

## How Parents/Carers can work together with schools to support pupils with dyslexia

## Help Sheet 1

- Prepare a pen picture of all the difficulties your dyslexic child experiences. Try and develop an understanding of these before talking to the school about the help they need.
- Remember schools 'have to do their best' to ensure special educational needs are met. Also remember that it may take time to find the right support programmes – this is called the 'graduated response'. However 'more of the same' is not the right way forward if your child is not making good progress.
- Be prepared before a phone call or meeting. Have a clear intention for making the call and phone at a convenient time.
- Dress smartly for the meeting and be punctual.
- Avoid confrontation, keep a clear head and stay confident and polite however frustrated you feel
- All your child's difficulties are likely to be classic aspects of dyslexia but, sad to say, it can still be controversial for schools to talk about being dyslexic. Don't worry too much about agreeing a label at meetings.
- Asking 'what can we do to support him/her with each of the difficulties?' is better than asking how much support your child will get. If you don't agree with what is offered, ask 'how do you think that will help?' Allowing a teacher to suggest a solution is far more effective than challenging them.
- It helps to take a friend (or someone from parent partnership) with you to meetings, having support can make you feel more confident in saying what you want to say. Allow your friend to step in if you feel you are becoming too personal/angry/emotional.
- At the meeting stay on track on why you have called the meeting, do not get personal about teaching staff/other pupils/parent/carers.
- It's important to build a paper trail. Try to take notes at meetings/phone calls, if you're not confident about note taking ask your friend to take the notes. This helps you stay focussed on what is being said at the meeting.
- Try and follow up meetings with a written note setting out what was agreed – and even what was not. Say what was said about when your child's help will be reviewed. Do the same with phone calls.

Try to work together to come up with a plan or seek help from an advocate such as WF SENDIASS (formerly Parent Partnership) who support Waltham Forest families. Contact them on Freephone: 0800 587 2521



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**Dyslexia Association**  
Opening doors for dyslexics since 1989