this assessment can be used at any time. Age related scores are given for the following areas:

Reading	Maths	Curriculum free
Word recognition	General Mathematics	Picture Vocabulary
Word decoding	Mental Arithmetic	Non-verbal Ability
Comprehension		Attitudes
Spelling		

Like PIPS, InCAS scores can be used to track pupil progress both on an individual basis and at the level of the class or year group, as well as indicating the value added over a specific time period (For example between P3 and P6).

InCAS scores are also intended to be used more diagnostically than PIPS since they further break down the areas of reading and maths into discrete 'modules'. This can help teachers to pinpoint more specifically elements of reading and maths that are areas of relative strength as well as where a different or more thorough approach to teaching may be beneficial.

Since InCAS can be administered with children at any point it would be possible to use them to evaluate the impact of a specific literacy or numeracy intervention. The whole of the InCAS need not be used if there is a particular area of interest. One module could be used both before and after an intervention and this would help to illustrate the value added by that intervention.

The Middle Years Information System (MidYIS) is intended to be used with secondary aged pupils to gauge ability and aptitude, rather than achievement. This

assessment covers the areas of vocabulary, maths and non-verbal skills. The system can be used to make predication relating to external examination results and value-added scores. There is also an attitudinal questionnaire available.

For more information on PIPS, InCAS and MidYIS visit www.cemcentre.org

Appendix 3: Indicators & Supports for Literacy Difficulties

	Indicators	Supports
Early Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor conversational skills like talking, listening and responding • Difficulty in matching letters to sounds • Early concepts of print and mark making • Lack of knowledge of songs, rhythms and rhymes • Repetition of non words • Motor skills difficulties problems with catching, kicking or throwing • Lack of interest in rhythm and rhyme 	<p>Games and activities developing phonological awareness (e.g. first consonant games – how many start with ‘S’?)</p> <p>I spy or odd one out (e.g. cat, mat, fish, rat).</p> <p>Alphabet awareness (e.g. learn alphabet songs, wooden and magnetic activities).</p> <p>Action songs</p> <p>Draw round letters and words.</p> <p>Multi-sensory resources (e.g. sandpaper, velvet)</p>
First Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow progress in reading • Slow in developing phonic knowledge • Difficulty in listening - following instructions, sequence of a story, understanding information • Talking – mixing up words/syllables/sounds, sequencing, retelling a story • Emergent writing and spelling difficulties • Poor motor skills, gross and fine • Organisational difficulties • Low motivation and interest 	<p>Core phonological awareness – rhymes, alliteration, sound-matching</p> <p>Kinaesthetic approaches (e.g. writing in the air/sand)</p> <p>Use visual & auditory strategies for remembering spellings - match with pictures & mnemonics</p> <p>Structured multi-sensory approaches (e.g. Toe-by-Toe)</p> <p>Importance of maintaining interest & enjoyment – particular genres, areas of interest, audio books, paired reading</p> <p>Use ICT (e.g. Clicker, Wordshark)</p>
Second	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading with hesitation • Misses words when reading • Poor visual tracking • Copying words is difficult, writing untidy • Speech challenges (e.g. difficult to repeat words) • Finds it difficult to transfer skills • Motor skills difficulties • Low self-esteem, easily distracted 	<p>Utilise multi-sensory approaches</p> <p>Specific programmes (e.g. Toe by Toe, paired reading).</p> <p>Utilise ICT (e.g. Penfriend, Adobe Read Aloud)</p> <p>Reciprocal reading approaches</p> <p>Instructions – short and simple</p> <p>Additional thinking time provided</p> <p>Explore other options to present work (e.g., dictaphone, spellchecker, mindmap)</p>

Appendix 4: The Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit

<http://addressingdyslexia.org/>

BACKGROUND

The Addressing Dyslexia website was first launched in September 2012 and was a result of a partnership between Dyslexia Scotland and the Scottish Government. It was revised and the updated Toolkit was relaunched in March 2017. The Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit is a free online resource for teachers, support staff and local authorities and is designed to:

- Support the collaborative process of identification, support and monitoring
- Share resources, approaches and strategies
- Support inclusive Scottish education

The toolkit is a key resource for teachers in understanding, supporting and addressing dyslexia. It provides a pathway of identification and support for dyslexia which is well researched and is in accordance with the Scottish legal and educational systems.

In the 'Resources' section of the toolkit, teachers will find the National Pathway for the identification of dyslexia as well as a series of forms and checklists to use. These are also available as downloads in the ASN section of the INTERCHANGE.

A link to a leaflet to promote this web-site with teachers, parents and young people is provided below:

<http://addressingdyslexia.org/sites/default/files/resources/AddressingDyslexiaToolkitFlierMarch2017.pdf>

The toolkit is grounded in a 3 stage model of intervention and outlines the respective roles of professionals beginning with the class or subject teacher through to that of support agencies.

The ability to navigate by level within Curriculum for Excellence from Early Level through to Senior Phase is helpful. Each level is further sub-divided and the following may be useful:

- The 'Starting the Process' section <http://addressingdyslexia.org/starting-process> (for Early Level to Second Level) includes useful points for reflection for class and subject teachers which focus on both teaching style and on the classroom environment.
- The 'Strategies' section outlines a range of classroom approaches within Universal level: <http://addressingdyslexia.org/strategies>
- At all levels, there are forms and templates which can aid the identification process and support the national pathway for identification of dyslexia <http://addressingdyslexia.org/identification-formstemplates>
- The 'What to Look For' section for each level outlines some of the key difficulties associated with literacy difficulties. <http://addressingdyslexia.org/what-look-curriculum-excellence-levels>
- The 'Reporting' section provides guidance on reporting <http://addressingdyslexia.org/reporting>
- The Resources section offers a wide range of Free Resources to support learners <http://addressingdyslexia.org/free-resources-support-learners> The 'More Resources' section is organised according to the nature of the difficulty making it easier to navigate. The headings include auditory processing and listening skills, comprehension, a range of areas affecting literacy, memory; numeracy & maths
- There is a vast section on how to use technology to support learners with literacy difficulties. <http://addressingdyslexia.org/literacy-support-software>
- Three free online learning modules, which support GTC Scotland Professional Standards, Professional Update and Professional Recognition have been

developed and are available at: <http://addressingdyslexia.org/free-online-learning-modules>. The modules are:

- Module 1: 'Introduction to Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice'
- Module 2: 'Support Dyslexia, Inclusive Practice and Literacy'
- Module 3: 'Dyslexia: Identification and Support'